



# Licensed Child Care

Parent Handbook  
on Program Policies

January 2025

[ymcaottawa.ca](http://ymcaottawa.ca)

## Table of Contents

About the YMCA and our Child Care Programs .....	2
Child Care Program and Staff Information .....	4
Contact Information and Hours of Operation.....	5
Safety and Security .....	6
Prohibited Practices .....	7
Emergency Contact and Health Information.....	8
Fees and Subsidies .....	11
Admissions and Withdrawals .....	13
Pick up and Drop offs .....	16

## Appendices

### Appendix A

Program Statement: YMCA Licensed Child Care Programs .....	18
--	----

### Appendix B

Parent Issues and Concerns .....	22
----------------------------------	----

### Appendix C

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy.....	25
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# About the YMCA and our Child Care Programs

## Welcome to YMCA Child Care

The YMCA of the National Capital Region is pleased to welcome your family to our child care services. You have chosen one of the finest and most trusted providers of quality child care in the Ottawa region.

This handbook will provide you with program information and policies and procedures regarding YMCA Child Care services. If you require further information or clarification, please feel free to contact the Centre Director. Thank you for becoming part of our Y family!

## Our Mission

The YMCA of the National Capital Region is a charity, open to all, and dedicated to enriching our community and its individuals.

## Licensing

The YMCA of the National Capital Region's Child Care Centres are licensed by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care Early Years Act. Provincial Government standards are established in order to ensure that all programs provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment with quality care for the children they serve. Centres are inspected at least once annually to confirm compliance with the Child Care Early Years Act.

Programs are also required to meet all health and fire regulations dictated by the City of Ottawa as well as the policies, health and safety regulations of the Y.

- **Taggart Family Y**  
Alternately licensed for 30 toddlers and 32 preschool children OR 15 toddlers and 48 preschool children according to the needs of the community as identified by the City of Ottawa's Centralized Wait list.
- **Ruddy Family Y**  
Licensed for 15 toddlers and 40 preschoolers OR 30 Toddlers and 24 Preschool children according to the needs of the community as identified by the City of Ottawa's Centralized Wait list.
- **Avalon Y Child Care**  
Licensed for 32 Preschool children, 80 kindergarten and 120 school age
- **Churchill Y Child Care**  
Licensed for 15 Toddler children, 24 Preschool children



# Child Care Program and Staff Information

## Staff

All Y Child Care staff are approved by the Ministry of Education and are, as required, registered and in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators. Staff are trained and mentored in the Playing to Learn curriculum, cleared with a vulnerable sector check, and hold current First Aid and CPR C certifications.

## Volunteers and Students

Volunteers and students are an important part of the Y and are required to attend an information session, agree to abide by program policies and procedures, and provide a current criminal reference check for the vulnerable population. Volunteers and students enhance ratios by providing support to staff, not replacing staff, and therefore are not left unsupervised or in a role of assuming full responsibility for the children.

## Updates on Children

Once yearly, staff will complete a children's assessment. These forms are intended to provide parents with written feedback and information on how their child is developing. Parent-teacher meetings are encouraged at this time, and may be requested by staff. Otherwise, weekly, daily or verbal feedback will be provided.

## Preparing for Each Day

The daily schedule of the child care programs includes outdoor play. Children should always come to the Y dressed appropriately for the weather. Some programs request an extra set of clothing be sent with your child. Please label all clothing so that misplaced items may be found more easily.

Parents are responsible for providing diapers, cream, etc. as needed for children who are not fully toilet trained. According to Child Care Early Years Act, we are required to check and/or change a child's diaper every 2 hours. On average a child will require 5 to 6 diapers per day.

As the child care program cannot guarantee a child's clothing will not become soiled or stained, we ask that parents keep this in mind when dressing their child for the day.

As there is always a risk of items being lost, stolen or broken, we discourage children from bringing in special items unless it is a special day. We do not accept any responsibility for these items or such incidents.

It is our policy that children not well enough to participate in outdoor play are too ill to attend the child care program and should remain at home.

During severe weather conditions, we do not participate in outdoor play. Severe weather conditions include:

- Extreme heat/humidity alert
- Extreme cold—temperatures of -15C or colder or a windchill of -20C or colder
- Poor air quality – air quality advisory has been issued
- Thunderstorm warning
- Tornado warning
- Winter and ice storms (heavy snow fall, hail, ice pellets, etc.)



## Gym Activities

Children who are not able to participate in gym activities will remain with another group. Physical activity is an important component to our programs providing recreational opportunities that instill a joy and importance of an active lifestyle. We ask that parents support us by ensuring their child has comfortable clothing and proper foot wear for the gym.

## Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of our child care programs. Trips are designed to meet the children's developmental needs. Ministry rules require parents to sign a permission form before a child may participate on a trip. Parents choosing not to have their child participate will be required to make their own alternate care arrangements at their own cost for the day.

If a child does not arrive on time to leave with the group, the group will be leaving on their scheduled departure time and therefore will not accept late arrivals. We will not accept children to be dropped off at the site of the field trip.

## Contact Information and Hours of Operation

The hours of operation for each program are as follows:

- **Dr. Roly Albert Child Care Centre, Taggart Family Y | 180 Argyle Ave, Ottawa**  
Toddler and Preschool  
7AM – 6PM  
613-237- 1320 x 4138 – Program Director
- **Orleans Y Child Care | 265 Centrum Blvd, Orleans**  
Toddler and Preschool  
7AM – 6PM  
613-830-4199 x3019 – Program Director
- **Avalon Y Child Care | 2080 Portobello Blvd, Orleans**  
Preschool, Kindergarten and School Age  
(Before & After Care and Full Day Programs on PD Days and Summer Break)  
7AM – 6PM  
613-824-2681 x1 – Program Director
- **Churchill Y Child Care | 345 Ravenhill Avenue, Ottawa**  
Toddler and Preschool  
7AM-6PM  
343-588-1633 – Program Director

## Scheduled Closures

YMCA Child Care programs are open year-round, Monday to Friday except for statutory, civic holidays, and any other identified dates listed below\*:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day



- Civic Holiday
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

\*The Y will also be closed for two professional development days a year and 3 additional days at the Christmas holiday season in combination with Christmas and Boxing Day; families will be provided a minimum of one-months' notice for these closure dates as they vary for each calendar year.

