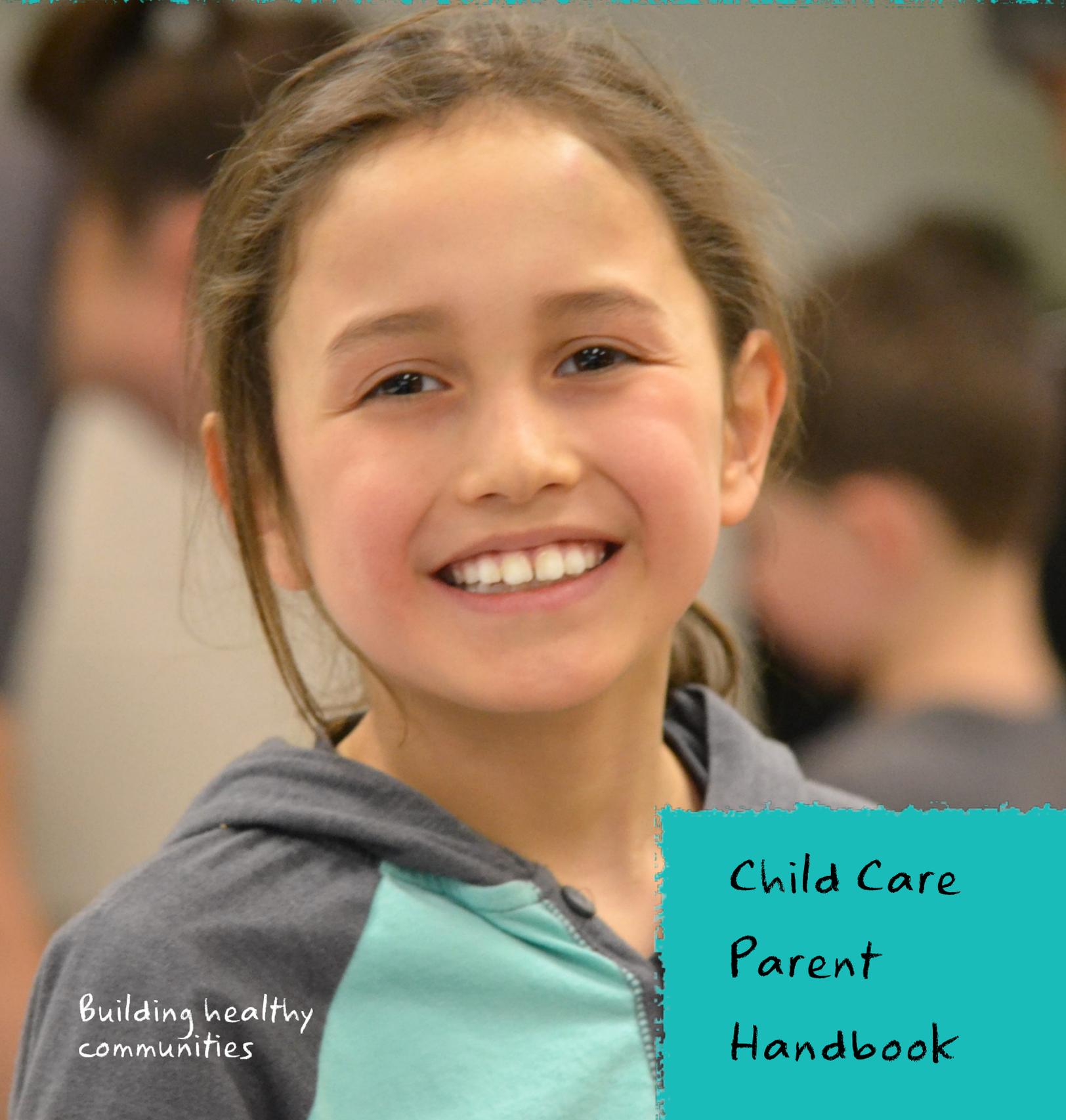




YMCA of  
Niagara

YMCA Child Care



Building healthy  
communities

Child Care  
Parent  
Handbook

# YMCA Child Care Parent Handbook 2017-2018

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*Revised May 2018*

## Welcome to YMCA Child Care

The YMCA of Niagara is pleased to welcome your family to our Child Care program. In choosing YMCA Child Care for your child, you have chosen one of the finest and most trusted providers of high quality child care services in the Niagara region.

This handbook will provide you with program information and policies regarding YMCA Child Care services. If you require further information, please contact your Centre Supervisor.

We encourage and welcome you to find out about additional ways you and your family can be involved in the YMCA. Refer to “Other YMCA Programs” at the end of this hand book.

Thank you for becoming part of our YMCA family!

