



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**EXPLORE.
LEARN.
GROW.**

**YMCA Early Learning Center Family Handbook
YMCA OF CENTRAL NEW YORK**

Updated December 2024

YMCA OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

YMCA Early Learning Center Family Handbook

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WELCOME TO THE YMCA EARLY LEARNING CENTER PROGRAM

Thank you for choosing the YMCA of Central New York. We are committed to making a positive impact on the lives of the children and youth.

OUR MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

WHO WE SERVE

The YMCA of Central New York's Early Learning Center Program serves youth ages 6 weeks through 5 years old.

LOCATION

North Area Family Branch

4775 Wetzel Road, Liverpool

HOURS

Monday - Friday; 6:45am - 6:00pm

OUR COMMITMENT

The YMCA is a nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors that is made up of concerned and interested local community leaders. The Y is supported solely by those who choose to join and take part in the many programs offered as well as those who choose to make voluntary contributions.

Joined together by a shared commitment to nurture the potential of kids, promote healthy living and foster a sense of social responsibility, members and staff believe that lasting personal and social change can come about only when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health, and our neighbors.

At the Y, we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income, or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

NYS OCFS LICENSING

Our program is governed by the Office of Child and Family Services. We adhere to all the State of New York Licensing Regulations, Policies, and Procedures. If you have any questions regarding OCFS regulations, please contact your Childcare Director.

YMCA MEMBERSHIP

Participants' families receive a complementary Family Membership. Please inquire with Member Services to begin your membership or register for additional programs. If you already have a Family Membership at the time of enrollment, please contact your member services team to begin receiving your reduced rate.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Our YMCA Annual Campaign raises money for financial assistance so that nobody is turned away due to an inability to pay. In addition to working with the county DSS to subsidize childcare payments, YMCA childcare scholarships are available to families who do not qualify for county subsidy. Please visit the website or childcare office for the confidential application.

CHILDCARE PHILOSOPHY

Quality childcare isn't just the proper ratio of teachers to children or a clean program space. It's a commitment to meet the social, emotional, physical, and developmental needs of our participants. Staff provide structure, consistency, fairness, and love to every child who enters our programs.

Goals

1. To provide quality care for all children regardless of their socio-economic background.
 - a. The YMCA provides scholarships to families who may not otherwise be able to afford childcare.
 - b. The YMCA accepts subsidized payments from the Department of Social Services.
2. To support and strengthen the family unit.
 - a. To provide a safe, healthy, & moral environment for all children.
 - b. To foster open communication with parents that allows for discussions regarding behavior, participation, illness, & attendance.
 - c. To plan & host Family Events with the goal of facilitating healthy family interactions & building a positive cooperative relationship with participant families.
3. To foster both intrapersonal & interpersonal growth with all participants.
 - a. To act as a positive role model for the children. This includes actions, speech, & attire of all staff.
 - b. To foster the growth of self-confidence & self-respect.
 - c. To foster the growth of respect for authority figures, property, & people from all cultural backgrounds.
 - d. To foster the growth of responsibility for one's own actions.
 - e. To foster the growth of caring & compassion towards others.
 - f. To foster the growth of honesty & reinforce the differences between right and wrong.
 - g. To teach healthy lifestyle choices in the form of physical activity & nutritious snacks.
 - h. To develop a sense of community responsibility through team building activities & service-learning projects.
 - i. To support educational goals & academic achievement through daily activities.

It is your commitment & dedication to the YMCA and the children who participate in our programs that will enable us to achieve these goals and others by providing wholesome, quality programs. YOU can positively affect the lives of each child enrolled.

OUR CURRICULUM

The YMCA Childcare Program reinforces our core values in a caring atmosphere. Children build confidence and trust by making friends and take part in group projects and activities where fair play, teamwork, and responsibility are emphasized.

Y Values

Caring • Honesty • Respect • Responsibility

The YMCA Childcare program also utilizes Frog Street Curriculum. Frog Street's comprehensive, dual-language curriculum is designed to meet the needs of diverse learners, while celebrating the joy of learning for each child.