## Safety and Security

### Serious Occurrences

Serious occurrence reporting is one of the many tools that provide licensed child care centres with an effective means of monitoring the quality of service delivery. Monitoring includes an ongoing review of practices, procedures, and training needs. Parents can also benefit from information about the incidents that occur as all Serious Occurrence Notification Forms will be posted for 10 business days after the last information pertaining to the incident is posted. Under the Protection of Personal Information and Privacy Act, no child or staff name, initials and age or birth date of a child, or identifiable group indicators are to be used on the form. Depending on the nature of the occurrence, other authorities may need to be notified as required.

### Security

In creating a safe and secure area for child care centres, each program has its own security system. At Avalon and Taggart Y programs there is a security system that requires an access card for entry. Parents can have up to 2 cards per family cards are assigned to each family and are not to be shared. A deposit fee is required upon receipt of the passes. This will be returned to parents when they return them. A replacement fee applies for any lost cards.

The Orleans Y, Avalon Y and Churchill Y child care centres also have security systems using a code access system. These codes will be provided to parents upon registration and are changed at strategic times throughout the year.

### Fire Drills

Fire drills are practiced monthly. In the event of a real fire or the need to evacuate the building, children are escorted in small groups to:

- **Taggart Family Y:** The Museum of Nature, Group Entrance | 240 McLeod Street
- **Orleans Y Child Care:** The City of Ottawa Building | 255 Centrum Boulevard
- **Avalon Y Child Care:** Francois Dupuis Recreational Centre | 2263 Portobello Blvd
- **Churchill Y Child Care:** The Festival House | 450 Churchill Avenue North



## **Emergency Management Procedures**

The YMCA of the National Capital Region has Emergency Management Procedures in place at each location in the event of an evacuation or other emergency situations (ie; lockdown). Emergency Services will be contacted & parents/guardians will be informed via email or telephone by the Director or Designate in Charge and children will remain at their evacuation locations until it is safe to return to their respective programs.

In the event of a temporary closure due to an unforeseen circumstance, parents/guardians will be notified by the Director via email or telephone with the expected time of the centre closure and provide updates to all families as they become available.

## **Court Orders**

To ensure the safety of your child, if there is a Court Order giving you sole custody of your child, or denying anyone else access to your child, a copy **MUST** be kept in your child's file. All visitations need to be outside of the program

## **Prohibited Practices**

The use of physical punishment, verbal abuse, confinement, withdrawal of basic needs, love or affection is prohibited. The method of adult intervention used allows for decision making and self-discipline on the part of the child, resulting in a positive rather than a negative experience. A team approach is used with all staff following these guidelines. Severe or on-going behavioral concerns are discussed and a course of action is agreed upon in cooperation with the parents.

### **In accordance with the CCEYA requirements unacceptable Child Guidance Practices include:**

- corporal punishment of the child;
- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will or restraining them for the purposes of forcing to sleep.



## **Any person who witnesses alleged contravention will report to CAS with Child Care Management support;**

- Should the person who witnessed alleged contravention choose not to report to CAS, the staff member to whom disclosure was made will report to CAS;
- As per the CFSA, section 72, and the College of Early Childhood Educators, all child care staff have a duty to report all suspected contraventions of the policies and procedures of prohibited practices; management will provide ongoing support.
- Senior management will be informed;
- A serious occurrence report will be filed with the Ministry of Education;
- Confidential written report will be completed as per Y Canada Child Protection Policy.

## **Emergency Contact and Health Information**

### **Emergency Contact**

Parents are required to provide us with at least two alternate adults in case of emergency and we are unable to contact the parents directly. These contacts should be aware that they would be responsible for picking up the child from the Child Care program in the event the child is not well, the child needs to go to the hospital or the parents do not arrive to pick up their child.

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the Child Care of any changes in contact information as needed. Otherwise, information is updated on a regular basis (September, March and June).

### **Children's Health**

Upon registration, please include a copy of your child's up to date immunization record. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child's immunizations are current at all times. Parents of children who object to immunization on the basis of religious/conscience grounds or medical reasons must complete a standardized form approved by the minister.

According to the Health Department, children are not permitted to come to Child Care for 24 hours after the following symptoms have disappeared without the use of medication:

- Fever over 38C
- Diarrhea or vomiting (48 hours)
- Severe cold symptoms (persistent cough, thick, coloured discharge from nose)
- Persistent pain
- Undiagnosed rash or skin condition

Management looks at each case on an individual basis and will direct staff using these guidelines.

### **COVID-19**

We ask that all families self-screen prior to attending care each day. The childcare and school self-screening tool can be found on Ottawa Public Health's website. If your child is experiencing symptoms of illness, we ask that you follow the suggested guidelines, keep your child home and inform the centre of your child's absence.





In the event your child becomes ill at the centre, parents/guardians will be notified and will be requested to pick up their child at your earliest convenience. We will provide rapid tests upon request, if available. If your child tests positive for COVID-19, we please ask you follow the isolation guidelines set out by Ottawa Public Health. Your child may return to the centre once their isolation period is complete. In the event the centre or program rooms reaches the absentee rate of the same symptoms as outlined by Public Health, the Director will **contact the Ottawa Public Health (OPH) Outbreak (OB) Reporting Line** for further guidance and next steps for the program and reporting procedures as required.

Masking is not currently required for children, staff or parents/guardians. However, the Y will provide personal protective equipment (PPE) at the designated entrances of each centre if you wish to use them. Hand sanitizer will also be provided. Please follow Ottawa Public Health for recommendations on safe approaches to reducing the spread of illness.

