



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

PARENT HANDBOOK

YMCA Child Care | Early Learning Centers

Updated: January 2026

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Philosophy

We believe that a high-quality program for young children provides a safe, nurturing environment that promotes the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. The program is child initiated, individually appropriate, teacher supported, and age appropriate.

The curriculum concentrates on providing problem-solving activities that motivate children to explore beyond the perceptual aspects of a situation. We recognize that children mature at different rates and that efforts to accelerate specific aspects of intellectual functioning are unproductive.

Parents' support and involvement are recognized as critical aspects of each child's development and are essential for the successful operation of child care centers. Parental participation is encouraged through frequent sharing of information about children and the solicitation of ideas concerning program operation.

The Early Learning curriculum has been designed so your child may play freely, yet work within a curriculum that provides opportunities for:

- Enhancing large and small muscle coordination
- Promoting self-help skills
- Language Development
- Experiencing a variety of art materials
- Developing readiness skills in math, science, and reading
- Acquiring social skills

Transition into Center

A full day in child care is a long time for a new child and may seem like too much at once. We encourage parents to bring their child to the center for a visit before their first day in order to meet their teacher and become familiar with the classroom. This allows a little time to get acquainted.

License

YMCA Early Learning Centers are licensed by the State Department of Children, Youth, and Families. Our license is reviewed and monitored every year. We are inspected by the Fire Department and child care licenser employed by the state.

Admission Policy

Admission is open to the children regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sensory, or mental or physical disability, marital or veteran's status or sexual orientation. Children must be between 4 weeks and 6 years of age. Enrollment is based on an available space basis. Children are selected for admittance to the program on the basis of:

- a) Application date
- b) Child's age
- c) Available openings

Prior to enrollment the parent or guardian must meet with our Early Learning membership team to complete the application (including health history), immunizations, and emergency sheet with consent to receive emergency medical care. The field trip consent section must also be signed.

New Adventures Specific Enrollment

MultiCare Health System employees are given priority for enrollment at a reduced rate from community members towards child care. Non-employees are admitted on a space available basis.

Drop-In Child Care

Drop-in care is not available unless your child is currently enrolled and you have made prior arrangements with the staff. Children must be registered, and all forms and orientation visits are complete prior to their first day.

Staffing

We meet or exceed minimum Washington State licensing requirements for staffing which is:

- 1:4 for infants (4 weeks to 11 months)
- 1:7 for toddlers (12 to 30 months)
- 1:10 for preschool aged child

The staff is carefully selected for their educational background, child care training, teaching experience and sensitivity to individual needs of young children's growth and development.

Necessary Information for Emergencies

The center should have the necessary information to contact you at all times. This information is given at the time of enrollment, but sometimes a parent moves, changes jobs, changes family physicians, the emergency person moves, etc. Remember to keep your records up to date on these important things. We will need at least one additional adult that can pick up your child due to an emergency if we are not able to reach you, the parent.

HOURS OF OPERATION AND DAYS CLOSED

Hours of Operation

- New Adventures ELC | 6am to 6:30pm
- University Place ELC | 6:30am to 6pm
- Puyallup ELC | 6:30am to 6pm

Closures

The centers are closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and Day after
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas

Open Door Policy

Parents always have free access to all areas of the center that your child uses for dropping off and picking up purposes. Parents are welcome to stop in for a short check-in during the day if it does not interrupt programming. Please understand that your presence may cause interruption as children are expecting to be picked up for the day when you arrive. We are unable to accommodate visits inside the classrooms due to the exposure to other children without parental consent and to ensure all our children maintain classroom routine. There may be a variety of special events that you are welcome to attend by invitation of your classroom throughout the year which is mentioned in the parent involvement section.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Arrival and Departure of Children

Please allow ample time when you bring your child in the morning. If he/she is unhurried and feels relaxed, he/she will be ready to let you go cheerfully and will face a happier day at the children's center. Also, there will be opportunity for exchange of messages between you and the teacher. We request that children arrive to the center by 10am. Many learning opportunities occur in the morning hours and it is also important to assess the needs of the center for the day.

It is a requirement by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families that you sign your child in and out. It is mandatory you bring your child into the center in the morning and come in and pick him/her up at night. We must be able to account for each child each day on the sign-in sheet. (See signing in and out).

Please do not leave siblings in the car when you are inside the center.

Signing In and Out Requirements

- Parents are required to sign their legal signature when they bring in and pick up the child along with the correct time of arrival and departure.
- At New Adventures, the sign-in and out sheets will be on a clipboard inside or outside with your child's teacher.
- At our other ELC locations, you will sign-in and out via the electronic system.