OUR STAFF

Childcare staff are hired based on experience working with children and the ability to positively represent our core values. Our employees receive medical clearances, background checks, and reference checks through the YMCA and OCFS agencies. Staff receive at least 15 hours of training spanning a variety of topics within their first 6 months of employment and at least 30 hours of training every 2 years after that.

ENROLLMENT

Applications for enrollment are accepted without regard to race, religion, sex, ability, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, or national origin.

Initial Enrollment

Parents will receive forms and information and be asked to complete and return several of the forms before their child begins at the center. These include the parent agreement form, registration card, physical/medical form and child assessment form.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$25 must be made upon acceptance to the program.

Waiting lists for those wishing enrollment at the YMCA Early Learning Center program are kept for the future openings. Once a space opens up, participants will have 48 hours to respond after a spot is offered. After that time, we will continue to move down the waitlist.

Inclusion

The YMCA Early Learning Center's goal is to provide safe, engaging childcare programming for all. YMCA Child Care programs are designed to follow OCFS regulations requiring the following staff-to-child ratios:

- Infants - 1:4
- Toddlers - 1:5
- Preschool (Age 3) - 1:7
- Preschool (Age 4) - 1:8

At no time is a YMCA staff permitted to be alone with one child. The YMCA shall accept into the program all children who are able to participate within the regular activities and guidelines as part of a group with a ratio and supervision requirements.

If a child receives services during program hours, then that therapist typically makes a plan with the staff and family on when is a good time to visit the child for their session. Between the therapist, family, and staff, we will come together to discuss any needs your child may have and strategize how to help your child be most successful each day.

We are not a 1:1 center. We can discuss your child's needs during the initial tour to see if this is the best fit and if they will get the most out of what our program has to offer.

If your child has a 504 plan or IEP, it must be on file with the staff as well.

If we feel services are needed, we will communicate our observation with the parents and provide any resources they might need.

In accordance with the requirements of Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act and applicable state disability law, the YMCA will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of disability. The YMCA will consider reasonable accommodations and/or modifications to its policies and procedures as necessary to allow children with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in this program, unless the accommodations or modifications would pose an undue hardship or fundamentally alter the nature of the program. The YMCA will not exclude a child from the full and equal enjoyment of its services, unless the child poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others in the program.

Medical Forms

Prior to enrollment, all children must be seen by a licensed medical practitioner to verify the overall health of the child and to document that immunizations have been administered according to the recommendations of the New York State Department of Health. Children who are not in compliance may be refused entry to the program since they may pose a health risk to themselves and others. Current medical forms are required in order for children to continue their enrollment in daycare. These forms serve as a state health record for the center.

Please notify the center when your child has additional vaccinations or if there are any changes in their medical status.

As stated in OCFS Regulations, the staff will complete daily health check forms for all children.

Updating Records

It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to notify the center when any information on the registration forms has changed. This includes such things as changes in phone number, address, physician, and emergency contacts, as well as any health information. After each yearly (or shorter if an infant) physical, please provide an updated daycare and immunization form.

Data Privacy

The only people permitted to see your child's record (attendance, phone, health information, emergency information, etc.) will be you, our employees, and the OCFS licensing examiner. Information will not be given to others without written consent of a parent or legal guardian. We will not verify your child's enrollment to anyone under any circumstances without your written consent.

It is our policy not to disclose the names of children who may have caused injuries to another child while in the program; this is a safeguard for each family's privacy.

PAYMENTS

Childcare payments are due on the Friday of the week prior. Payments can be made through automatic payment, online using a credit card or bank account, or at the membership desk using check, cash, or credit card. A \$35 charge per occurrence will be assessed on all bad drafts, returned checks, or credit card transactions. You are responsible for updating your payment method prior to the due date if you receive a new card number or expiration date.

DSS Payments

DSS Payments are due on the Friday of the week prior. Before DSS parent-pay portions can be approved. The YMCA must receive a contract from DSS outlining the parent payment. If authorization is discontinued, the parent is responsible for the full month's payment. We understand participants cannot attend or will be responsible for payment when not authorized or when parent is not working.