## **Medication**

Please inform a staff member if your child is taking any medication. This will allow us to stay alert for side effects. If your child needs to take medicine while in our care, whether prescription or non-prescription, a medical authorization form must be completed as required by the Child Care Early Years Act.

All medication must be in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's name, dosage, administration and storage instructions. Parents should advise staff of possible side effects. For children who are on prescribed medication, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the medication is replenished as needed.

If the parent does not provide the child care program with medication as needed, the child care program has the right to refuse admittance of the child into the program until such a time as the medication is replenished. Please do not send medication of any kind in your child's knapsack or lunch bag.

### **Non-prescription medication will only be administered for:**

- Avoiding high fevers for children with health risks
- Minor pain or discomfort (ex: teething)
- Motion sickness (if necessary) for long bus rides

## **Non-Prescription Skin Products**

Consent must be given by parents/guardians on your Digibot parent portal for use of non-prescription skin products for children including items such as: diaper cream, lip balm, lotions, hand sanitizer, sun screen and insect repellent.

## **Epi Pens**

Any child requiring an EPI PEN JR. must have one that is up to date on site at all times or the child will be denied entry to care until one is brought in.

Children carrying an EPI-PEN JR. require written permission indicating that they are mature and responsible enough to handle the administration of it. If the child is not old enough to accept this responsibility, then it is to be stored in the teacher's emergency first aid bag. All staff should be aware of where this bag is stored, in case of staff absenteeism

In the case of an EPI-Pen shortage, Health Canada has deemed it acceptable to continue to use an expired EPI-Pen, so long as the fluid is visibly clear. Regular anaphylaxis protocols are still to be followed.



## Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

All children with Anaphylaxis reactions are required to complete an anaphylaxis emergency plan. Notification including a picture of the child will be posted in each of the centre's main program room.

Parents with children that have dietary restrictions and/or severe allergies will be required to meet with the program supervisor to review the lunch menu and snack charts to ensure we are able to meet dietary needs. Parents may be required to provide food items until we establish an appropriate menu.

## Food from Home

In the event the centre and the caterer are unable to provide the necessary or requested food items for a child, the parent may bring alternate food from home for their child as long as the outside food items do not contain any known allergens that may put other children or staff in the centre at risk. These outside food items may include but are not limited to: Halal meats, specific dietary foods for illnesses or allergies. All outside food items must be discussed and agreed upon with the parent(s) and the centre coordinator. All outside food items must be clearly labelled with the child's name and proper storing instructions. Staff or the centre coordinator may also request a list of ingredients for a specific outside food item from the parent(s) if at any point it may put another child or staff at risk.

## Children with Special Needs

The Y is **dedicated to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment** for every child and welcomes all children to our services. As each child is unique, we utilize individual approaches to meet their needs as some children have special needs, such as physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, social delays and behavioural issues. We will work in partnership with the family to strive for full participation within our programs.

In order to ensure full and meaningful participation in our programs, we kindly ask families to disclose if their child has any special needs or confirmed diagnoses that may require additional support. This transparency enables us to create an Individual Support Plan (ISP) tailored to your child's unique requirements, ensuring they thrive within our program. Our commitment extends to providing equal opportunities and celebrating the richness of each child's individuality.

## Enrollment Process

### 1. Intake and Registration

- a. All applicable information of the child will be obtained to register child into program.
- b. Parents are encouraged to provide any diagnoses, assessments or other information regarding child's development.
- c. The family will participate in an orientation meeting to review the components of the program.



## 2. Orientation Meeting

When parents disclose their child’s special needs, the YMCA will take the following approach:

1. **Capacity Determination:** The YMCA will assess its capacity to support the child based on staff training, skills, and experience. The Senior Director of the Child Care program, in conjunction with the Vice President, will regularly determine the capacity of each YMCA center.
2. **Individual Support Plan (ISP):** To set the child up for success, the YMCA will create an Individual Support Plan (ISP). This plan will be tailored to the child’s specific needs within the physical and social environment. The Director will meet with the parent and any third-party consultants if required and create the plan in partnership before they begin the program. All staff must review the Individual Support Plan prior and all supports identified in the plan must be in place before beginning the program.
3. **Annual Review:** Staff will review the ISP annually or whenever changes occur in the child’s individual plan.
4. **Additional Support:** If further support is required, the YMCA may seek permission for additional program support.

### Other Medical Conditions

Children with other life-threatening medical conditions will have an individual Emergency Action Plan that will clearly outline the condition and procedure to follow by staff. The Individual Emergency Action Plans include the child’s medical condition, a picture of the child, preventative measures and additional procedures to be followed during an evacuation or an off-site field trip. These Individual Emergency Action Plans will be posted in each of the centre’s main program rooms and emergency books. All medical plans will be reviewed annually by staff or anytime there is a change to the child’s individual medical plan.

## Base and Non-Base Fees

### Base Fees

The YMCA of the National Capital Region has enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning Agreement (CWELCC). All fees will be charged as a daily rate based on the days your child is registered to attend. Please see table below for the CWELCC Base Fees.

Program	Base Daily Fee
Toddler	\$22.00
Preschool	\$22.00

Please speak with your centre’s director to confirm your fees. Payment is due in advance. Parents are required to complete a form for preauthorized direct withdrawal on your Digibot parent portal account upon registration. Payments are made on the 1st of the month or split between the first and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month via pre-authorized direct withdrawal. We do not accept cheques or e-transfers for monthly registrations. An income tax receipt will be provided the following fiscal year.

Parents will be provided with a minimum of one month’s written notice of any increases to fees.



## **Subsidies**

Each licensed YMCA Child Care program has subsidies available through the City of Ottawa for families who qualify. Parents may apply for a subsidy through the City of Ottawa Child Care Section. Parents must renew their own subsidy in order to avoid loss of subsidy and child care space.

