



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WHERE CHILDREN LEARN, GROW, & THRIVE

YPlay & YAC Parent Handbook

YMCA OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE



WELCOME TO YPLAY & YAC

At the Y we care about the whole family. YPlay and YAC are included with all "Plus" memberships, providing short-term drop in supervision while you pursue your own health and wellness goals. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment for your children.

Ages Served

YPlay: 6 weeks – 5/6 years old *max age varies by center

YAC: 6 – 12 years old

Hours & Usage

Our YPlay and Youth Activity Center (YAC) provide drop in, onsite childcare while parents/guardians workout – or grab a cup of coffee!

The YMCA YPlay and YAC are not licensed and are not required to be licensed by the state as a child care agency. (Tenn. Code Ann. § 71-3-503(a)(9)); (Tenn. Code Ann. § 71-3-503(b))

Children may only stay up to 2 hours per day and 9 hours per week. Parents/Guardians are required to remain onsite for the entire duration of your child's visit. Abuse of these policies may result in suspension of privileges

Hours of operations vary by location. You can find specific hours by visiting <https://www.ymcamidtn.org/locations>

CHECK-IN/OUT

We use a check-in management platform called Alaris, which is integrated with our member management system. Using Alaris helps us with tracking ratios and better ensures safety for everyone during drop off and pick up. We can track developmental progress, such as potty training, and any health concerns. Alaris also provides one-way enhanced communication with parents/guardians. With just a click of a button we can contact you via text. Maybe your child is having difficulty adjusting or if they've had a potty accident, we can communicate directly with you through the Alaris platform.

Check-in

- When you first try to check-in through Alaris, you will need to register your specific member barcode – providing updated information regarding health concerns and emergency contact.
- After registering, parents can use their phone number on file to check-in.
- During registration you will select where you will be within the YMCA property and the duration of time that you estimate your children will be in our care *the system will not allow you to exceed our 2hr/day, 9hr/week policy.
- A name sticker will be printed for each child 6 and under – please place sticker on child's shirt where it is visible to staff.
- Only authorized adults 18+ may drop off/pick up children.

Check-out

- The parent/guardian who drops off the child(ren) must be the one who does check-out.
- At check-out when parent enters room to pickup child(ren), staff will confirm who you are picking up and use information and pictures in the system to verify your identity.
- Be sure the name sticker is removed before leaving.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Illness

- Children must be symptom-free for 24 hours before attending (no fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.).
- If a parent informs the Y that their child has a communicable disease, the Y will post signage for at least 2 days informing parents of possible exposure.
- If a child exhibits symptoms while in our care, we will notify parent/guardian to pickup child immediately.

First Aid/Reporting

- YPlay/YAC Staff are CPR and First Aid certified.
- Basic first aid supplies (Band-Aids, Ice Packs) are stocked and readily available.
- Both minor and more severe injuries will be documented and communicated to parents/guardians.

Clothing

- All children should be fully clothed. Bathing suits are not acceptable attire.
- Shoes should be worn once a child is walking – grippy socks do not replace shoes. *Exceptions may be made by staff in non-shoe areas.
- We encourage parents to bring an extra set of clothing.

Toys/Cleaning

- Staff follow a regular schedule to remove and clean toys. At a minimum, staff follow a cleaning process at the end of each shift. Spaces are also cleaned by the property/cleaning staff.
- 'Yuck buckets' are used to remove unclean toys during YPlay hours, especially those that are mouthed by babies and toddlers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONT.

Mandated Reporters

A principal endeavor of the YMCA is to provide a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of children. Any suspected or reported child abuse shall be treated in accordance with applicable laws and YMCA policies. All YMCA employees are mandated reporters. Any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse requires staff to notify YMCA leadership and the TN Department of Children's Services.

Everyone in Tennessee is a mandated reporter. Tennessee Code Annotated 37-1-403(i) (1) requires all persons to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. "Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality abuse, or neglect or that, based on available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect."

<https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/child-safety.html>

STAFFING AND SUPERVISION

Ratios

- The YMCA YPlay/YAC program is not licensed and is not required to be licensed by the state as a child care agency. (Tenn. Code Ann. § 71-3-503(a)(9)); (Tenn. Code Ann. § 71-3-503(b)) *Parents must sign an acknowledgement form on their first visit.
- As a non-licensed child care facility, we are not held to specific ratios from the state. However, to provide the best care for your children, we use the state ratios as a guide.
- Ratios will vary by space and by center based on the range of ages and size of space.