## Licensed Child Care

The YMCA of Niagara’s Child Care Centres are licensed and inspected by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. Provincial Government standards and the YMCA’s practices and initiatives ensure that all programs provide a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment with quality care for the children we serve. We adhere to all legislated staff to child ratios.

## Curriculum & Program Statement for Child Care

In compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, under the Ministry of Education, YMCA of Niagara Child Care programs and educators follow the goals and approaches in our Program Statement.

Our quality YMCA Child Care programs create rich learning environments for children to flourish and reach their potential. Our approach to learning is in alignment with the Ministry of Education’s *How Does Learning Happen?*, a resource developed to promote a shared understanding of what children need and what can be done to help them grow and flourish.

Please view the Program Statement by clicking [here](#).

## YMCA Playing to Learn – Infant, Toddler & Preschool

We believe that YMCA Playing to Learn incorporates the best approach to ensure a child’s continued enthusiasm and capacity for life-long learning. Our infant, toddler and preschool staff are trained in the research-based YMCA Playing To Learn national curriculum, which provides an understanding of how play provides the foundation for learning to read and write, for learning mathematics, science, technology, and a foundation for the arts. YMCA Playing to Learn also sets the stage for your child to successfully transition to school and the Early Learning Kindergarten curriculum.

## Program Curriculum – School Age

All YMCA Child Care programs take a child-initiated, teacher-directed approach that focuses on play-based learning, allowing the child to take the lead and then focusing on his/her interests. Staff’s understanding of child development is critical in helping children reach their maximum potential in the environments we create, including outdoors where planned activities are designed to promote physical activity.

Research tells us that children learn primarily through play. Play is the cornerstone of our curriculum – understood to be essential to the healthy social and cognitive development of children and future academic success. This approach and these principles are the cornerstone to our program planning in all of our before and after school programs, as well as our full day Holiday Care for 3 & 4 year olds.

## YMCA Core Values

Caring • Health • Honesty • Inclusiveness • Respect • Responsibility

YMCA Child Care is available to all, regardless of race, gender, creed, or economic circumstance.

Values, sometimes referred to as character, are the basis of who we are, how we live and how we treat others. Living with, and acting on good values contributes to the development of self-esteem and overall personal happiness. This is an important component of all YMCA programs.

YMCA Child Care promotes and teaches these values through our curriculum and daily interactions with our children and families. We encourage our families to support these values.

## Caring, Qualified Staff

Our staff are carefully chosen and have appropriate educational background and experience to ensure quality care and understanding of child development. They have personal qualities of friendliness, warmth, and the ability to relate openly to children and adults. Our staff are dedicated to the needs of the children, the concerns of the parents and the high expectations of the YMCA.

All YMCA Child Care staff complete a Criminal Reference Check with a Vulnerable Sector Search through Niagara Regional Police services and hold current certification in First Aid and CPR.

Our Child Care staff participate in ongoing professional development opportunities such as YMCA Playing to Learn for preschool staff, training in Quality Child Care Niagara (QCCN), CATCH, YMCA Healthy Child Development and internal curriculum training, among others.

We continue to strive for excellence in all our programs, and regular evaluation of staff and programming ensures ongoing high quality care for your children.

## Students and Volunteers

The YMCA promotes opportunities for personal growth, community involvement and volunteerism. Students and volunteers aged 18 years or older are welcome in our licensed Child Care centres, and they participate in an orientation and review of relevant policies and procedures. All volunteers and students complete a Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Sector Search through Niagara Regional Police services.

Students and volunteers do not have unsupervised access to the children in the centres; that is they are not alone with a child. They are paired with and mentored by a YMCA staff member.

## Child Guidance

A positive approach is used to guide children; each situation and child is dealt with individually. The methods we use include:

Redirection: Guiding a child into acceptable options when engaged in an unacceptable activity.

Logical and Natural Consequences: Endeavour to make children aware of results of their actions.

Limit Setting: Boundaries are developed by the teacher for the children as a group and for individual children according to each situation.

Modelling: Demonstration of appropriate ways of interacting.

Providing Choices: Appropriate choices are outlined and children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves.

Anticipating Trouble: Planning and preparing the environment.

Ignoring: Some inappropriate behaviour may be ignored with more emphasis given to appropriate behaviour.

Positive Reinforcement: Use of encouragement.

## Prohibited Practices

As per the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), the following are prohibited practices in YMCA Child Care centres:

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) 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;
- (c) 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;
- (d) 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;
- (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;  
or
- (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

## Duty to Report

Duty to Report is defined under section 72 (1) of Ontario's Child and Family Services Act and sets out what must be reported to a child protection authority ie: Family and Children's Services (FACS). A report must be made immediately if a child is, or appears to be, suffering from abuse or is at risk of harm. Duty to Report applies to the public, and includes special reporting responsibilities for professionals in the child care field. Registered Early Childhood Educators also have this obligation under the College of ECE. The YMCA supports its staff in their Duty to Report responsibility. The YMCA does not investigate reports; we cooperate fully with FACS' investigations.