Parents receiving a subsidy are allowed a combined total of 36 pro-rated days or 3 days per month. These can be used for vacation, sick days, appointments, etc. Any extra days taken, which are not paid by the City, must be paid by the parents in the same amount the City pays. Although we attempt to inform parents of a depleting number of days away, ultimately it is the parent's responsibility to monitor their child's number of days away

## **Tax Receipts**

Child Care fees are tax deductible. An income tax statement will be made available to each family on their individual Digibot parent accounts by February each year. Please make sure that you keep your contact information current to ensure that you receive it in a timely manner.

## **Sponsorship**

The YMCA also provides sponsorship to qualifying families through its Annual Community Fund Program. Approval is at the discretion of the individual centre director, in consultation with the Senior Director, Child Care.

## **Refunds**

Fees are set and will not change or refunded according to a child's attendance. For fee-paying parents, this includes if your child is away due to illness, injury, holidays, statutory holidays or bus cancellations and temporary suspension from a Y childcare program. This also includes closures of the program that are beyond our control such as, but not limited to; acts of God, inclement weather, power outages, or any situation that may risk the health and safety of children, staff or families.

In the event of a planned closure (*i.e. for maintenance repairs*) families will receive at least one month's notice in writing from the director to make alternate care arrangements and will not be charged for the duration of the closure period. Families will also not be charged in the event of an outbreak that requires a program closure as directed by Ottawa Public Health.

If a child is still enrolled in the program at the time of the families account requiring an adjustment due to the above mentioned, a credit will be applied to their next payment. If the family will not be returning to the program, a direct refund will be issued.

## **The Y Reserves the Right to Suspend Service**

Missed payments may risk the loss of or disruption of your child's space. The Y will notify you of any outstanding balance and provide you with ten (10) business days either to receive the complete balance or to negotiate an agreement of payment. Parents are responsible to communicate and proactively avoid the suspension of service.

In the event of an unsuccessful payment attempt, there is a \$15 administration fee for all NSF payments. If after 3 unsuccessful payment attempts, the Y may choose to end services due to non-payment.



## Non-Base Fees

### The Y Reserves the Right to use Collection Services

If required, the Y reserves the right to use Collection Services to collect any fee of fifty dollars (\$50) or more.

### Deposit Fees

An offer of admission is sent to families through the online Digibot registration system. A deposit is not due upfront upon registration and fees are collected the month of the child(ren)'s start date. Should a family wish to cancel their registration, one month's notice or payment equivalent is required. If a family has child care subsidy through the City of Ottawa, notice for withdrawal is equivalent to 2 weeks.

### Late Fee

Each time parents are late, they will be billed \$2.00 per minute. The director will then send an email to the family with the details of the late pick up including the amount and scheduled withdrawal date for the fees. If you are late picking up your child(ren) three (3) times in one (1) calendar year, the late fee then doubles to \$4.00 per minute.

In the event you are expecting to arrive late to pick up your child(ren) we encourage you to contact an emergency or alternate pick up for your child and notify your child's centre of the alternate pick up. This alleviates any concerns children may have. If you do not pick up your child by 6PM, the centre will contact your emergency contacts and other appropriate authorities if required and follow our safe dismissal policy.

### Field Trip Fees

As many of our field trips are to places with admission fees, extra money may be required. Fee paying parents are required to pay for admission fees. Subsidy parents are not required to pay, as per the contract between the YMCA and the City of Ottawa. Parents are encouraged to support the continued scheduling of trips by making a donation to the Y.

## Admissions and Withdrawals

### Ages of Care Provided

The Y offers child care for children 18 months to 12 years of age as follows:

- **Toddler:** 18 months to 2 ½ years
- **Preschool:** 2 ½ to 4 years
- **Kindergarten:** 4 to 6 years
- **School Age:** 6 to 12 years

### Admission

Upon acceptance of a child into a YMCA Child Care program, appropriate registration forms must be completed and signed by parents. Parents are required to keep this information up to date. Parents and their children must also visit the program for a thorough orientation before starting the integration process.



Admission depends on the program's ability to meet the child's needs and the needs of the children already in the program. Admission into the program does not guarantee a space in the next age-appropriate program.

### **Waiting List**

The City of Ottawa prioritizes families on the Centralized Waiting List according to predetermined criteria.

Families wishing to know where they are placed on the Centralized Waiting list can contact the director of a specific Y program directly. Directors can share what priority number they have been assigned as well as the total number of families currently on the list; personal information of other family members on the waiting list is not to be discussed.

Internal waiting list priorities are given as follows:

- Children currently enrolled in a Y Child Care program waiting to move into the next age-appropriate program;
- Siblings of children currently enrolled in a Y Child Care program.
- Children currently enrolled in a Y Child Care program waiting to transfer to another Y Child Care Centre;
- For employees of the YMCA of the National Capital Region.
- All children are prioritized based on availability of fee paying or subsidized spaces.

### **Integration Period**

For many young children, starting their child care program is a new experience and can be stressful as well as fun and exciting. This may also be the first time the child is separated from their parent.

To make the transition easier, we have devised a system where the children are gradually staggered into their regular routine and hours of care.

Prior to entering the child care program, the child will visit the centre with their parent, usually on the initial tour. On their scheduled first day, we ask that you leave your child here for a specific two hours. The second day we ask that you leave your child here for a half day of care; until just after lunch time and on the third day we ask that your child come for a full day, however with shorter hours than what you would normally.

Depending on your child and how well the integration process proceeds, there may be some flexibility in this process to include a shorter or longer transition period. This system helps both you and your child to adjust to the child care setting.

### **Transitioning Into Next Age-Appropriate Program**

Upon entering the child care program, children are placed in programs that are geared to the chronological age of the child. Before moving into the next age-appropriate program, there are several factors that are taken into consideration including; overall development of the child, space availability, behavior, peer groups, whether the child occupies a subsidized or fee paying space and overall age of children in the next older group.