- Early Learning staff will only release a child to people authorized on the registration forms unless given written permission to release the child to another person by the enrolling parent or guardian. Staff will ask for verification of identity.
- Custodial Parents: The child care center requires a copy of any parenting plan or restraining order that denies access or release of your child to the non-custodial parent. We may be obligated to release your child if the legal paperwork is not on file. Early Learning staff will stay a neutral party and will not supply documents without an official request.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Children and drugs don't mix. Adults cannot be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or any legal drugs that is clearly causing impairment while on the premises. If a parent or another appointed person picking up a child appears to be intoxicated, we may ask the adult not to remove the child if they are obviously impaired. We will ask for permission to call a backup person on the authorized pick-up list or volunteer to call a cab or give directions to a bus stop. If the person insists on leaving with the child and we fear the child's safety, we will call our law enforcement agency and CPS.

Access to Facilities

Parents enter through the front door at each location using the center pin code. Please do not hold the door for other parents or delivery workers providing them with access to the building. Each parent that has access will be able to enter the code individually.

Valuable Items Left in Cars

Please do not leave your children, purses, or other valuable items in your cars or leave motors running. You place yourself and your property in a vulnerable position.

POLICIES ON INFANT CARE

In accordance with the Washington State’s Chapter 110-300-0275 through 110-300-0296 WAC Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers. YMCA Early Learning Centers adopts the following policies and procedures:

Developmental Stage/Age of Infant	Type of Feeding
(a) Under 4 months of age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve only formula or breast milk unless you have a written order from the child's health care provider.
(b) When baby can: (At about 4-6 months of age) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit with support • Hold head steady • Close lips over the spoon • Keep food in mouth and swallow it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve only formula or breast milk unless you have a written order from the child's health care provider. • Begin iron fortified baby cereal and plain pureed fruits and vegetables upon consultation with parents.
(c) When baby can: (At about 6-8 months) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit without support • Begin to chew • Sip from a cup with help • Grasp and hold onto things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve only formula or breast milk unless you have a written order from the child's health care provider. • Start small amounts of juice, or water in a cup. • Let baby begin to feed self. • Start semisolid foods such as cottage cheese, mashed tofu, mashed soft vegetables or fruits.
(d) When baby can: (At about 8-10 months) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a bite of food • Pick up finger foods and get them into the mouth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve only formula or breast milk unless you have a written order from the child's health care provider.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to hold a cup while sipping from it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small pieces of cheese, tofu, chicken, turkey, fish or ground meat. • Small pieces of soft cooked vegetables, peeled soft fruits. • Toasted bread squares, unsalted crackers or pieces of soft tortilla. • Cooked plain rice or noodles. • Only formula, breast milk, juice or water in the cup.
<p>(e) When a baby can: (10-12 months)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finger Feed • Chew and swallow soft, mashed and chopped foods • Start to hold and use a spoon • Drink from a cup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve only formula or breast milk unless you have a written order from the child's health care provider. • Begin offering small sized, cooked foods. • Variety of whole grain cereals, bread and crackers, tortillas. • Cooked soft meats, mashed legumes (lentils, pinto beans, kidney beans, etc.), cooked egg yolks, soft casseroles.
<p>(f) When a baby can eat a variety of foods from all food groups without signs of an allergic reaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit pieces and cooked vegetables. • Yogurt, cheese slices. • Offer small amounts of formula, breast milk or water in the cup during meals.

Safe ways of storing formulas and infant food.

To store bottles, formula or infant food, you must:

1. Parents are to bring from home prepared bottles clearly labeled with the date and infant's first and last name for daily use. Bottles must be immediately refrigerated. **Label all bottles with the infant's full name and the date the bottle was filled to be sure the correct formula or breast milk is given to each infant.**
2. Have a refrigerator accessible to staff to store bottles and unserved, leftover infant food.
3. Not serve infant formula past the expiration date on the manufacturer's container; and
4. Keep bottle nipples covered when not in use to reduce risk of cross contamination and exposure.
5. Bottles that are not fully consumed within one hour will be placed in a plastic bag labeled – "do not use".
6. Bottles that are not consumed will be returned to parents at the end of the day.
7. Adding food, medication, or sweeteners to the contents of a bottle must have a doctor's note on file.

Safe ways of storing breast milk

You can keep frozen breast milk if you:

1. Parents are to bring from home prepared bottles clearly labeled with the date and infant's first and last name for daily use. Bottles must be immediately refrigerated. **Label all bottles with the infant's full name and the date the bottle was filled to be sure the correct formula or breast milk is given to each infant.**
2. Bottles will be stored in a refrigerator specifically for breast milk.
3. Bottles that are not fully consumed within one hour will be placed in a plastic bag label – "do not use".
4. Bottles that are not consumed will be return to parent at the end of the day.

Infant Safe Sleep Practice

1. Have a clean, firm, and snug-fitting mattress designed specifically for the particular equipment.
2. Have a tight-fitted sheet that is designed for the sleep equipment.