## Child Care's Approach to Inclusion

The YMCA is experienced in providing inclusive programming for children with special needs and behaviour concerns, working closely with parents, YMCA staff, the school network, and linking with other community partners who support children with special needs to ensure the child's individual needs are met.

YMCA Child Care staff also receive Quality Child Care Niagara training which provides environmental and developmental tools to ensure optimum success for all children in YMCA Child Care programs, inclusive of those who have cognitive, physical or behaviour challenges.

It is essential that parents and guardians provide YMCA staff with all pertinent information specific to the child's unique needs at the time of registration inquiry. Once the inquiry takes place, the parent will meet with a YMCA Regional Director of Child Care to complete a Participant Profile so that upon entry in the YMCA program, the appropriate support plan and strategies are in place to ensure optimum success for the child. Resources for 1:1 staff supports are not available; all children are blended into groups with regular staff to child ratios.

If it is determined that the YMCA Child Care program cannot reasonably accommodate the unique needs of a child, we will arrive at a final decision in consultation with the family and link them with local agencies that can support the needs of the child.

## Behaviour Expectations and Resolution

We want all children to be safe, have fun, and enjoy our program. For this reason we have expectations and rules that respect the rights of all persons in the program. Violence, swearing, and behaviour that puts others or self at risk are not permitted.

It is the intent of the YMCA of Niagara to include all children in our programs. However, should a situation arise where concerns have been identified that a child's needs are not being met and/or other individuals are at risk, the Regional Director of the centre, the Centre Supervisor, the child (depending on age) and his/her parents will work together to resolve the situation. A step in the resolution may include developing a case plan, keeping progress documentation, and consultation with community resources.

YMCA Child Care is a shared experience for everyone to enjoy. The YMCA of Niagara holds the right to suspend or discontinue services if the well-being and safety of others is at risk. Fees will not be charged during suspension.

## Permission to Share Information

In School Age Child Care, parents are asked to complete a Permission to Share Information form so that communication between the school and child care is permitted, in order to serve the best interests of your child.

## School Suspensions

If at any time, a child is suspended from school, the child is also denied child care during the extent of the suspension. Fees will not be charged during suspension.

## Serious Occurrences

YMCA Child Care Centres comply with all legislation regarding the reporting of serious occurrences, which supports the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

In alignment with the Ministry of Education's intent to provide greater transparency for parents, all YMCA Child Care centres post Serious Occurrence Notification Forms to keep parents informed of reported serious occurrences in their child's centre.

## Accident/Incident Reports

Communication about their child's well-being is important to parents. Parents will be informed regarding any incidents affecting their child's health, safety or well-being. If a child is injured, parents will be provided a copy of the Accident/ Incident Report.

## Health & Illness

To maintain a good standard of health, we conduct a daily health check. It is necessary to have alternate arrangements for care in the event your child is ill. If a child's ill health prevents him/her from participating or being comfortable in normal program activities, the child will be considered too ill to attend Child Care. Should your child become ill during the day, you will be contacted immediately to pick up your child (see symptoms below).

Children should not return to the centre until they are symptom free and ready to participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor play.

Parents are to keep their children at home if they display any one of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash/skin condition
- Communicable disease
- Obviously infected discharge
- Lethargy and irritability and are not able to participate in program
- Persistent pain
- Persistent cough

A receiving staff member who notices any of these symptoms when a child arrives will ask that the child be taken home or to a doctor. A note from the doctor confirming that the child is healthy and not infectious may be required.

All children play outside each day. If you feel your child is not well enough to play outside, please keep him/her at home. We are not able to accommodate keeping children inside on an individual schedule.

## Immunization

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 stipulates that prior to admission, each child must be immunized according to the local Medical Officer of Health. Since parents of school age children must keep their

children's immunization records up to date with their child's school, they do not need to be submitted for children in our school age program. For preschool children, we require that a copy of the child's immunization record must be submitted at the time of admission and should be updated annually or as new immunizations are received.

## Exemptions to Immunization

A child may be exempted from immunization for medical reasons. Parents will need to have a legally qualified health care professional complete a Medical Exemption form.

Or if a child is not immunized due to conscience or religious belief, parents are required to complete a Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief form, signed by a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits.

These forms must be submitted prior to the child attending child care.

## Medication

Our Child Care staff will administer only medication prescribed by a physician or nurse practitioner. Parents are required to sign a medication authorization form outlining dosages and times to be given. For safety reasons, medication must be in the original container as supplied by the pharmacist, must be clearly labeled with the child's name, date, and the name of drug, instructions for storage, and administration of the drug and must be a current prescription. These requirements also apply to holistic medications.