When a space becomes available, staff in conjunction with the director, will meet to determine (based on these factors) which child is most ready and needs to change programs. Once a child is confirmed to move into the next program, parents will be informed in writing and the staff will schedule a series of visits into the next program. These visits are to be scheduled at different times of the day, providing opportunities for the child to become more familiar with the staff, children and the program.

The parents will be provided with information specific to that program including a tour, program schedule and an opportunity to meet the teacher.

As space is limited, we cannot guarantee that space will be available once your child turns a certain age. Children will remain in their current program until such a time that a space becomes available in the next age-appropriate program or until the child care needs change (i.e. the child is going to Kindergarten or School Age).

## **Withdrawal**

YMCA budget depends on full enrollment in the programs. For full-fee families, we require one month advanced written notice of intent to withdraw your child from a program and two weeks written notice for subsidized families. This allows the program appropriate time to fill the empty space. One month of fees is acceptable in lieu of written notice.

## **Behaviour Management**

### **Addressing Concerns in Children’s Behavior or Development**

- The YMCA staff will follow a structured process:
  1. **Informing Supervisors and Managers:** When concerns arise, staff will inform their Supervisor and Manager. These individuals provide support and guidance.
  2. **Observations:** Staff will observe the child over time and in various circumstances. Detailed, specific, and recorded observations will help identify patterns.
  3. **Formulating a Plan:** Based on observations, staff will create a plan. If behaviour occurs at specific times, arrangements will be made to address it.
  4. **Community Resources:** Staff will explore available community resources for formal assessments. Providing parents with relevant information facilitates their action.
  5. **Clear Communication with Parents:** A clear, unified, and organized plan will be developed, led by the Supervisor and immediate child care team. Private conversations will take place without interruptions.
  6. **Manager Involvement:** If the situation doesn’t improve or parents are uncooperative, the Manager will become more directly involved, and the dismissal process may begin.

## **Resources and Support**

In cases where YMCA is unable to accommodate the needs of the child due to limited staff, inadequate staff training and/or skills or unavailable resources, the YMCA will work in partnership with the family to find solutions, explore options and, if necessary, make appropriate referrals to a more suitable program.



## Withdrawal Process for Behaviours and Other Reasons

When there are issues of concern expressed by the staff or situations where children may need more support than the YMCA can provide, the YMCA will work in partnership with you to find solutions, explore options and, if necessary, make appropriate referrals to a more suitable program. When there are situations where behaviour incidents occur that which place the safety of staff, children or program at risk, the following process will take place:

1. **Notification to Parents:** The YMCA will promptly notify parents about any incidents related to their child's behaviour or needs. Transparency is essential to maintain trust and open communication.
2. **Serious Incidents Threshold:** After two serious incidents (as defined by the YMCA), parents will receive notifications. These incidents could impact the safety of educators or the overall YMCA reputation.
3. **Cancellation Right:** Following the notifications, the YMCA reserves the right to cancel services if necessary. This decision will be made based on the severity and frequency of incidents.

## Discharge

The YMCA has the right to end a child's attendance in any child care programs should the Y find a program is not right for the child's needs or if the child's behaviour is dangerous to the health and safety of other children, staff or themselves (or if a parent's behaviour or attitude is non-supportive of the program and policies).

This will happen only after staff and parents have tried together to help the child adjust. Notice provided for discharge will vary depending on the severity of the issue or behavior after discussions with the individual centre Director and the Senior Director, Child Care Services.

## School Cancellation

In the event school is cancelled, the YMCA will provide full day child care from 7AM to 6PM at the Avalon Y programs as long as the cancellation is not for emergency reasons that deem the school unsafe to be in. Depending on the length of school closure, parents may be required to pay an additional fee.

## Pick up and Drop offs

Parents are responsible for ensuring their children arrive at their Child Care program. Parents who accompany their children should help them remove their outer clothing, as required.

All children should be in their program by 9:30AM. Parents who are consistently late will be asked to arrive on time and depending on programming may be denied access. A phone call is appreciated if you may be later than 9:30AM. It will then be the director or designate in charge's discretion to accept any child after 9:30AM.

Children cannot be dropped off earlier than 7AM at the child care centre.

If your child is going to be absent from the program for any reason, please advise staff by phone or via Digibot attendance or chat tool. If your child does not arrive to the program by 10:00AM, a notification from the Digibot portal will be sent to you to confirm your child's absence. At 10:20AM if there is no response, the Director will contact the parent/guardians and emergency contacts as listed on the child's file. In the event we are unable to confirm your child's absence





with one of your child's contacts, other authorities may be contacted such as Children's Aid Society or the Ottawa Police as per our safe arrival policy.

Unfortunately, it is not possible for the Y to give families a rebate or reduction of the fees as a result of a child being absent from the program. This includes sick, injury, vacation, statutory holidays and bus cancellations.

Children will not be permitted to leave with individuals other than a parent or designated pick-up person unless staff have been notified. In such cases, staff will ask for photo identification. Parents must come to the program area to pick up their child, and must inform staff they are leaving.

If the child is still signed in at the child care centre 10 minutes before closing, parents/guardians will receive a notification from the Digibot portal confirming they are on their way. If parents/guardians do not respond to the notification within 20 minutes, the educator will personally attempt to contact each person listed on the child's emergency contact listing in the sequence identified in the child's file and notify their director or designate in charge. If no parent or emergency contact can be reached, the educator will contact their director or designate in charge to confirm next steps. The director or designate in charge will then contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) and notify the Senior Director. Program staff must follow CAS instructions regarding next steps.

### **Incident Reports Related to Safe Arrival or Dismissals**

Every time Safe Arrival or Dismissal steps are engaged, regardless of level, a safe arrival or dismissal incident report will be generated. Incident reports will require an electronic signature from the Director as well as a parent/guardian. In the event, several high-level incidents occur, the Director should notify the Senior Director and a decision to provide further warnings and/or termination of childcare services to the family may be considered.