3. Have a moisture resistant and easily cleaned and sanitized mattress, if applicable. The mattress must be free of tears or holes and not repaired with tape.
4. An early learning provider must immediately remove sleeping children from car seats, swings, or similar equipment not designed for sleep unless doing so would put another enrolled child at risk.
5. An early learning provider must consult with a child's parent or guardian before that child is transitioned from infant sleeping equipment to other sleep equipment
6. An early learning provider must follow safe infant sleep practices when infants are napping or sleeping by following the current standard of American Academy of Pediatrics concerning safe sleep practices including SIDS/SUIDS risk reduction, including:
 7. Actively supervising infants by visibly checking every 15 minutes and being within sight and hearing range, including when an infant goes to sleep, is sleeping, or is waking up;
 8. Placing an infant to sleep on their back or following the current standard of American Academy of Pediatrics. If an infant turns over while sleeping, the provider must return the infant to their back until the infant is able to independently roll from back to front and front to back.
 9. Not using a sleep positioning device unless directed to do so by an infant's health care provider. The directive must be in writing and kept in the infant's file.
10. Sufficiently lighting the room in which the infant is sleeping to observe skin color.
 11. Monitor breathing patterns of an infant.
 12. Allowing infants to follow their own sleep patterns
 13. Not allowing blankets, stuffed toys, pillows, crib bumpers, and similar items inside a crib, bassinet, or other equipment if occupied by a resting or sleeping infant
 14. Not allowing a blanket or any other item to cover or drape over an occupied crib, bassinet, or other equipment where infants commonly sleep|
 15. Not allowing bedding or clothing to cover any portion of an infant's head or face while sleeping, and readjusting these items when necessary; and

16. Preventing infants from getting too warm while sleeping, which may be exhibited by indicators that include, but are not limited to, sweating; flushed, pale, or hot and dry skin, warm to the touch; a sudden rise in temperature; vomiting; refusing to drink, a depressed fontanelle; or irritability.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

YMCA Early Learning Centers conduct Center for Disease Control (CDC) developmental screenings on all children aged 0-5 within 45 days of their enrollment date. All enrolled children are rescreened annually in October using the ASQ developmental screening tool.

Every effort will be made to give the screening in the child's home language. If no one on the staff speaks the child's home language, staff will partner with the family or use Google translate to complete the screenings. The results of this screening will be shared with the children's parents/guardians within 30 calendar days of their screening date. Results will be shared with families during the initial scheduled conference or other scheduled meeting time using the family's preferred language or Google translator. During this meeting, information about how to find resources for possible developmental delays will be shared with parents/guardians. The original screenings, along with the date of data sharing, will be kept in the child's file.

Assessment

Our program conducts formal and informal assessments for all children enrolled in the program for at least 90 days. Our program uses assessment tools based on Washington's Early Learning and Development Guidelines and aligned with the WAKids assessment. Formal and informal assessment results will be shared with families at scheduled Parent/Teacher conferences 3 times a year: fall, winter, and spring. If a child is enrolled between the 2 conference times, the child will receive an assessment within 90 days of enrollment. Ongoing informal observation and documentation are collected for all children enrolled at least 90 days in the form of a portfolio which is given to families at the end of the school year or at the time of departure from the program. The portfolio includes pictures, anecdotal notes, observations, and work samples. We also share

evidence of informal observations and documentation via brightwheel, phone calls and classroom displays.

Individualization

Teachers and families share responsibility for children's learning and development.

Teachers will use developmental screening, formal and informal assessments, observations, and parents'/guardians' feedback to inform teaching practices and develop goals based on each child's individual learning needs.

Parents and families will work together with the teachers to develop these individualized goals during the initial conference time.

PREVENTING SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION | DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Discipline and Guidance Techniques

We, as child care providers, are key to making sure that children thrive, grow, develop, and have fun at our Early Learning Centers.

Our goal is to teach children to evaluate and make choices, to take responsibility for their own actions, to recognize and express their feelings appropriately, and to be considerate and fair in solving problems with others. Classroom management is based on the recognition that a stimulating, balanced, age-appropriate learning environment and an atmosphere of mutual respect, caring, positive teacher attitudes and expectations will encourage cooperation and prevent most behavior problems. The following procedures are observed to ensure the safety and welfare of all children and to help the teachers be consistent in setting limits and using techniques that convey the value of respect, trust, honesty, and caring for others:

- A. Establish a climate of trust. Young children need the security of knowing that adults will set and maintain limits fairly and consistently. A trusting climate is one where adults give clear messages, mean what they say, and keep the promises they make. Trust is demonstrated by both verbal and non-verbal communication.
 - a. Build Positive Relationships. The following four ingredients are essential for effective adult-child relationships: 1) demonstrate

mutual respect; 2) take time for fun; 3) provide encouragement; and 4) communicate love.