If children are prescribed medication by a doctor while they are too sick to attend child care, or when they have been sent home from child care because they are sick, they must have been receiving the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to child care, or as per Niagara Region Public Health's guidelines. See also "Health & Illness".

All creams and lotions to be applied externally (ie: diaper creams, sunscreens, etc.), including natural or holistic products, must also be in an original container, clearly labelled with the name of the product, ingredients, and instructions for application. Parents are required to complete a form to give permission to administer the product.

## Medical Needs

Parents of children with specific medical needs such as, but not limited to, asthma, epilepsy and diabetes, must complete a Medical Needs Action Plan prior to beginning child care. Children with a Medical Needs Action Plan that includes 'over the counter' medication as a necessary part of the plan, need not have a prescription for the medication; however it must be in an original container, labelled with the child's name, date, instructions for storage and administration of the medication.

## Anaphylaxis Protocol

Our Child Care Centres follow the YMCA's Anaphylaxis Protocol to ensure the safety of all children with allergies in our programs. Upon registration, parents of children with a risk of an anaphylactic response will complete an Anaphylaxis Action Plan and provide the centre with any emergency medication before they begin child care.

Children with an Anaphylaxis Action Plan that includes ‘over the counter’ medication as a necessary part of the plan, need not have a prescription for the medication; however it must be in an original container, labelled with the child’s name, date, instructions for storage and administration of the medication.

## Nutrition & Allergies

Preschool Child Care Centres provide morning and afternoon snack and a hot, nutritious lunch. All meals follow Canada’s Food Guide and are monitored by government standards. We encourage each child to try each type of food. Our goal is to help children develop a taste for a variety of foods.

In School Age Child Care, the children are provided a morning and afternoon snack, which follows a balanced menu based on Canada’s Food Guide.

Most of our centres are peanut-free environments, and due to severe allergies and Public Health requirements, any outside food brought into your child’s centre must comply with your centre’s allergy restrictions, and special treats to be shared must include the manufacturer’s list of ingredients.

## Sun Safety

All children go outside every day, weather permitting, and our YMCA staff promote sun safety. All children should have hats to wear outdoors, as well as sunscreen in warmer weather. Parents must fill out a Sunscreen permission form in order for sunscreen to be applied.

## Rest Period

It is a requirement that all children attending a licensed Early Learning & Care Centre (Preschool) have a rest period each day. It is not necessary for your child to sleep, but he/she will be encouraged to rest quietly on his/her cot during this time. A child-sized blanket from home, labeled with your child’s name, is required. Children may also bring a soft comfort item from home for rest time.

## Children’s Clothing

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothing that allows them to explore and play without fear of getting dirty: indoors and outdoors.

Clothing should be appropriate for the weather and the season. We recommend snow pants, mitts, and boots in winter; sunscreen and a hat in the summer; an extra sweater or jacket for spring and fall, etc. When boots are worn, it is necessary that your child has indoor shoes at the centre.

Accidents can happen, so please provide an extra set of clothing at the Child Care Centre. To minimize losses, please label clothing with your child’s name.

## Outdoor Play

The importance of outdoor play for children cannot be overstated. An inviting natural setting inspires children to play outside, and will improve their social and psychological health. As a natural classroom, being outdoors with birds, butterflies, bees and bugs and allowing children the hands on experience of

the natural environment will benefit children by developing a lifelong appreciation for the beauty and wonder of nature.

Outdoor play is also key to children's physical health and development of gross motor skills. Playing outdoors provides the children an opportunity to climb, jump, balance, explore and learn in the moment, based on their interests. YMCA Child Care programs include the required amount of daily outdoor time, weather permitting, as designated by the Child Care and Early Years Act.

Children who have fun outdoors will likely get dirty.

## Your Child's Toys

Our centres have a variety of age-appropriate toys and activities for your child to enjoy, and children are encouraged to share as part of their learning experience. We ask that children keep their own toys at home. If there are designated Show and Share days in preschool, these allow your child to bring in a special toy from home on that day to talk about at group time.

## Electronics

The option to bring in personal electronics to the centre, and use them during child care, is at the discretion of the Centre Supervisor. The decision is determined based on the centre's unique environment and specific needs, and if allowed, is only on a limited basis.

## Ages for Care

YMCA Early Learning & Care Centres (Preschool) are licensed for children from infants to five years of age. Infant care is available in our Grimsby location only.

YMCA School Age Child Care programs are licensed for children aged 3.8 to 12 years. Children must attend school to participate in a school age program. Children must be toilet trained, unless there is a medical or diagnosed condition. In cases where children have a medical or diagnosed condition, toileting may be supported by staff, depending on the centre's needs and available resources.

