



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Families entrust their children to the YMCA's care for child care, camp and other youth programs. Our promise to these families is that we will provide a safe environment in which all participants are treated in a caring, honest, respectful and responsible way. Our mission commands us to "build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all."

It is everyone's responsibility to deliver on this promise and to project and further the mission. This includes all dealings with the community; inside and outside of our workplace and both on and off duty. YMCA staff members and volunteers should avoid any inappropriate speech or behavior in the presence of our community members at all times. No one should have reason to be offended or embarrassed by YMCA staff member's or volunteer's speech, appearance or conduct.

The YMCA's Code of Conduct and personnel policies detail the YMCA's expectations and your responsibilities and are put into place to protect YMCA staff, volunteers and program members.

1. At no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in such a way that other staff can see them.
2. A child may never be left unsupervised.
3. Restroom supervision: Make sure the restroom is not occupied by unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Stand in the doorway of the rest room while children are using the rest room. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff and volunteers (not being alone with a child). If assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or at other off-site locations.
4. Conduct or supervise private activities in pairs – diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, and so on. When this is not feasible, be positioned so that you are visible to others.
5. Do not abuse children in any way, including, but not limited to:
 - physical abuse – striking, spanking, shaking, slapping; and so on;
 - verbal abuse – humiliating, degrading, threatening; and so on;
 - sexual abuse – touching or speaking inappropriately;
 - mental abuse – shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, and so on; or
 - neglect – withholding food, water, or basic care.**No type of abuse will be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.**
6. Use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Have age-appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in predetermined situations (when necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), administered only in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing.
7. Conduct a health check of each child upon his or her arrival each time the program meets, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, and so on. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Document any questionable marks or responses.
8. Respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally.
9. Respect children's rights to not be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.



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10. Refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.
11. Never transport children in your own vehicle or allow youth participants old enough to drive to transport younger children in the program.*
12. Staff/Volunteers must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired.
13. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours is prohibited.
14. Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited.
15. Possession or use of any type of weapon or explosive device is prohibited.
16. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of behavior outside of our character values in the presence of children, parents, volunteers, or other staff is prohibited.
17. You may not be alone with children you meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting children to their home. Additionally, you are to have no personal contact with program participants under the age of 18. This includes any face to face contact as well as electronic contact such as phone calls, text messages, e-mails or any other possible electronic means. You must not accept any request by a YMCA program participant under the age of 18, to become a friend as part of their personal social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram SnapChat, etc).
18. Using YMCA computers to access pornographic sites, send e-mails with sexual overtones or otherwise inappropriate messages, or develop online relationships is not allowed.
19. You should never engage in any action that might adversely affect the children's physical or mental health.
20. You will portray a positive role model for youth and act in a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible manner consistent with the mission of the YMCA.
21. Do not give gifts to program participants.
22. You may not date program participants who are under the age of 18.
23. Under no circumstances should you release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
24. Report to a supervisor any staff or volunteer who violates any of the policies listed in this Code of Conduct.
25. Staff is required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.
26. All YMCA staff and volunteers are mandated by the Commonwealth of Virginia to report all incidents of suspected child abuse and it is a punishable offense not to do so. You also agree to cooperate fully in any investigation.

*Exceptions may be granted when a staff or volunteer has a relationship that pre-dates meeting at the Y. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to administrator approval.