Late Pick-Up

Please note your program's end time. If you are unable to pick up by the end time, please arrange for an alternate pick-up person to pick up your child and notify staff immediately. If you arrive late, your card or bank account on file will be charged a \$25 late pick up fee per 15 minute interval. Late payment fees will be charged to your billing method on file and you will receive an e-mailed receipt. Excessive late pickups (more than 3) may result in suspension or termination of services. If your child remains at the site more than one hour after closure with no contact from the parents/guardians, the child will be turned over to the local authorities.

Late Payment

A late fee of \$20 per program registered will be assessed to you after the due date. Late payment fees will be charged to your billing method on file and you will receive an e-mailed receipt. If full payment has not been made by the 15th of the month, your childcare services will be suspended. Excessive late payments (3 or more) may result in termination of your services.

Tax Statements and FLEX Reimbursement

You may access your full account, including record of registrations, payments, and tax statements on your online account at ymcacny.org/myaccount. Paper tax statements will not be mailed. You are responsible for maintaining your receipts for FLEX reimbursement. Please contact the Early Learning Center Director if you need a reimbursement signed.

WITHDRAWING FROM PROGRAM

Withdrawals from the Early Learning Center must be submitted in writing via e-mail to the Early Learning Center Director 2 weeks prior to the child's last day in order to be removed from the next billing. Any cancellations received within the timeframe will be processed the following weeks and families will be responsible for the next weeks' full fees.

Credits/Refunds

YMCA childcare programs do not issue refunds or credits, unless overpayment of fees occurs or the program is canceled. Refunds or prorates will not be given if your child is out of program for illness or suspended from the program.

Termination

The YMCA reserves the right to terminate the daycare arrangement if the program staff does not feel that it is meeting your child's needs.

The center has a zero tolerance policy for inappropriate behavior between any parent and staff member. If an accident is reported, the administration as a team will review all information from all parties involved. You may be asked to permanently remove your child from our program immediately, without notice, upon the decision of the administration.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

All children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment in our childcare programs. Our first step in behavior guidance is prevention. Our staff are trained to be proactive to prevent behaviors.

Behavior Policy

We will work with all children who exhibit harmful or inappropriate behavior for a daycare setting. All kids are at different stages of development, thus each instance is treated on a case-by-case basis. Some things are obviously age-appropriate and there isn't an easy fix, other than redirection.

If an older child has behaviors that aren't appropriate for daycare, we will let the parent know. If it becomes a pattern, we will have to have a meeting to discuss how we can help this child moving forward. Most of the time, parents are in agreement with our recommendations and want what's best for their child. If the behaviors continue and the parents are not doing their part, we then discuss termination.

Grievance Policy

Parents are asked to address program concerns with their child's classroom teacher. If a satisfactory response is not received, parents should discuss the problem with the childcare director. In areas of administration, the director should be the first person to contact. Should any concern not be fully addressed by the program staff or the director, parents should contact the YMCA branch director.

Biting Policy

Our program recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when infants and toddlers are in group care. While we feel that biting is never the right thing for toddlers to do, we know that they bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems. Our program, then, does not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs, our three main responses are:

1. To care for and help the child who was bitten, and
2. To help the child who bit learn other behaviors, and
3. To work with the child who bit.

Our teachers work to keep children safe and help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior. When there are episodes of on-going biting, we develop a plan of specific strategies and techniques. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We immediately apply ice to the bite. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water and notify both sets of parents/guardians. If children are bitten on the top of the hands and skin is broken, we recommend that they be seen by medical personnel.

Biting is always documented on our bright wheel app.

We keep the name of the child who bit **confidential**. This is to avoid labeling and to give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting.

As always, we encourage parents to bring their concerns and frustrations to the teacher or the office.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our childcare programs follow New York State OCFS and local Department of Health guidelines regarding all health and safety guidelines. Throughout the year, specific guidelines may need to go into effect. In these circumstances, please be kind to our team as we continue to support the health and safety of your children and our community.

Illness

Sick staff and children should remain at home, both for their health and that of the other staff and children in the program.

Children who become ill may not remain in the program and will be isolated from other program participants until their parent arrives to take them home. Pick up by an authorized personal shall be within 30 minutes.

Monitoring & Supervising Sick Children

Children who become ill will be directly & actively supervised at all times. The isolation location and child must remain in the line of site, visible by all staff at all times. Staff will frequently check-in with the ill child. Staff will position themselves in a way that they can supervise/monitor all children within the program space and will refrain from having their back to children at all times. Staff will never leave children in the room unsupervised. Staff/Child ratios will be maintained at all times.