Children who are 12 years of age may attend child care up until their 13th birthday. To discuss an exception to this age limit due to a child's special needs, parents should speak with their Centre Supervisor.

## Part Time Care

Part time care is available on a limited basis and is vulnerable as the centre reaches capacity. The YMCA depends on fees for financial viability; therefore our Centre Supervisors will register each component of care to the full operating capacity with priority given to full time registration.

Parents who are accepted for occasional care or care with a varied schedule must place a request for each of their chosen day(s) with their Supervisor and must receive approval. Children may not be dropped off or sent to child care without approval given. Occasional or varied care is not guaranteed.

## Registration Process and Waitlist

All parents must place themselves on the Niagara Region's online waitlist (ONElist) for your chosen YMCA Child Care Centre. Visit [www.niagara.onehnsn.com](http://www.niagara.onehnsn.com) to access the online waitlist. You will be contacted by the Centre Supervisor when a space becomes available to you.

The YMCA offers registration for child care from the ONElist on a first come, first served basis, based on the date registered on the list.

Parents will receive an admission package and information about the program when contacted by your chosen YMCA Centre. All forms must be returned by the deadline given before your child's first day. It is absolutely essential that all information be completed, including payment authorization with either banking or credit card information, immunization record (for infant to preschool only), and an emergency contact person to ensure the safety and security of your child. All families must provide valid banking information, even if they are receiving full fee Regional subsidy.

If a child's care is being paid for by more than one payer/account, both payers must sign a Shared Payment Agreement.

## Changes to Your Child's Registration

Changes to your child's registration arrangement must be requested in writing from your Centre Supervisor with at least one week's notice. Your centre may not be able to accommodate different or additional days. Please ask the Supervisor for the form.

## Bagged Lunch Policy

In School Age Child Care, our Bagged Lunch Policy will be reviewed with parents upon registration; it includes guidelines and practices around the safe and acceptable inclusion of your child's lunch and snacks while at child care.

## Arrival, Departure, Custody and Release

To ensure the safety and security of your child while attending YMCA Child Care, we require that:

- Parents escort their child to a staff member and sign him/her in and out. Our responsibility begins when you inform us that your child has arrived – 'transfer of care'. Care may be denied if there is persistent instances of the child not being appropriately transferred to our care.
- Parents are responsible to dress and undress their child upon arrival and departure.
- Children will only be dismissed from child care when an approved individual arrives to sign them out.
- Parents must notify the Child Care Centre if someone other than those listed on the admission forms will be picking up their child. Children will only be released to those appointed by the parent/guardian. The alternate pick up person must be 16 years of age or older, and will be asked for photo identification if staff are unsure of who the person is.
- Where there are child custody arrangements in place, the YMCA shall not deny a parent access to their child unless the centre has a copy of the original legal document outlining the specific custody arrangements including days and timeframes.
- Parents must make alternate arrangements for pick up if they cannot pick their child up by 6:00 pm. (See "Late Fees")

- If a staff perceives a parent or alternate pick up person to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when arriving to pick up their child, the staff will make every effort to ensure the safety of the child by requesting the parent arrange an alternate form of transportation.
- If staff perceive a dangerous situation arises at pickup, they will call the police to intervene.

## Field Trips

During the year, our Preschool Centres may take trips to special places of interest. In School Age Centres there may be a special trip planned on a PA/PD Day. Your centre will send a notice home in advance of the excursion informing you of the destination, time, and date. A minimal charge may be required to cover transportation and entrance fees. You are always welcome to join us: please let the Centre Supervisor know.

## Hours of Operation

YMCA Early Learning & Care Centres (Preschool) are open Monday to Friday year-round, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm except statutory holidays.

YMCA School Age Centres are open every school day from 7:00 am until school begins and after school until 6:00 pm except statutory holidays and school holidays. School Age Child Care also operates on Easter Monday. (See also "PA Days...") On school holidays, such as March Break, Summer and Winter Break, families are encouraged to participate in YMCA Day Camp, or Holiday/Summer Care for children aged three or four.

## PA/PD Days, Easter Monday & Early Release Days

For school board Professional Activity/Development Days and Easter Monday, full day child care will be offered in designated School Age Centres - care is not offered in every location. Parents who sign up for PA Day/Easter Monday care are charged a full day PA Day fee. If you choose not to use the PA Day/Easter Monday care, your normal daily fee applies.

Care is offered in School Age Centres on school Early Release days. Parents who sign up are charged the Early Release Day fee. If you choose not to use care on an ER Day, your normal daily fee applies.

