

YMCA Children's Educational Services



Child Care Parent Handbook

ELGIN COUNTY

June 2024





The Best Start for a Happy, Healthy Life

Welcoming your Family to our Family

Thank you for choosing the YMCA. The YMCA is one of the largest and most trusted providers of high quality licensed child care in Canada. When you get the best possible start in childhood, you have the best possible opportunity in life. In addition to our child care and school age programs, your child and your family will benefit from our health and fitness branches, summer day camp and overnight camps, as well as a huge variety of unique programs and services. We are proud to provide a safe, high quality learning environment for children 2 weeks to 12 years of age, across London-Middlesex, Elgin, Windsor-Essex, Sarnia-Lambton, Chatham-Kent, Oxford and Huron-Perth, since 1987. The YMCA is a place where everyone belongs. We are committed to the development of people of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, abilities and experiences.

What's Inside

In this booklet, you will find everything you need to know about child care at the YMCA, beginning with information we believe you and your child will need to know to get started, including practical program information, fees and hours, clothing needed, and what to do during absences or emergencies, followed by our safety policy, and information about our child care philosophy, our educator team, and our curriculum.

Want More?

If you have any questions or want to discuss your child's progress, we would be happy to talk to you one-on-one at a time most convenient for you. If you have any further questions about the YMCA and all the services it offers, please contact your director.



YMCA Program Statement

Welcome to YMCA licensed child care. Our program statement describes how our programs support and foster early learning. It will outline our view of the child, our philosophy and pedagogy as well as the goals and approaches used to ensure healthy child development. It will also outline how we evaluate our programs to maintain quality and how we support the professionals who work with the children. The YMCA Program Statement is reviewed annually to ensure it is aligned with the Minister of Education's Policy Statement.

Our View of the Child

Every child is special in the eyes of their family and those who love them. The children are also special to us. As educators of young children, we know that each child is an individual of great human worth and potential. Every child is different in their looks, their growth patterns, their genetic make-up, their previous experience, the way they think and in every aspect of what makes them human beings. We appreciate each child's uniqueness and view the child's growth and development occurring in a holistic manner.

At the YMCA we understand that children learn through play. Play by definition is enjoyable, spontaneous, active, and undertaken without external goals and sanctions. This means children are self-learners and do not require an adult to choose what or how they should learn. When the child's natural activity of play is supported by caring and responsive professionals in positive, developmentally appropriate learning environments, we believe a child will flourish. The child's innate competence, capacity, curiosity and potential will be maximized.

"[YMCA Playing to Learn] is a wonderful, academically sound, and highly accessible document. At the heart is a view of children, teachers and families as capable and competent. This is one document that will be highly valued in the field, not just sitting on a shelf"

Jean M. Clinton, BMus MD FRCP(C) Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences, McMaster University

GOAL

An aim of desired result.

APPROACH

A means of attaining a goal.

HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

The philosophy or view of human development that recognizes the necessity to include all aspects or domains of development in order to understand the whole person.

SANCTION

For a recognized authority to give approval of something.

INNATE

Existing from birth (i.e. born with).

PHILOSOPHY

The study of the theoretical basis of a particular branch of knowledge.

PEDAGOGY

The method and practice of teaching.



YMCA Curriculum

The YMCAs across Southwestern Ontario has a well-established, research-based approach to early learning. Our curriculum YMCA Playing to Learn has been successfully implemented in all programs for children 0-6 since 2011. All YMCAs across Canada have adopted this curriculum.

YMCA Playing to Learn 2nd Edition was published in 2015. This edition incorporates new research, best practices, knowledge and experience. There is more information on infants and toddlers, and it has a greater focus on the social and emotional development of the young child.

A Place to Connect curriculum for children 5-12 rolled out nationally in 2016.

The YMCA has been involved in shaping the development of the provincial early learning framework by sharing YMCA Playing to Learn and our training materials to support educators in implementing a play-based approach. The goals and approaches of the YMCA curricula align in philosophy, standards, and recommendations with the provincial frameworks below. It is gratifying to see Ministry of Education embrace play and adopt a very similar approach.

✓ **Minister of Education's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy**

<https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/programCCEYA.pdf>

✓ **"How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years**

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/pedagogy.html>

✓ **Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)**

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf/>

CURRICULUM

The deliberately organized part of the child's experience and the experience that occurs through everyday aspects of life. Playing to Learn is a curriculum based on play development.

SOCIAL LEARNING

The process of acquiring knowledge about individuals and groups by observing, imitating and interacting with others.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The complex changes within the individual over time that involves the self and feelings and regulating behavior.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, Fire Department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

YMCASWO link to complaint policy and electronic submission:

<https://www.ymcaswo.ca/contact-us>

"Did you know 3 in 10 children in our Y programs are there because of the YMCA Community Starts Here Campaign?"

Contact Us!

Please check out our website www.ymcaswo.ca or follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/YMCACES> and on Twitter @YMCAofSWO.

You can contact us via email at childcare@ymcaswo.ca or call 519-907-5500 X1072.