- b. Communicate Effectively. We speak slowly and with patience and always speak to children with respect. We use "I" statements and always make sure that we have the attention of the child or children to whom we are speaking. We listen to what the children say to us.
 - c. Use Descriptive Reinforcement. We encourage children while engaged in an activity. Focus on the improvement of process rather than an evaluation of a finished product. We use descriptive reinforcement to increase children's positive self-concept, reliance, and autonomy.
- B. Encourage self-control. We encourage children to develop their own measure of self-control through:
- a. Setting Clear Limits. With the cooperation and knowledge of the children, set explicit, understandable limits, and rules for personal and group conduct.
 - b. Preventing Inappropriate Behavior. Anticipate trouble; give gentle reminders; ignore minor annoyance; praise effort and accomplishment; inject humor and offer choices.
 - c. Establishing Logical Consequences. Mutual respect and order in the classroom can help children develop self-discipline.
 - d. Utilizing Conflict Resolution. Conflict resolution is an opportunity for children involved to evaluate what caused the disagreement and to figure out an alternative. Discussing the situation is a means of helping children learn to verbalize their feelings and solve their own problems with the support of one another and an adult.

Timeout as a punishment is not a standard practice at our Early Learning Centers. This procedure will be used only with the discretion of the staff when unusual behavior is of concern, and all other strategies have proved ineffective.

In unusual cases where preventative techniques, logical consequences, and conflict resolution are not effective, an alternative plan for working with an individual child will be agreed upon in conference with the parents, teaching staff and Center Director.

We want to work with parents to resolve behavior problems. Because we are committed to maintaining a comfortable environment for all our children, we insist on following through with all behavior concerns. If, after talking and counseling, a child continues to have problems adjusting to the environment, we may determine another program would better suit this child's needs.

Biting

Biting is a behavior that can occur during early childhood and is considered developmentally appropriate for some young children, particularly toddlers. At this stage of development, children are learning how to communicate their needs, manage strong emotions and interact with others.

For many children, biting is used as a form of communication. A child may bite when they are feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, tired, seeking sensory input, or unable to express their needs using words.

While biting is not acceptable behavior, it is an important signal that a child needs support.

When biting occurs, our role is to ensure the safety of all children while also using the situation as an opportunity to learn more about the child's needs. Rather than focusing on the punishment, we focus on understanding why the behavior is happening and teaching appropriate alternative skills.

In some cases, biting may indicate that a child needs additional support or resources. This may include extra social-emotional guidance, sensory or speech supports. We will collaborate with families providing external resources that may benefit children who bite.


Understanding and Preventing Biting Resource – also available in classrooms.

Understanding and Preventing Biting

Why Do Children Bite?

Biting can show:

- Pain (teething, sore throat, allergies)
- Frustration or overwhelm
- Tiredness or overstimulation
- Simple exploration and curiosity

 **It's normal!** Young children sometimes bite before they have the words or tools to express their needs. Your role is to guide them toward safer and more effective ways of communicating.

10 Steps to Decrease Biting

1. Check for medical reasons Look for teething pain, sore throats, or allergies. Rule these out first.

2. Observe and gather clues Notice when and why biting happens. Is the child usually verbal but struggles when over-excited? Or are they exploring by mouthing objects?

3. Adjust the environment

- Watch for early signs of frustration
- Teach peers to recognize cues
- Provide enough space and materials
- Offer a **"bite box"** with safe objects

4. Plan for success During high-risk times, keep interactions short and well-supported. Redirect immediately to a safe option (chew toy, cup, etc.).

5. Stay calm yourself Soften your face, jaw, and hands before interacting. Children sense your tension.

6. Step in early Guide the child away before a bite happens. Redirect with an action:

- "Touch your head"
- "Clap your hands"
- "Here, chew this"

7. Calm the storm Focus on helping the child re-regulate, not lecturing. Use:

- Deep breathing together
- Fidgets or squeezables
- Safe chewable items

8. Return to play Help the child rejoin once calm. Use positive phrases like:

- “Bite only food” instead of “No biting.” Avoid long explanations in the heat of the moment.

9. Assume positive intent Children bite to communicate — not to manipulate. Look for the message behind the behavior.

10. Practice everywhere Use the same strategies at home, school, and in the community. Share this approach with all adults who care for the child.

✿ Remember

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- Biting is a **developmental stage**, not a permanent problem.
- Your calm, consistent response teaches children healthier ways to express themselves.
- Assume competence, focus on safety, and guide gently toward new skills.

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Expulsion Prevention Policy and Steps of Progressive Discipline

Our teachers and staff are provided yearly training in social emotional development, trauma informed care, and understanding and reducing challenging behavior in young children.

We will work with each individual child and family to promote consistent care and maximize opportunities for child development and learning. Our goal is to develop strong relationships between teachers and families, ensuring that everyone is on the same page and working toward the same goals.