Please see Appendix C for our full Safe Arrival and Dismissal policy.

### **Parking - Taggart Family Y**

The YMCA realizes the difficulties and frustration caused by the lack of parking in front of the Taggart Family Y Building. In order to facilitate drop off and pick up of children from child care, parents are welcome to use the underground parking of the facility free of charge for up to one half hour. The white ticket that allows access to the parking lot can be used for exiting at no charge within the half hour for drop off and pick up. Parents will be responsible for any fees incurred after the half hour with the exception of special child care events.

### **Parking - Other Facilities**

Free parking is available at the Ruddy Family Y Child Care, Avalon Y Child Care Centre and Churchill Y Child Care Centre.

### **Other YMCA Services**

In addition to the Child Care services, the YMCA of the National Capital Region offers a variety of services and programs to the community:

- Health, Fitness and Aquatics
- Y Mind (free mental wellness program)
- Employment Services
- Immigrant Services
- Camping and Outdoor Education
- Housing and Support Services



## Appendix A

### **Program Statement: YMCA Licensed Child Care Programs**

In keeping with its mission and its vision, the YMCA of the National Capital Region believes in the development of healthy and confident children.

Our Child Care programs are unique because of our commitment to supporting children and their families and are grounded in the Y's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Our Child Care programs provide a safe, child centered environment that create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development are supported that is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plan. We believe by providing this nurturing and inclusive environment, each child has the opportunity to grow and develop to their full potential. Our programs strive to provide 'quality care' in an environment where each child is actively engaged, creating a sense of belonging and well-being, and which supports their capabilities as authentic communicators in a variety of ways.

The Licensed Child Care programs of the YMCA of the National Capital region see children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Each child is respected and regarded as a unique person. Play is understood to be essential to the healthy social and cognitive development of children and future academic success; children at play are building foundations for learning to read and write, mathematics, sciences and technology, as well as an appreciation for the arts.

Educators are to follow the YMCA Playing to Learn curriculum and How Does Learning Happen (HDLH) pedagogy as a reference in supporting children's learning.

At the Y, we provide a "home away from home" feeling and often refer to our parents, children and staff as our 'Y Family'. In our program, we pride ourselves on small groups; which allows greater opportunities for building relationships and for the educators to participate in a variety of individualized learning experiences with the children.

### **Overriding goals of our programs include but are not limited to:**

***Reflecting a view of children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.***

#### ***This is accomplished by:***

- Implementing the Y Canada curriculum – Playing to Learn. This child-initiated approach, with an emphasis on play-based learning, allows children to take the lead and explore their interests.
- Encouraging children to make choices, pursue their interests, and try new activities.
- Interacting and talking to children on a regular basis; asking open ended questions during activities to promote increased vocabulary, discovery and self-awareness.
- Responding appropriately and with respect for individual needs.
- Actively engaging in conversation with the children; being aware of their needs; taking the time to really get to know each child and his/her family.



***Promoting the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children by providing activities that incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.***

***This is accomplished by:***

- a) Offering balance, variety and choice between large and small group as well as individual activities; and opportunities for active and quieter play.
- b) Providing daily opportunities for up to 2 hours of outdoor play which include:
  - Time in designated play yards;
  - Neighbourhood walks to local parks and other areas of interest to offer the children in our care a variety of outdoor experiences;
  - Regularly scheduled indoor gross motor time in the gymnasium, indoor climbing structure area, and;
  - Weekly swimming lessons where possible
- c) Providing a full lunch and 2 snacks everyday
  - In cooperation with a local catering company, avoiding added sugar and salt whenever possible;
  - working with the Canada Food Guide.
  - Supporting a variety of dietary needs whether for allergic or cultural reasons.
  - Offering a peanut and nut free setting.
  - Supporting relaxed and positive social interactions during meal and snack times where children are encouraged but never forced to try what is offered.
- d) Providing a rest time of up to no more than 2 hours
  - Children are encouraged to rest quietly on their beds, they are never physically restrained.
  - Quiet activities are offered for those who after one hour of rest/sleep are awake.

***Supporting positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff and to encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.***

***This is accomplished by:***

- Demonstrating respect for children’s feelings and supporting appropriate expression of those feelings.
- Encouraging the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and supporting their ability to self-regulate.
- Enhancing feelings of mutual respect, acceptance, and caring amongst children and adults.
- Supporting the holistic development of children through an approach to child :adult interactions, which is based on respect (respect for self, others, materials and the environment).
- Promoting decision-making and self-discipline on the part of the child resulting in a positive rather than a negative experience



***Fostering the children’s exploration, play and inquiry through child-initiated and adult supported experiences; support Positive Learning Environments by planning for and creating positive learning environments and experiences in which each child’s learning and development will be supported.***

***This is accomplished by:***

- Providing programs that foster the children’s exploration, play and inquiry;
- Offering balance, variety and choice between large and small group as well as individual activities; and opportunities for active and quieter play.
- Providing child initiated as well as adult-supported experiences.
- Focusing on small group activities that allow for increased opportunities to create authentic learning opportunities.
- Offering a variety in materials and activities that are in keeping with the needs, abilities, interests and developmental age of the children.
- Observing these play experiences staff can then determine what the children are interested in and in turn create a program that both educates and simulates this curiosity in a natural and fun way.
- Recognizing and accepting each child’s individuality, differences, and developmental level.

***Fostering the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.***

***This is accomplished by:***

- Respecting family lifestyles, beliefs and traditions.
- Encouraging families to participate and take advantage of daily exchanges, annual surveys and opportunities to volunteer to strengthen our partnership.
- Creating a partnership with the parents based on building trust and being honest.