Staff Training & Certification

- All staff receive child abuse prevention training upon hire and through annual refresher courses.
- YMCA employees are mandated reporters. Any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse requires staff to notify YMCA leadership and the TN Department of Children's Services
- Staff are required to be CPR and First Aid certified.
- Each center has an official Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in the event of various emergencies (weather, lockdown, etc.). All center staff are trained to follow the EAP. If a parent chooses to pick up their child from YPlay/YAC during an emergency, staff must first ensure all children are in a safe location and complete a headcount. Once this is done, staff will resume and follow the standard checkout procedures to ensure all children in our care are properly accounted for.

STAFFING AND SUPERVISION CONT.

Behavior Management

At the YMCA, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all children. We believe that children learn best through positive guidance, encouragement, and clear expectations.

We use age-appropriate strategies such as redirection, positive reinforcement, and modeling respectful behavior to support children's social and emotional development. We focus on helping children understand their feelings, make safe choices, and build positive relationships with others.

If challenging behaviors arise, staff will work to guide children toward appropriate behavior while ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants. Parents may be notified if behaviors persist or if additional support is needed. Behavioral concerns, such as hitting or biting, may result in immediate removal from YPlay/YAC, up to multi-day/week(s) suspension.

ACTIVITIES AND ENVIRONMENT

At the Y, we strive to provide engaging age-appropriate activities that foster learning and social interaction. Our trained staff will incorporate various enrichment activities with a focus on:

- Arts and Crafts
- Creative Movement
- Imaginative Play
- Free Play

Outdoors/Playground

Staff may take children to the playground/outdoors if the temperature is below 98 degrees Fahrenheit and above 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Toys and Activities

- The Y provides age-appropriate toys and activities for children to enjoy while in our care.
- Please leave all personal toys at home. If a personal item is brought, we will kindly ask you to leave it in their bag, a cubby, or return it back to your vehicle.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices are only permitted in YAC. If children bring devices to YAC, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Ratings of G, PG, or E
- No violence, bad language, or horror

If an electronic device causes a disruption or if the above policies are violated, staff may hold the item for the remainder of your child's time in our care, and potentially ask that it not be brought back.

SNACKS AND PERSONAL ITEMS

Snacks

Food is not allowed in YPlay. Children in YAC may bring foods, but this is a nut free zone.

Bottles

- Glass bottles are not allowed unless fully encased in a silicone sleeve.
- Bottles must be fully prepared/mixed before coming into YPlay.
- Pre-measured water and pre-measured formula are allowed. Staff can mix/prepare the bottles, but staff cannot measure out water or formula.
- If a child's bottle is not already 1) fully prepared/mixed, 2) filled with pre-measured water, or 3) the formula is not already pre-measured, staff will contact the parent/guardian to prepare the bottle.

Car Seats

- If a child arrives in a car seat and the parent/guardian requests to leave baby in car seat, staff are required to check on baby's breathing and for a soiled diaper.
- Staff are not allowed to buckle children in car seats at time of checkout – these must be buckled/secured by the parent/guardian.

Diapering/Potty Training

- Parents should bring diapers, wipes, and a change of clothes in a labeled bag on each visit.
- Staff will check for wet/soiled diapers at least every 30 minutes.
- Parents/Guardians can choose to opt out of staff changing diapers. In this instance, the parent/guardian will be notified when a change is needed.
- If your child is potty training, please let staff know so that they can do their best to regularly prompt your child for a potty break.

COMMUNICATION

Alaris Texting

- Our check-in/out management platform, Alaris, provides one-way communication so we can contact parents/guardians while your child is in our care.
- Communication will come in the form of texts, such as “Parent snuggles needed”.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to keep their text-capable device (phone, smart watch, etc.) on them while at the Y and to respond by returning to YPlay/YAC promptly.
- If a parent/guardian does not return in a timely manner after a text is sent, we will try to reach you by calling from the Y phone and up to looking for you based on the location entered at time of check-in.

Health and Behavior Forms

- When we are notified that a child in our care is positive for a Communicable Disease, we will post signage for all families to see that provides details of the specific illness and dates that your child could have been exposed if in our care.
- If a minor incident occurs, we will fill out an Ouch Report and share that with you at pickup. If a more severe incident occurs, an official Incident Report will be filled out and passed along to the Executive Director and our Safety and Risk Management team.
- Behavior Forms cover a wide range of behaviors. These forms are used to document incidents when children behave in ways that are not acceptable at the Y. Some examples include, but are not limited to, biting, hitting, or disrespecting staff or other members. We will notate the incident that occurred, any prior incidents, expectations moving forward, and any action taken with this incident (immediate removal from care, suspension, etc.)