



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



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PRAESIDIUM
— 2023-2026 —

LEARN GROW THRIVE

A GUIDE TO SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE



WELCOME

Dear Families,

We are delighted to welcome you and your children to the YMCA Before and After School Program! As we begin this new journey together, we want to express our gratitude for entrusting us with the care and development of your children. Our program is designed to provide a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive.

At the YMCA, we believe in fostering a community that supports each child's unique needs and interests. Our dedicated team of professionals is committed to providing engaging activities that promote physical, social, emotional, and academic growth. From homework time and creative arts to sports and team-building exercises, we aim to create a well-rounded experience that encourages curiosity and self-confidence.

To ensure a smooth transition and a positive experience for everyone, we encourage open communication between our staff and families. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us continuously improve our program.

We are excited to embark on this adventure with you and look forward to making many wonderful memories together. Thank you for choosing the YMCA Before and After School Program. We can't wait to see what this year holds for your children!

Warm regards,



Richard K. Gorab, President & CEO
Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges

MISSION STATEMENT

Strengthen community through Youth Development, Health Living, and Social Responsibility.

Program Overview

The YMCA Before and After School Program offers a safe, nurturing environment for children during out-of-school hours. Designed to support working families, the program provides a structured yet flexible schedule that includes homework assistance, recreational activities, and enrichment opportunities. Children engage in arts and crafts, sports, and hands-on projects, fostering social skills and creativity. With a focus on healthy living and character development, the YMCA ensures children are active, engaged, and supported, promoting a sense of belonging and community. Staffed by trained professionals, the program prioritizes safety and personal growth, making it an ideal choice for parents seeking comprehensive care for their children.

Before school care is offered at select school locations based on availability and demand for the program. Registration is open to current students attending the school. Students will be engaged in age-appropriate activities including arts and crafts, reading, board games, and light physical activity until it is time for the school day to begin. After school care is offered on school days from dismissal until the designated end time. Program times may vary by location. **Refer to your branch-specific FAQ form or check with a Y staff member for more information.**

Program Hours

Operating hours may change and vary by location. Before care typically opens at 7:00 am. After care begins at school dismissal and runs until 6:00 pm. Please check with your program supervisor to confirm the specific hours for your program.

Daily Schedule

A consistent daily schedule and routine helps children feel comfortable in their environment. Daily schedules will include various age-appropriate hands-on learning activities, homework help, free choice, snack time, outdoor activities, and enrichment. The program supervisor is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the daily program with the support of their group leaders and program counselors.

- **Attendance:** Attendance will be taken at the start of the program. Please notify us if your child is going to be absent by calling the site phone number and leaving a message for the staff. If your child is expected at the program and does not arrive, the program staff must make all attempts to locate your child. Parent communication is essential for your child's safety and ensuring our staff are aware of the whereabouts of your child at all times.
- **Physical Activity & Nutrition:** The Y is committed to supporting healthy living by adopting a set of Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) standards. Based, in part, on years of research with key partners, the HEPA standards will build a healthier future for our children by creating environments rich in opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity. Nutrition guidelines include access to healthy beverages, snacks, and modeling healthy behaviors.

Physical activity is the cornerstone of our program. Physically active children have lower rates of obesity in childhood and lower risk of obesity and chronic medical conditions in adulthood. In addition, higher levels of physical activity improve cognition, executive function, attention, and academic performance. At least 30 minutes of physical activity will be incorporated into the daily schedule. This time is designed to provide children with a variety of organized indoor and outdoor games, sports, and activities.

- **Homework Assistance:** Homework completion is encouraged during the designated daily quiet time. Our staff will assist and encourage your child with any general questions about their homework assignments. Please check your child's homework for accuracy. Please note that depending on their grade and number of assignments, they may not be able to finish all of their homework during the scheduled quiet time. Your

child may be able to continue homework after quiet time if requested in writing by the parent/guardian and we staff are available to accommodate the request. We cannot guarantee additional staff and a quiet place for homework assignments as we continue with the daily schedule of activities.