***Involving local community partners and allowing those partners to support the children, their families and staff in order to provide the best care and early learning support for each child in our program.***

***This is accomplished by:***

- Offering support and feedback to local community partners to better support the children, their families and child care staff.
- Developing and maintaining on going relationships various external support systems including but not limited to Children’s Integration Support Services, the Ottawa Children’s Treatment Centre, CHEO and the Children’s Aid Society.



***Providing support to staff who interact with the children in our child care centres, in regards to continuous professional learning.***

***This is accomplished by:***

- Providing individual paid time for conference/workshop participation.
- Providing professional leaves of absence to complete on-going studies including, but not limited to, Early Childhood Education diploma programs.
- Hosting all-staff retreats up to twice a year.
- Providing financial support for participation in chosen professional development activities, for annual first aid certification, and for annual membership fees for the College of ECE's as applicable.

***Effectively documenting and reviewing the impact of the strategies set out in the above goals.***

***This is accomplished by:***

- Conducting regular staff meetings in which all staff are encouraged to discuss and share observations and development noted in the children in our care as well as opportunities to discuss concerns, share ideas and problem solve as a team. Minutes of the meetings are kept on file.
- Annual third party audits conducted through Y Canada to ensure that Playing to Learn standards are being met and upheld. Information is shared with staff in regards to areas that are going
- well as well as area on which to focus;
- Annual third party parent satisfaction surveys conducted through Y Ontario/Y Canada with an emphasis on whether or not our programs are meeting family and individual child needs.



## Appendix B

### Parent Issues and Concerns

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent and consistent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and child care staff to reference when parents/guardians express concerns surrounding but not limited to: Daily flows of program rooms, Operations, Staff, Supervisor, Volunteers, Students and or the Licensee.

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's experiences at the YMCA of The National Capital Region. This is achieved by, supporting positive and responsive interactions and fostering engagement of ongoing communication between staff and parents/guardians.

All concerns raised by parents or guardians are taken into careful consideration in a timely matter and will be addressed by the director of the program or the senior director dependent on the nature of the concern **(see Schedule A)**.

The Senior Director in conjunction with the Vice President are responsible to address the concerns or situations that may affect in overall, the well development of the programs, policies and procedures.

Parental concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing at the discretion of the parent/guardian. An initial response will be provided by the necessary respondent within 2 business days. Details provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved. In the event of an open investigation, no details are to be provided without the approval of the Senior Director. The findings of the concerns brought forward may be provided to the parent/guardian verbally or in writing, upon request. Each concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect all parties involved. Depending on the nature of the concern, at times other agencies may need to be notified and provided with more detail (e.g. Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, Children's Aid Society and/or Local Law Enforcement).

The safety and well-being of all children is our top priority at the YMCA of the National Capital Region. This is achieved by practicing high standards for positive interactions, communication and role-modeling to all children and families in our community.

All members of the community, parents/guardians and child care workers are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly at 613-747-7800. Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to Children's Aid Society as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

**For more information please visit:**

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>



## Schedule A

Nature of Concern	Steps for Parents / Guardians to Report Concern	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee to Respond to Concern
<p><b>Program Room Related;</b> e.g. daily flows, rest period, toileting, program activities etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise concern directly to: the classroom staff <b>OR</b></li> <li>• the centre director</li> </ul>	<p><b>Step One:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the concern at the time it is raised <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Arrange a meeting with parent/guardian who brought concern forward within 2 business days</li> </ul>
<p><b>Operations Related;</b> e.g. child care fees, hours of operation, waiting lists, menus etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise concern to centre director</li> </ul>	<p><b>Step Two:</b> Document concerns. Documentation should include the following:</p>
<p><b>Staffing, Duty-Parents and/ or Supervisor, Licensee Related*</b></p>	<p>Raise concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the individual directly <b>OR</b></li> <li>• the centre director and/or Licensee</li> </ul> <p><b><i>*All concerns in regards to the conduct of staff, duty-parents, etc., that puts a child's health, safety or well-being at risk should be reported to the centre director immediately.</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the date/time the concern was received</li> <li>• the name and contact information of the person who reported the concern as well as the person who received concern</li> <li>• A timeline/details of the concern</li> <li>• Steps taken to resolve the concern &amp; any information given to the parent/guardian regarding the next steps.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student/Volunteer Related</b></p>	<p>Raise concern to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the individual directly <b>OR</b></li> <li>• the centre director and/or Licensee</li> </ul> <p><b><i>*All concerns in regards to the conduct of students or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety or well-being at risk should be reported to the centre director immediately.</i></b></p>	<p><b>Step Three:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the concern.</li> <li>• Ensure the investigation of the concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possibly thereafter. <b><i>*Document reasons for any delays in writing</i></b></li> </ul> <p><b>• Step Four:</b> Provide parent/guardian with resolution or outcome of concern raised.</p>



## Escalation of Issues or Concerns

When parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of a concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to **Cass Vallee, Senior Director, Child Care Services**. If the situation requires the **Senior Director**, will elevate their concerns or issues to the **Vice President of Child Care**, and together they will make the final decision.

Concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory parties (e.g., Ottawa Public Health, Local Police Department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, Children's Aid Society). Please see **Schedule B** for the above mentioned contact information.