## Inclement Weather & Emergency Closures

Centres will not operate if schools are closed due to inclement weather or another emergency. Parents in both Preschool and School Age Centres are responsible for determining if the child care centre/school is closed because of inclement weather or emergency circumstances. For information on centre closures please tune in to your local radio stations or check social media or websites for the YMCA of Niagara or the school boards. Regular daily fees will apply.

## Emergency and Crisis Policy

YMCA of Niagara Child Care programs have an Emergency and Crisis Management Procedures & Policy in place. In case of an emergency, parents and guardians will be contacted by phone, using numbers as supplied by parents/guardians through centre registration.

## YMCA Child Care 2018/2019 Daily Fees

The YMCA annually reviews Child Care fees and makes adjustments accordingly each September.

Infant (Grimsby location only)	Full time	\$56.00
Toddler	Full Time	\$45.20
	Part Time	\$50.25
Preschool	Full Time	\$38.75
	Part Time	\$43.80
Before School (JK-12 yrs)	Full Time/Part Time	\$7.75
After School (JK-12 yrs)	Full Time/Part Time	\$10.20
PA Day	Full Day	\$37.25
Early Release Day	Half Day	\$26.45

Family Discount 5%: Child with highest daily fee pays full fee, additional children receive 5% discount.  
Vacation: 2 weeks of available vacation at no fee in preschool, and 1 week available in school age care.  
(See also "Vacation")

### Fees and Absenteeism

Child Care daily fees are payable on a monthly basis through Visa, Mastercard or pre-authorized payment. You may choose your payments to be withdrawn from your account on either the 15th or the last day of the month, or both. Your fee payments are based on your child's registration. Payments returned to the YMCA from your bank will be subject to a \$20 charge. If an adjustment on your payment is required, it is reflected in the following month, unless you notify your supervisor by the 20th of the prior month.

Full fees, based on registration, will be charged for statutory holidays, PA Days and Early Release Days in School Age Programs, Easter Monday, and any days which children miss due to illness or absence. (In School Age Child Care, fees are charged on the following statutory holidays: Thanksgiving, Family Day, Good Friday, and Victoria Day.) School Age Child Care fees are not charged for the Winter Break, March Break or summer.

Parents with accounts past due will be notified by letter; care will be terminated unless payment arrangements are met successfully. Outstanding accounts will be referred to the credit bureau.

### Regional Subsidy and Absent Days

All parents who receive Regional Subsidy will be given a copy of the YMCA's policy in regards to subsidy, absent days, and fees for additional absent days used, which is in alignment with the Region's policy.

## Late Pickup & Late Fees

A late fee charge of \$10.00 for every 10 minutes, or part thereof, will be charged after 6:00 pm. If there is an emergency and you are going to be late, we ask that you call the Centre to notify us.

Numerous or persistent incidences of late pick up may result in termination of care. It is important for parents to have an alternate person who can pick up your child when you will be late.

In the case of a child(ren) who is not picked up, and no emergency contact or approved person for pick up has been reached, the staff member and child will travel by taxi to nearest/assigned YMCA Membership Branch at 7:00 pm. At 8:00 pm, if all efforts to contact someone are still unsuccessful, the YMCA will contact police services for assistance.

## Vacation

Over the year, families may accrue vacation time with no charge. Preschool families will be entitled to 1 week at no charge every 6 months (one each during September to February and March to August). School age families will be entitled to 1 week at no charge during the 10 month school year. Vacation times must be taken in 5-day blocks and are not cumulative. Please speak to your Centre Supervisor to give notice of vacation.

## Financial Assistance

If you require fee subsidy, please contact the Region of Niagara at 905 984 3750 or [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca). Online application may be requested by emailing [childcarecosts@niagararegion.ca](mailto:childcarecosts@niagararegion.ca).

Short term and emergency financial assistance is available through YMCA Strong Kids. Speak with your Centre Supervisor for more information.

## Tax Receipts

Child Care fees are tax deductible. A final statement will be available to each family by the end of February for income tax purposes. For your convenience, information about how to request and receive your YMCA tax receipt will be available on our website in early January.

## Withdrawal

The YMCA requires one week notice anytime during the year to withdraw from care or from a specific component, or one week's fee will be charged in lieu. The exception is for withdrawal from School Age Child Care in the summer, which requires notice by August 20th. (See also "Returning in September")

## Returning in September

In the spring, our School Age Centres ask all families to complete a Confirmation of Registration form so that parents can confirm their children's registration for September. This holds your child's space for September, and is the basis for billing your child care fees for September.

The copy of the Confirmation of Registration form that you receive, signed by the Centre Supervisor, is your confirmation of the child care space for your child.

If your child does not need their child care space in September, you must provide notice by August 20th. If notice is given after August 20th parents will be charged the first week's fee. Timely notice for September withdrawal allows the YMCA to register a waiting family in child care for the start of school.