When challenging behaviors persist in the classroom, teachers will:

Step 1: Parent Communication

Step 1 intervention includes, but is not limited to: setting clear limits, implementing and recording reasonable modifications taken to prevent and/or positively redirect inappropriate behavior in the classroom, establishing logical consequences, and utilizing conflict resolution. Staff can use step 1 as often as necessary. Staff will record parent communication.

Step 2: Intervention

Step 2 is designed when further intervention is necessary beyond reasonable modifications in the classroom environment. If the unsafe behavior continues to persist, the teacher will have a more in-depth conversation with parents/guardians seeking strategies or tools that may be working at home. The goal is for everyone to be on the same page.

Step 3: Parent Conference

Step 3 is designed to provide additional support and guidance unsafe behavior continues to persist, and the combined efforts of reasonable classroom modifications and consistent parent communication have not resolved the behavior. The center director, staff, and parent/guardians will conduct a conference about documented incidents of unsafe behavior. Together, we will review documented behavior, modifications, and observations and create a behavior support plan. The plan created during this conference will outline next steps for staff and parents/guardians to ensure that a consistent, responsive care plan is in place. Staff will give parents/guardians referrals to community-based programs/setting, including mental health consultants, early learning coaches, ChildFind, ESIT, or other professionals to support relevant developmental or behavioral concerns. We will also provide/discuss any community resources that you may be interested in. Consistency of providers and parents being on the same page is key to a successful turnaround. If behavior becomes too difficult to manage in the classroom setting, the parent may be asked to pick the child up and a 1 or 2-day suspension may be necessary.

Step 4: Final Warning/Dismissal

Step 4 is designed as a last chance warning. If the child requires more individual attention than can be given within staff: child ratios, or if the child risks the health and safety of other children or staff, child care services will be discontinued. The Executive Director will determine the consequences based on the number and severity of problems the child has been having. Our goal is to prevent expulsion, However, at any stage, if a child engages in aggressive behavior (physical or verbal) such as but not limited to hitting, punching, kicking, and biting it may be determined that immediate pick up is necessary. If unsafe behavior persists, we will assist you in finding a suitable child care environment by providing local resources. Refunds will not be issued.

CURRICULUM

The program uses developmentally appropriate practices. It emphasizes experiences that are aimed at the children's level of ability and interest. Children are given choices in what they select to do, and are encouraged to use materials and complete projects in ways they choose.

The curriculum includes opportunities for self-selected activities and exploration of: Creative Movement, Music, Games, Creative Art, Science, Safety, Language Development, Special Activities and Cooking Experiences.

Our team strives to:

- Help your child be more aware of the world around him or her.
- Help stimulate a thirst for knowledge.
- Help your child:
 - Express creative abilities.
 - Develop a good self-concept.
 - Relate well with other children.
 - Accept routines of the day.
 - Learn basic concepts; size, shapes, colors, numbers.
 - Discover that learning is fun.

- Accept the rights of others in a group.
- Solve his or her own problems.
- Understand and find outlets for his or her emotions.
- Develop large and small muscle coordination

Rest Periods

Rest period is an important part of your child's day. Because so many of our children arrive early and their day is packed full of activity, it is necessary they have quiet time to sleep or rest depending on their individual needs. The 12 months through 5-year-old rest for approximately two hours. Feel free to send a favorite blanket (that fits in their cubby) with your child to help their rest time go smoothly.

Grouping Children

YMCA Early Learning Centers has ungraded classrooms, and we reserve the right to move children through our program based on how many child care slots are available in each classroom and whether your child is developmentally ready to move. Before we move children, we carefully weigh all the contributing factors to be sure the child can be successful.

Parent Involvement

Parents are considered by the staff as the most important people in children's lives; thus, parents are invited to participate in the program in a variety of ways. Informal daily contacts are possible when parents come into pick-up or drop-off their child. Parents are invited to participate in field trips and special events or projects held throughout the year. Making specified donations for snacks, or sharing of family traditions are also ways of being involved. If items of food are brought from home the items need to come with all the ingredients listed with the item; we recommend store bought. Conferences can be arranged to provide a way for you to see how your child is progressing. Parents may select whatever level of involvement they choose and may feel free to ask at any time for assistance, information or the opportunity to become more involved.

FOOD PROGRAM

Our menu follows USDA guidelines and attempts to greatly reduce the amount of sugar ingested. Sugar coated cereal has been omitted and nutritious snacks served. It is not our intent to omit sugar type food entirely. There will still be occasional days in the month that families will be sending cakes or cookies to celebrate a birthday. However, in general, children should not be allowed to bring candy or gum to the center.

If the child has any food or contact allergies, they should be included on the registration forms in order for us to serve substitute foods. Other dietary restrictions should also be noted, such as religious prohibitions. Children will be asked to eat what is served, but are never required to eat or drink what they do not wish. All staff members are required to have Washington State Food Handler's Permit and the program maintains standards necessary for obtaining a Food Handler's Certificate.