## Schedule B

Contact Name	Contact Number
Director, Taggart Family Y	613-237-1320, ext.4138
Director, Orleans Y Child Care	613-830-4199, ext.1
Director, Avalon Y Child Care	613-824-2681 ext.1
Director, Churchill Y Child Care	343-588-1633
<b>Cass Vallee</b> Senior Director, Child Care Services	613-237-1320 ext. 5110 <a href="mailto:cass.vallee@ymcaottawa.ca">cass.vallee@ymcaottawa.ca</a>
<b>Morgan Bello</b> Vice President Child Care	613-237-1320 ext.5135 <a href="mailto:morgan.bello@ymcaottawa.ca">morgan.bello@ymcaottawa.ca</a>
<b>Ministry of Education</b> Licensed Child Care Help Desk	1-877-510-5333 <a href="mailto:childcare_ontario@ontario.ca">childcare_ontario@ontario.ca</a>
<b>Ottawa Public Health</b>	613-580-2400 <a href="mailto:healthsante@ottawa.ca">healthsante@ottawa.ca</a>
<b>Police Department</b> (non-emergency)	613-236-1222
<b>College of Early Childhood Educators</b>	416-961-8558 <a href="mailto:practice@college-ece.ca">practice@college-ece.ca</a>
<b>Ontario College of Teachers</b>	416-961-8800 <a href="mailto:info@oct.ca">info@oct.ca</a>
<b>Children's Aid Society- Ottawa</b>	613-747-7800





## Appendix C

# Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy

### Accepting a child into care

When accepting a child into care, program staff must:

- greet the parent/guardian and the child;
- if shared by (or discussed with) the parent/guardian, document any one-time change to pick-up procedure during the child's check-in process on DigibotGO;
- check-in the child on DigibotGO.

### When a child has not arrived in care as expected

When a child does not arrive at the centre, and the parent/guardian has not reported the absence in advance via the parent portal, program staff will receive a notification on the DigibotGO staff app requesting confirmation that the child has not arrived. This notification will be triggered as follows:

- For school-age programs in the morning: 15 minutes before transition to school
- For school-age programs in the afternoon: 15 minutes after transition from school to childcare. As an added safety measure, we view the school's attendance daily to check for absences.
- For infant, toddler and preschool programs: 180 minutes (3 hours) after the centre opens

If program staff does not confirm the child's absence within 10 minutes and/or if their DigibotGO device is offline, the Director will be required to confirm the child's absence. Once the child's absence has been confirmed:

- **Level 1** – Authorized parents/guardians will receive a notification asking them to confirm the child's presence or absence.
- **Level 2** – If parents/guardians do not confirm the child's absence within 20 minutes, the Director will personally attempt to contact each person listed on the child's emergency contact listing in the sequence identified in the child's file. If the Director is unavailable, this will be the responsibility of the designate in charge.
- **Level 3** – If no parent/guardian or emergency contact can be reached, the Director will contact the Senior Director to identify next steps. Permission may be given to contact other authorities, including Children's Aid Society or Police services.



## Releasing a child from care

Staff supervising the child at the time of pick-up must only release the child to a parent or authorized contact listed on the child's Digibot contact listing available in the DigibotGO staff app or on the child's printed emergency card. During the first three (3) interactions between a staff member and a parent/emergency contact, the DigibotGO staff app will require the staff to confirm the person's identity:

- by checking with another staff member, or;
- by checking the person's photo identification. \*If at anytime a staff member has never met the person(s) requesting to pick up the child or they are unsure of their identity, staff must verify their identify with a valid piece of government issued photo ID as per the YMCA's Child Protection Policies.

If the person is not listed as an authorized contact for pick-up, the educator must obtain authorization in person or verbally (by telephone, walkie-talkie) from the Director or designate in charge to release the child to this person. In this case, an automated email will be sent to parents/guardians to document the interaction and remind them to add the emergency contact via the portal.

## When a child has not been picked up upon centre closing

If a child has not been picked up 15 minutes prior to the centre closing time, program staff will receive a DigibotGO notification to confirm that the child is still present. If staff does not confirm the child's attendance within 10 minutes and/or if their DigibotGO device is offline, the Director will be asked to confirm the child's attendance. Once it has been confirmed that the child is still on site:

- **Level 1** – Authorized parents/guardians will receive a notification asking them to confirm that they are on their way.
- **Level 2** – If parents/guardians do not respond to the notification within 20 minutes, the educator will personally attempt to contact each person listed on the child's emergency contact listing in the sequence identified in the child's file and notify their director or designate in charge.
- **Level 3** – If no parent or emergency contact can be reached, the educator will contact their director or designate in charge to confirm next steps. The director or designate in charge will then contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) and notify the Senior Director. Program staff must follow CAS instructions regarding next steps.

## Incident Reports

Every time Safe Arrival or Dismissal steps are engaged, regardless of level, a safe arrival or dismissal incident report will be generated. Incident reports will require an electronic signature from the Director as well as a parent/guardian. In the event, several high-level incidents occur, the Director should notify the Senior Director and a decision to provide further warnings and/or termination of childcare services to the family may be considered.



## **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

Parents/guardians agree to:

- report their child's absence in advance via the parent portal;
- maintain their child's updated emergency contact listing via the parent portal;
- notify program staff of any punctual changes to their child's daily drop-off or pick-up procedures.

## **Program Staff Responsibilities**

Program staff agrees to:

- adequately and accurately complete the child's check-in and check-out process;
- complete safe arrival and dismissal attendance validation when prompted;
- complete identity verification when prompted.

## **Disclaimer**

The purpose of this policy is to implement procedures to ensure the safe arrival and departure of children. It relies on the participation and collaboration of parents/guardians, program staff and management staff to function optimally. In addition, the organization uses several Digibot technological tools and features to support the implementation of this policy. Some factors may affect the implementation of these procedures, the accuracy of the information dispatched and/or the triggering of these automated processes - including power outages and/or network failures, equipment malfunction and manual oversights or errors. The childcare centre and Digibot will not be held responsible in the event of such a situation. Furthermore, as this policy stems from brand new requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (Regulation 325/23 section 5, Regulation 137/15 section 50), the childcare centre and Digibot reserve the right to modify the policy at any time with reasonable notice.



**If you wish to contact your child's teacher, please call the program number directly.**

**Taggart Family Y Child Care**  
613-237-1320 x 4138

**Orleans Y Child Care**  
613-830-4199 x 1

**Avalon Y Child Care**  
613-824-2681 x 1

**Churchill Y Child Care**  
343-588-1633

**Senior Director, Child Care**  
613-237-1320 x 5110

[ymcaottawa.ca](http://ymcaottawa.ca)