School Age Centres are closed in the summer, so please contact the YMCA Administration office by emailing [cregistration@niagara.ymca.ca](mailto:cregistration@niagara.ymca.ca) during July and August with your change requests or withdrawal notice.

## Parent Participation & Communication

At the YMCA, we believe strongly that Child Care is a shared responsibility between parents and Child Care staff. We know it is important to your peace of mind to have regular information about your child's experiences. As well, your participation and input are valuable to your child and the centre. This is not always possible in the rush of the morning drop offs and evening pickups. Your centre provides the following opportunities to ensure communication and information between parents and staff.

### Open Communication

YMCA Child Care staff have a commitment to provide an environment that fosters your child's growth and learning and staff are pleased to share information with you daily. If you feel that your child's needs are not being met, we encourage you to express your concerns to your Child Care Supervisor.

### Weemarkable App (Infants to Preschool)

Weemarkable™ is a secure app that is the window into your little one's day - from wherever you are. Weemarkable is an app, developed by the YMCA that allows you to get notifications, messages and photos from your centre, sharing your child's excitement and fun in Child Care. It keeps your mind at ease with secure access to important child care notices, photos, milestones, educator observations, menu information and direct to educator messaging. Even when you can't be with them, it's amazing how connected you'll be.

### Family Events

You are encouraged to visit and participate in our programs and special events, such as Family Socials, Open Houses, and YMCA events whenever possible. Please read the letters, bulletins, and YMCA website for information.

### Newsletter

Periodic newsletters will be distributed in our preschool centres outlining news and special events across the YMCA of Niagara and in your centre. Your suggestions and comments are welcome!

### Evaluation

Parents are encouraged to complete our annual online Parent Satisfaction Survey, which is confidential. Feedback and suggestions are welcome any time, as well as requests for a parent-teacher meeting.

## Parent Issues and Concerns Resolution Policy

At the YMCA we recognize that our engagement and communication with parents and guardians helps a child to feel a greater sense of belonging and is key as we strive to build relationships with our YMCA families.

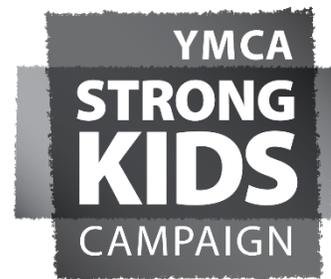
The YMCA is committed to finding resolutions to issues and concerns that may arise for families while participating in YMCA Child Care. We are committed to engaging with families and addressing their concerns in a timely manner, and all efforts will be made to resolve concerns within YMCA Child Care policies. During this process confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Maintaining necessary documentation and reports is an important aspect of the process, and will also remain confidential.

### Resolution Process

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to share their concern with the Centre Supervisor or directly with staff at the child care centre. Staff will bring the concern to the Supervisor.
- If the Supervisor receives the information through a third party, he/she will contact the parent/guardian within one business day.
- Centre Supervisor gathers information and determines if he/she can provide a solution to the concern or issue within two business days of initial contact.
- Centre Supervisor contacts the parent to resolve the concern. If the process for resolution is extended, the parent/guardian will be informed.
- If the Centre Supervisor cannot provide resolution to the conflict, the information will be shared with the Child Care Regional Director for advice on how to proceed.
- The Regional Director will determine if the conflict needs to be brought to the attention of the Child Care General Manager or another manager who will review the information and provide direction and/or advice regarding resolution.
- Follow up with the parent/guardian will take place within two business days of the information being shared with a Regional Director.
- If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the resolution or information as presented to them, they may request that the concern be escalated to the next level of leadership. (Centre Supervisor – Regional Director - General Manager – Vice President – CEO) YMCA staff will provide the parent/guardian with the requested contact information.

## Strong Kids Annual Support Campaign

Kids can help create strong communities for today and for the future, but only if they have the chance to reach their full potential. Donations to the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign help support proven programs that give kids the opportunities they need to live healthier, happier lives now, but also to grow into productive adults. By supporting the Strong Kids Campaign, you can help our kids build a better community for tomorrow.



Please consider a charitable gift to Strong Kids.

You can give online by going to [ymcaofniagara.org](http://ymcaofniagara.org) and clicking on the DONATE NOW button or through your YMCA Child Care Centre or your local YMCA Health, Fitness & Aquatics Centre.

## Other YMCA Programs

### YMCA Health, Fitness & Aquatics

The YMCA builds healthy communities by helping you to achieve your personal goals as part of a community of people that nurtures both your success and the success of your local community. When you join the Y, you will have access to people, programs and facilities to help you become healthier, feel better about yourself, and feel more connected to your community. As a leading charity, we offer opportunities to all individuals regardless of race, age, sex, creed, ability or economic circumstances. Men, women and children come to the YMCA to grow and develop into happier, more productive people.