We serve whole grain rich items for many breakfasts and snacks. We ask parents to provide a sack lunch for their child. We encourage you to make a nutritious lunch of sandwich, fresh fruits and vegetables. Morning, afternoon, and evening snacks are provided. The following eating schedule and menu content is provided to assist you. There is also a menu available in our entry.

Breakfast

We encourage parents to provide a small snack that will hold your child over until our breakfast. Food is offered to the child appropriate to age and individual needs.

Due to different events the menu may have changes each day depending on seasons, special events, or the store being out of an item. Please talk to the teachers to find out about any special events in your classroom.

Lunch

New Adventures and Puyallup ELC locations parent provide their child with a well-balanced nutritious lunch each day. They are sent in a lunch pail and

stored in the specified area of each room. We ask that the parent include an ice pack in the lunch pail to keep items cold and make sure your child's name is printed on their lunch box. Please cut all food as you intend your child to eat it.

The child care center staff will monitor foods brought from home to ensure safe preparation, storage, and nutritional adequacy. We will supplement foods brought from home that do not meet nutritional requirements and we will provide a sandwich, fruit, and vegetable if a child arrives at school with no lunch. However, we must charge a fee in both instances.

Please provide a variety of foods for your child to encourage them to eat a well-balanced lunch. Our center has a variety of resources to help you if you need it.

University Place ELC lunch is provided.

Snack

Our menu is a two-week rotation of healthy snacks that are offered in the morning and afternoon. The menu is located on the parent board inside the main entrance.

Birthdays

Birthdays for each child are recognized if the parents wish to celebrate as a group party. In an effort to reduce the amount of sugar served to the children, we encourage parents to celebrate their child's birthday at the center without food. Some ideas include wearing a special hat or sash, or bringing in a special "birthday book". Please help us promote a healthy environment and healthy kids.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Child Abuse Prevention

Child abuse is physical injury, sexual abuse, neglect or maltreatment of a child by a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare. The law requires day care providers to report suspected child abuse and neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS) or Law Enforcement agencies. Depending on the recommendation from CPS, New Adventures staff may not be able to notify parents when police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Pre-employment background checks are completed for the Department of Children, Youth and Families on all employees. We provide ongoing curriculum for the staff and children that deal with feelings, self-esteem, and protection skills for the child. Please feel free to discuss this part of our program with the Manager.

Photographing Children

In order to protect the privacy and individual rights of all persons, we want to be upfront and clear about our photographing policies and procedures. Classroom photographs are taken of the children during their educational activities, such as art, music, field trips, holidays, and birthdays. You may ask for copies if you like, but no photos with other children can be shared on social media. Occasionally, pictures are taken for publication or for media purposes, but before a picture of your child is published, you will be contacted for approval.

Education on Life, Sex, Etc.

Preschool age is the time when children ask questions about life and death, where babies come from and how they are born. In the Children's Center, their questions are answered simply and truthfully as they arise. We feel it is important to call body parts by their correct names. Please feel free to discuss this part of your child's learning with his/her teacher.

Potty Training

Toilet training is a substantial step in every child's development. Potty training will be initiated in the 2-year-old classrooms with consultation and communication between our staff and the parents of each individual child. This will continue throughout the classrooms. Children do need to be potty trained when reaching the 3.5 year old classrooms as we no longer have changing tables available.

Due to facility limitations, children are required to be potty training at the Puyallup ELC.

To assist your child's toilet trained needs we will:

- Use positive reinforcement
- Consider cultural/developmental sensitivity
- Not use food as reinforcement
- Follow a routine of consistency established between parents and teachers

Clothing

The children play actively and hard, so sturdy clothes are most suitable. Since they play with clay, dough, finger-paints, and easel paints, we hope that you will not expect them to come home from the Children's Center spotless. Dress them so their play will not be spoiled by the fear of getting dirty.

It is required that the centers have a change of clothing for each child enrolled. Please put the changes of clothes in your child's cubby and label them with your child's name to prevent loss. The children play outdoors for at least an hour or two on all days the weather will allow. Be sure they have boots, mittens, hats, and an extra sweater to keep at the center during the cold weather seasons and extra shorts and shirts for warm weather. Also, make sure you always have extra socks, underwear, and pants on hand for your child.

Transportation/Field Trip/Walks

Field trips are vital to children's exposure to the world around them. When the children are taken on excursions to a place of interest such as the fire station, zoo or park, prior notice will be given to parents before each trip. Parents are asked to sign a release for trips covering all occasions at the time of enrollment. Field trip cost will be charged to your account. Also, city transit or a chartered bus will be used in trips that are not within walking distance. When possible, we encourage parents to volunteer to join us.

Excursion Safety

Teachers may take children on walks outside the center to explore nature and experience the world around them. Staff maintain situational awareness as they plan to take children offsite and communicate with each other to ensure we are all following the same protocols.