Medications During Program

If your child is required to take a medication during program, a written medication consent (OCFS document) must be completed by the child's physician and parent prior to starting program. We also are required to have the medication in the original box with the original prescription label. Medication forms and medications must match exactly and be provided prior to the start date of the program.

Allergy Action Plans

An Individual Allergy Action Plan is required to be completed for any child with ANY known allergy (including a medication or seasonal allergy.) The childcare program must work with the parent(s)/guardian (s) and the child's health care provider to develop written instructions outlining what the child is allergic to and the prevention strategies and steps that must be taken if the child is exposed to a known allergen or is showing symptoms of exposure. This plan must be reviewed upon admission, annually thereafter, and anytime there are staff or volunteer changes, and/or anytime information regarding the child's allergy or treatment changes. This plan must be attached to the child's Individual Health Care Plan.

Medical Emergencies

If your child is injured during program hours, the staff member in charge will take all steps necessary to obtain emergency medical care as warranted.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, staff will provide first aid, contact parent/guardian immediately, contact emergency contacts if necessary and call 911.

Child Abuse Prevention

All YMCA staff are mandated reporters and required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. The Y provides all youth with the highest quality services available. We are committed to creating an environment for youth that is safe, nurturing, empowering, and that promotes growth and success. Outside of the Y, staff members may not have relationships or be alone with youth whom they meet in Y programs. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting youth to their homes.

Monitoring & Supervising Quiet Time

Children must be directly & actively supervised at all times. During downtime or quiet time, participants must remain in the line of site of staff at all times. Staff will position themselves in a way that they can supervise/monitor all children within the program space. Staff should refrain from having their back to children at all times. Staff/Child ratios will be maintained at all times.

Emergency Drills

Each program will conduct a monthly evacuation drills, along with semi-annual shelter-in-place drills. Drop-off and pick-up during these drills are restricted. In the event a situation arises that is not a drill, families will be notified immediately of any change in location or situation.

Please check your site's posted emergency plan for specific relocation sites.

Nutrition Guidelines & Meals

YMCA childcare programs participate in the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) programs and adhere to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. We offer well-balanced and nutritious meals and snacks. Breakfast, lunches, and afternoon snacks provide the children with various taste experiences. Menus are distributed periodically and are posted in the classrooms. Please note that these are subject to change. We provide a healthy snack during our programs which represents a minimum of 2 food groups—including a fruit or vegetable daily and a whole grain, lean meat, or dairy option. Water is served with each meal.

If your child cannot eat certain foods because of allergies, religious, or lifestyle reasons, please bring in a note from your doctor. Parents and/or guardians will be responsible for supplying nutritious components of the meal.

Dress for Weather and Play

Please dress your child in washable clothes that are appropriate for weather and daily activities. For the safety of all participants, sneakers are required to be worn for physical activities in the gym, field, or playground.

FAMILY/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT

Parent support is critical to the success of the program. We have an open door policy and our families are encouraged to visit our program at any time. Please be respectful of the children's routines and program activities, as well as our staff's need to be with the children. We encourage you to schedule a time with your site coordinator/director to discuss your child's progress.

Family Events

Family events are held throughout the year and provide an opportunity for families to spend time together, meet new friends, and have fun.

Parent Communication

Daily contact between parent and teacher is an important part of the program. By sharing information concerning your child's activities and welfare, we can work together to meet the child's needs, and attempt to provide continuity between the family environment and the center. Parents and teachers typically have the opportunity to exchange information regarding the children during arrival and/or departure. If there is not enough time for this type of exchange during the arrival or departure times, a time for more in-depth discussions can be set.

ATTENDANCE

To ensure your child's safety, if your child is absent from Program or will be arriving late, please call and notify the Early Learning Center staff before the scheduled arrival time.