For information call your local branch:

Fort Erie EJ Freeland YMCA	905 871 9622
Niagara Centre YMCA	905 735 9622
Niagara Falls YMCA	905 358 9622
Niagara West YMCA	905 309 9622
Port Colborne YMCA	905 835 9622
St. Catharines Walker Family YMCA	905 934 9622

Or visit us online at [ymcaofniagara.org](http://ymcaofniagara.org) for more information.

### YMCA Employment & Immigrant Services

YMCA Employment initiatives fulfill the Mission of the YMCA by helping individuals to find, create, and maintain meaningful employment, thereby supporting personal development and motivating participants to reach their potential as contributing members of society.

The YMCA of Niagara Employment Services has been successfully helping people in Niagara find work since 1985. Visit us and let our experienced Job Coaches see how we can start helping you.

Now 3 Employment locations to assist you, plus St. Catharines and Niagara Falls locations also have a Newcomer Information Centre:

<b>St. Catharines</b>	<b>Niagara Falls</b>	<b>Thorold</b>
285 Bunting Road	8123 Lundy's Lane	9 Pine Street North
T: 905-684-3500	T: 289-296-8400	T: 905-397-8390

### YMCA Day Camp

School age children can participate in a YMCA Day Camp programs during the times that our School Age programs are closed. Holiday Camp in December and January, March Break Camp and Summer Day Camp programs in July and August provide a fun complement to our School Age program. Please ask your Centre Supervisor for a brochure outlining times and locations, or visit [ymcaofniagara.org](http://ymcaofniagara.org).

YMCA Day Camp	905 934 9755 x 280 <a href="http://ymcadaycamp.ca">ymcadaycamp.ca</a>
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## **YMCA Holiday/Summer Care (for children 3 – 4 years old)**

Full day licensed care for children aged 3 to 4 years is a fun and safe transitional program for those children not old enough to participate in YMCA Day Camp. Children are either in Junior Kindergarten, or in summer are entering JK. Offered in four YMCA locations:

St Catharines	Grapeview Public School 905 682 9455
Welland & Pelham	Father Fogarty Centre 905 788 3505
Grimsby	Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School 905 309 2219
Niagara Falls	Kate S Durdan Public & Loretto Catholic Schools 905 354 4555

## **YMCA of Niagara EarlyON Centres**

EarlyON Centres are places where parents and caregivers can:

- Participate with their children 0 - 6 years in play based learning activities.
- Get answers to parenting questions, attend educational workshops and access various parenting resources.
- Learn about other programs and EarlyON services that are available for young children in our community.
- Talk to EarlyON professionals, as well as other parents and caregivers, while children socialize and interact with each other.

These parent-participating programs are free of charge and available in many convenient locations. For more information, call 905 938 9392.

## **YMCA Mission**

The YMCA of Niagara is a charity, open to all, providing leadership and opportunities for people and their community to grow in spirit, mind, and body.

## **Vision**

Inspiring health, wellness and community – for life.

## **Values**

Values are cornerstones that make our society safe and workable. They are the principles of thought and conduct that help distinguish right from wrong and provide a foundation for decision making. Values, which are sometimes referred to as character, are the basis of who we are, how we live and how we treat others. The values we try to impact at the YMCA, through character development are these six “Core Values”:

#### Caring

Acting with compassion and concern for the well-being of others.

#### Health

Being committed to physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.

#### Honesty

Demonstrating integrity and trustworthiness.

#### Inclusiveness

Appreciating diversity. Striving to be open to all. Seeking to understand differences and find common ground.

#### Respect

Recognizing and protecting the inherent worth of every person, including oneself.

#### Responsibility

Being dependable and accountable for choices, actions and commitments.

Living with and acting on good values contribute to the development of a healthy self-esteem and overall personal happiness.

## YMCA of Niagara Child Care

For more information, please contact us at:

YMCA Administration & Training Centre  
310 Woodlawn Road  
Welland, ON L3C 7N4

**T: 905 735 6959**

jackie.kerry@niagara.ymca.ca

lisa.degasperis@niagara.ymca.ca

Visit us online at [ymcaofniagara.org](http://ymcaofniagara.org)



[facebook.com/ymcaniagara](https://facebook.com/ymcaniagara)



[twitter.com/ymcانيagara](https://twitter.com/ymcانيagara)

## YMCA Privacy Statement

As a charitable, community-based association, the YMCA of Niagara is committed to protecting your right to privacy. The personal information you share with the YMCA will be used to support the work of the YMCA. For further privacy information, please visit our website at [ymcaofniagara.org](http://ymcaofniagara.org).

Charitable Number: 11930 7064 RR0001