Safety Measures Include:

- Staff carry cell phones offsite for emergency purposes.
- May return to the center or cancel excursion at any time.
- Communicate with Center Director as they leave/return to the center.

Transitions within Program

You will be notified one month in advance when your child is ready to move to the next classroom level by your child's teacher. Two weeks prior to the move you will receive a welcome letter email. To help ease the transition into the next classroom before the "move day" we will have your child visit either for short periods of time or even for a whole day should their schedule allow. Due to licensing capacity in each room, we will make every effort to have a child visit twice two weeks before the move and then 3 times the week before the move if possible. You are more than welcome to pop in and see your child's new classroom, talk with their teacher, and ask any questions you may have before the big day.

Religious Activities

None. We do say a short poem before eating to settle the children in for mealtime. There will not be religious stories, songs or religious instruction. We will respect and facilitate the rights of the children in our care to observe their faith.

Toys

If children bring toys from home, they are apt to get broken or lost. The staff may not be able to leave the children to find your child's toy. Also, a toy suitable for play at home often breaks when handled by many children. We suggest personal toys be left at home except for "show & tell". From a safety or hygienic point of view, please be sure your child does not bring such things as money, a whistle or horns, marbles, jewelry with pin on back, or guns. Toy guns are often a source of unhappiness. If a child brings one to the center, we will keep it for him/her until he/she goes home. Please cooperate with us on this!

Sometimes when children first start, they feel less lonesome if they can bring a favorite "comfy" from home something they can take to bed with them for their nap and carry about during the first "strange" days. We have no objection to this. We want them to be as comfortable and happy as possible. However, to minimize the spread of infections we encourage you wash these items weekly.

No Smoking Policy

YMCA ELCs are a tobacco and vaping free campus. We ask that parents reframe from smoking around our facility.

Transition Out of the Program

We require a two-week notice if you would like to terminate care for both private pay and subsidy families. This can be done by contacting the early learning membership through email or phone call. We would love feedback as to why you are choosing to terminate care and if we have any opportunities for improvement.

Transition into Kindergarten

Our teachers spend a lot of time preparing children for the big transition to kindergarten ensuring they are ready and comfortable. You will receive our latest kindergarten readiness assessment where teachers will explain their successes for the year and things to continue to practice. We will provide kindergarten registration information for surrounding school districts. Also, we are more than willing to connect with your child's kindergarten teacher upon request to ensure for a smooth transition. YMCA ELCs will provide information about local Kindergarten Registration events and opportunities within the

community.

HEALTH POLICIES

1. Upon arrival at the child care center, staff will do a visual health check. If your child appears to have symptoms of illness that indicate he should not be at the center, you may be asked to find alternative care for your child.
2. Your child will not be admitted to the center if any symptoms of fever, diarrhea (3 times in 1 day or 1 time non-containable), or vomiting have been present within the past 24 hours. A child may also be excluded with a rash, pinkeye, eye discharge, sore throat, severe cough that interrupts play or sleep, lice or nits, any other communicable disease, or if they are too tired or sick to participate in the daily activities.
3. Please keep your child at home if he/she shows symptoms of illness. Outdoor play is an important part of a child's growth and development and builds large muscle coordination. During outdoor play, staff is on the playground and unable to supervise children left inside. A good rule to follow is, if your child is too ill to be outdoors, he/she is too ill to be at school. We will appreciate your cooperation.
4. If a child becomes ill at the center, we will;
 - a. Contact parent and notify of child's condition
 - b. Parents need to make arrangements to have their child picked up as soon as possible. The child must be picked up within one hour after contacting the parent.
 - c. If parents cannot be reached, we will call the person listed as an emergency number
 - d. Teachers will record illnesses and keep a copy on file
 - e. If your child is sent home with a communicable disease, we will report it to the local health department and notify all parents, in writing, so they can take appropriate action to protect their children.
5. If your child is able to come to the Children's Center but needs medicine, it will be administered and documented by their teacher. This is an important protection for your child and for us. Medicines must be stored in the original containers labeled with the child's name, dosage and date

of purchase. Leave the medicine with a staff person, fill out a consent form giving the physician's instructions for medication and we will see that the medicine is administered according to the prescription. You must initial the consent form each day you want the medication given.

Non-prescription medication can be administered with written parent consent if the medication bottle label specifies how much medication to give based on the child's age and weight. Follow the same procedure as you would with prescription medication. For children under the age of 2, we will still require a physician's note for non-prescription medications. Upon enrollment you will sign an authorization form for diaper cream, rash cream, and sunscreen for children under the age of 2.