DROP OFF & PICK UP

Parents or caregivers must sign their child in and out each day. The sign out process is a record of your child's attendance. For your child's safety, only parents or people you designate as Authorized Pick-up/Emergency Contacts may pick up your child from the program. You may add additional people by submitting their name, phone number, and full address to your site. Anyone picking up your child must be at least 18 years old. Anyone, including yourself, will be asked to present a valid photo ID before signing a child out of program. We will deny access to anyone who is not listed as an Authorized Pick-up/Emergency Contact. Please notify your site staff if any last minute changes occur.

Contact Information Changes

Parents or caregivers are now able to access their child profile online and can make necessary changes to address, phone number, email, and authorized pick-ups. If any changes are made, the childcare office needs to be notified when the changes are made. You may also submit your changes in writing to the Early Learning Center Director. In the event of an emergency, it is critical that we are able to reach you.

Divorce/Separation

If a non-custodial, biological parent arrives to pick up their child and they are not listed on the form (whether or not a court order is on file), we will:

1. Call the parent/guardian listed on the registration form
2. Explain to the non-custodial, biological parent that we cannot release the child to them and explain the release procedures to the non-custodial parent.
3. Call the police to release the child to the police. The police will then confirm the identity of the non-custodial, biological parent.

This scenario can place all parties in a very difficult situation. Often times, the person who will have the most difficult time is the child. Please discuss these implications with the non-custodial parent so that they will not show up at the site without prior arrangements. All court orders must be provided to the childcare office when updated to ensure appropriate information is at each site.

Concerns for Safety

Safety is our number one priority. If we have reason for concern regarding the safety of a child's release to a parent or other adult, we may call the police. Cause for this course of action includes:

1. Parent/adult suspected to be "under the influence"
2. Parent/adult is abusive or threatening the child, our staff, or any other persons present.

If there is a concern for the safety of our program participants, please contact the Childcare Director IMMEDIATELY.

NO SCHOOL

Delays

Please note that some programs may be delayed or closed early based on YMCA branch operations.

Program Holiday Closures

The YMCA Early Learning Center program runs continuously year-round. Child Care is NOT available on the following days:

- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- New Years Eve
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Independence Day
- Christmas Day
- New Years Day
- Juneteenth
- Black Friday
- Indigenous Peoples'/Columbus Day (closed for professional development)

MOVING TO THE NEXT CLASS

Children are moved to the next class taking into account chronological age, developmental stage, and available space in the next classroom. Many factors go into deciding when to move up each child. Teachers and administration will stay in close communication with parents as the decisions are being made.

INFANTS

In our Infant One room (6 weeks - 9 months) and Infant Two (9 months - 18 months), the infants keep their own schedule; sleeping when tired, eating when hungry, and having diaper changes regularly. While infants are awake, a variety of toys are available for stimulation, and there is freedom to explore the rooms. Caregivers interact constantly with the babies with comforting arms and words and games to play. Throughout the day, the Infant Two children go to the multipurpose room and have outdoor time (weather-permitting). They also have time for music, sensory, art, large and fine motor skills, and dramatic play. Around the age of 15 months, the infants begin to follow the center's schedule, in order to transition to the Toddler One room. They have breakfast, lunch, and a nap on a tiny cot, and then snack.

Formula should be prepared at home and brought to the center already poured into their labeled bottles. Unused formula must be discarded after each feeding, so please plan accordingly. Bottles and food containers must be labeled with your child's **first and last name**, and **taken home each night**. Parents are responsible for checking the refrigerator for unused bottles and food each night.

Please provide the following for your infant:

- Diapers (as needed)
- Three containers of unscented sensitive wipes each month
- Two porta-crib sheets and a lightweight blanket (possibly a "cuddly" as well)
- Bibs (at least one of them plastic)
- Complete set of clothes (ie: onesies, socks, pants, etc.)
- Burp cloths

TODDLERS

In our toddler rooms, the toddlers continue to follow the center's schedule. They use the gym, outside playground (weather permitting). They also do art, dramatic play, large and fine motor skills, and sensory play.

Toddlers start toilet-learning and work together to achieve this goal. It is suggested that children who are in the process of toilet-learning should be sent in wearing training pants. Since “pull-ups” are much like diapers and the children cannot feel when they are wet, we **do not** recommend them as a substitute for training pants. The children must be able to learn from their “accidents”, and this cannot happen if they are not able to feel when they are wet. This is the case where convenience cannot outweigh the needs of children. Please make sure your child has several sets of extra daily clothes.