6. Immunizations must be up-to-date prior to admission and kept current. No child will be accepted without a completed immunization form.
7. If an ill child is found to have a contagious disease; please notify the Children's Center immediately so other parents can be told of the presence of a contagious disease. This makes it possible for them to have protective injections if indicated.
8. Staff and children are required to use good hand washing techniques. Teachers are required to wash with soap and water before and after cooking or meal preparation, after using the toilet or helping a child use the toilet, after diapering, after wiping a child's nose, and whenever needed. Children must wash with soap and water before and after eating, after rest, after outdoor play, before and after cooking, after the toilet and other appropriate times.
9. Minor injuries such as scratches, abrasions, bumps, and bruises will be handled by a staff member at the Center. Staff trained in first aid will take appropriate steps and refer to first aid guides as needed. Staff will fill out a minor injury form to be signed at pick up. In case of life-threatening emergencies, staff will call 911 and follow directions. Staff trained in first aid and CPR will take appropriate steps. The parent will be called. If we cannot reach a parent, we will notify the person(s) listed on the registration form for emergencies. The hospital used for emergencies will be Mary Bridge, unless 911 deems otherwise.
10. The Center Director will report communicable diseases to the Health department. Accidents and injuries that require any procedure beyond a

visit to the doctor, i.e. x-rays, stitches, or a cast will be reported to the child care licenser.

Note: if your child becomes ill while in our care, he/she can return to the center 24 hours after being sent home if symptom free without fever reducing medicine and child can keep up with the demands of the program.

Sick Policy Quick Reference: Parents will be contacted for the following symptoms and a medical release may be requested to return to child care.

- 100.4 Fever or higher.
 - **Parent** Keep Home Until: 24-hour fever free without fever reducing medication.
- Diarrhea 3 times or 2 times with another symptom (note: loose stool is not diarrhea)
- Blood, or mucus in stool may be called immediately for pick up.
 - **Parent** Keep Home Until: Has not had Diarrhea 3 or more times in past 24 hours.
- 1 Vomit with 1 other symptom.
 - **Parent** Keep Home Until: Has not vomited for 24 hours and fever-free.
- Persistent Coughing
 - **Parent** Keep Home Until: Cough has eased and can manage daily activities in child care. Masking may be requested as age appropriate.
- Persistent Congestion or Runny Nose
 - **Parent** Keep Home Until: Congestion/Runny Nose has eased and can manage daily activities in child care. Masking may be requested as age appropriate.
- Eye discharge, rash, lice or nits, abundance of nasal discharge
- Any exposure and/or symptoms of communicable diseases
- Breathing difficulties
- Unusual Tiredness
- Poor feeding
- Persistent crying or irritability

COVID-19: Diagnosis of covid-19 does not require immediate exclusion. However, the symptoms your child is presenting does. Please refer to our sick

policy and 'when to keep your child home' document for exclusion guidelines. If your child does not have any symptoms, they may return to care.

When to Keep Your Child Home



Dear parent or guardian:

Keep your child home from school if they:

- Are too sick to participate in normal activities.
- Need a level of care or observation not manageable at school.
- Create an unhealthy or unsafe environment for others.

These conditions require you to keep your child home:

Chickenpox (varicella)	Keep your child home until all blisters have scabs and no new blisters are forming.
Diarrhea	Keep your child home until diarrhea can be contained and they can participate in normal activities. Keep your child home if there is blood or mucus in the stool.
Fever	Keep your child home until their temperature is below 100.4°F and they don't have behavior changes, sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability or confusion.
Flu (influenza)	Keep your child home until they are fever-free for 24 hours.
Measles	Keep your child home until 5 days after rash appeared.
Mumps	Keep your child home until 5 days after swelling began.
Ringworm	Keep your child home until treatment is started.
Scabies	Keep your child home until treatment is started.
Scarlet fever	Keep your child home until they have taken antibiotics for 24 hours and are fever-free.
Shingles	Keep your child home until rash can be covered or all lesions have crusted.
Skin infection	Keep your child home if they have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draining open wounds that you can't cover with a waterproof dressing. • Mouth sores with drooling. May return after symptoms resolve or a healthcare provider evaluates and treats them.
Strep throat	Keep your child home until they have taken antibiotics for 24 hours and are fever-free.
Vomiting	Keep your child home until they have not vomited for 24 hours and they can participate in normal activities.
Whooping cough (pertussis)	Keep your child home until they have taken antibiotics for 5 full days.
Other contagious condition	Check with your child's school or primary care provider.

These conditions do not require you to keep your child at home (unless they are too sick to participate in normal activities).

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| • Bronchitis | • Ear infection | • Molluscum contagiosum | • Pneumonia |
| • Cold (without fever) | • Fifth disease | • Mononucleosis | • Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) |
| • Cytomegalovirus (CMV) | • Hand, foot and mouth disease | • Pinworm | • Warts |

The Health Department, healthcare providers or schools may make exceptions to these requirements on a case-by-case basis.

Pesticide Policy

Parents and guardians will be made aware of the application of pesticides at least 48 hours in advance. The notice will state the following information:

- Product name of the pesticide being used
- Intended date and time of application
- Location where the pesticide will be applied
- Pest to be controlled
- Name and number of a contact person at the facility