Please provide the following items for your toddler:

- Diapers (as needed)
- Three containers of wipes each month
- Complete change of clothes (including socks and underwear)
- Toothbrush with cover
- Small tube of toothpaste
- Crib-size sheet and blanket

PRESCHOOLERS

In our preschool rooms, the preschoolers continue to follow the center’s schedule with a few additions. The preschoolers begin swim lessons. They also continue with their music class. The preschoolers have large motor time in the gym and on the outdoor playground (weather permitting). The preschool room begins to work on the kindergarten readiness using the Creative Curriculum and Frog Street.

The preschoolers learn through play as the teachers utilize all experiences as teachable moments. The YMCA embraces the Creative Curriculum for preschool to ensure that YMCA early childhood programs deliver high-quality activities and interactions. Add Frog Street.

Please provide the following items for your preschooler:

- Complete change of clothes (including socks and underwear) to be kept and updated in your child’s cubby
- One container of wipes each month
- Toothbrush with cover
- Small tube of toothpaste
- Crib-size sheet and blanket
- Swimsuit and towel on swim days

CLOTHING

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and suitable for all activities, including sitting on the floor, outdoor play, painting, and other messy activities. A complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing in your child’s current size should be kept in your child’s cubby at all times. An additional supply of clothing should be provided during toilet-training. If the extra clothes are used, please be sure to replace them the next day.

Please dress children according to weather conditions as outdoor play is part of our daily schedule. On cold days, mittens, hats, and snow pants are important. When the ground is snowy, muddy, or damp, boots should be worn. For sunny days, particularly in the warmer months, sunglasses, sun hats, and sun block should be provided for your child’s protection. Appropriate modifications for infants will be made, although all children, even babies, will be expected to go outside when the weather permits. **For your child’s safety, please do not send your child in wearing open toe shoes.** (Sneakers are always best), Please consult your child’s teacher for additional information.

All clothing and other belongings should be marked with your child’s first and last name.

NAPS

Because children arrive early and are very busy during their day, a rest time is an important part of the day. Children rest after lunch on their own cot, and we urge you to send in their favorite blanket to make this time as comfortable as possible. **Please do not send pillows.**

From time-to-time, parents will ask that we not allow their child to sleep for more than one hour. Please understand that children know when and how much rest they need better than we do. We cannot force a child to stay awake.

Lights are turned off, soft music is played, and backs are rubbed to help the children relax. If some children wake early, quiet activities (books, puzzles, or soft toys) are provided until nap time is over.

We recognize that some children outgrow their need for an afternoon nap before others. However, all children are required to rest quietly and given other quiet activities.

TOYS AND ITEMS FROM HOME

To prevent the spread of illness, toys or other items from home are not permitted, unless it is a part of your child's specific learning or behavior plan. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items brought to the Early Learning Center Program. Please connect with your Early Learning Center Director if your child requires a comfort item or fidget to be successful in program.

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are very special days for young children. Parents may send in a special treat for their child's birthday. There are a few guidelines we ask that you follow:

- Any food brought in must be store bought
- We do not allow any hard candy, lollipops, or candy that could pose a choking hazard
- No balloons

Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend the party, which is usually held during afternoon snack. If birthdays are not celebrated by the child for cultural or religious reasons, please notify the staff.

The YMCA is committed to young children's development of the awareness of themselves as a member of a particular family or cultural group. Parents are encouraged to share family traditions with staff in order to incorporate those traditions into the child's daily childcare routine. The children will explore holidays and celebrations from many lands and cultures. YMCA staff will not introduce concepts of religion or creed, but shall present traditional celebrations from around the world in a lively and participatory atmosphere.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned once a year for our preschool rooms. We will provide the same responsible adult supervision for these excursions as is provided at the center. The field trips are a fun and educational part of the program. Parents are notified in advance and asked to sign a permission slip and submit any fees required. We encourage parent involvement with our field trips. If you would like to attend a field trip, please speak with your child's teacher.

Please review all policies with your family and address any questions with the Early Learning Center office. All policies in this handbook are subject to change at the discretion of the YMCA Administration.