- **Snacks:** All children will receive a healthy snack each day as part of the after school program. Please inform the program supervisor if your child has any food allergies or restrictions. You may provide additional snacks for your child. You may send breakfast with your child before school care.
- **Program Activities:** A wide variety of activities are offered each day including indoor and outdoor play, sports, and enrichment activities. Program specialists and events are also scheduled regularly to enhance the daily program at each site.
- **Screen Time:** Our programs provide an activity-focused, hands-on learning environment. We believe children learn best through active participation, hands-on experiences, interactive conversations, and exploration. Our programs follow the recommendations established by the American Academy of Pediatrics including no screen time for children 0 – 18 months and a limit of one hour or less per day for older children. Occasionally, children may utilize technology such as computers and iPads to participate in learning activities or participate in “virtual field trips”.
- **Social Responsibility:** Opportunities for children to participate in social responsibility projects will be available throughout the year. For example, children may participate in a fundraiser for a cause or contribute to a holiday coat and mitten drive, all while learning the importance of helping others.

Diversity & Inclusion

The Y is made up of people of all ages and from different walks of life working side-by-side to strengthen communities. Together we work to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, age, cultural background, ethnicity, faith, gender identity, ideology, income level, national origin, race, or sexual orientation has the opportunity to reach their full potential. Our core values are caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility – they are the foundation of the Y and guide everything we do. We encourage parents/caregivers to share information about their culture, language, and country of origin for all to learn.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges (“YMCA”) embraces values and beliefs which support and reflect the inclusion and appreciation of all individuals, regardless of race, color, physical or mental disability (including use of guide dog, hearing dog, or service dog), religion, creed, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, sexual orientation or affectional orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, nationality, age veteran status, uniform service member status, genetic information, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, marital status, domestic partnership status, civil union status, familial status, or any other protected class under federal, state, or local law. We are proud to be an equal opportunity employer and provider of services to the community.

Nondiscrimination in the Provision of Services to Persons with Disabilities

As a place of public accommodation, the YMCA is proud to serve a diverse community of individuals, including those with disabilities. The YMCA will work with prospective and current participants with disabilities, and/or their parents/guardians, to ensure that individuals with disabilities are offered full and equal enjoyment to the YMCA’s goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and accommodations. The YMCA does not discriminate the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, including children with diabetes, in any YMCA programs including, but not limited to, childcare, camps, before and after-school programs, classes and recreational programs. Accordingly, the YMCA will not exclude individuals with disabilities from enrollment. The YMCA also will not impose or apply eligibility criteria that tend to screen out or screen out individuals with disabilities.

Prospective or current participants with disabilities, and/or their parents/guardians, may, at any time, request modifications to the YMCA's policies, practices and procedures and/or request auxiliary aids or services. Reasonable modifications and auxiliary aids and services can be wide-ranging. A few examples include working with children who have diabetes to administer the necessary care they need and allowing a program participant to have a service animal.

All requests for modifications or for auxiliary aids and services should be directed to the applicable Program Director, the Branch ADA Compliance Officer or the Association Office ADA Compliance Officer. Program Directors may be reached in person or by calling the Branch's main telephone number and asking for the Program Director. Contact information for Branch ADA Compliance Officers is located www.metroymcas.org under the "About the Y Leadership" tab. The Association Office ADA Compliance Officer, Ed Philipp, may be reached at ephilipp@metroymcas.org or at 973-758-9622.

The YMCA will work with prospective or current participants in our programs, and/or their parent/guardians, to promptly address all requests for modifications to the YMCA's policies, practices and procedures and/or for auxiliary aids or services and to determine what reasonable modifications and/or auxiliary aids and services are available. Our goal is to ensure that all participants in our programs with disabilities have access to the full and equal enjoyment of all YMCA programs. Accordingly, the YMCA conducts individualized assessments on the specific facts of each request and will not apply a general prohibition against providing particular types of reasonable modifications. The YMCA will make reasonable modifications for individuals with disabilities, including children with diabetes, unless the request for modification amounts to a fundamental alteration of the applicable YMCA program. Similarly, the YMCA will provide auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities, unless the request for the auxiliary aids or services creates an undue burden or amounts to a fundamental alteration of the applicable YMCA program.

The YMCA prohibits retaliation against any individual for exercising their rights to request and/or receive a modification to the YMCA's policies, practices and procedures or auxiliary aids and services. The YMCA further prohibits retaliation against any individual who on good faith participates in any investigation or proceeding related to a request for modification to the YMCA's policies, practices and procedures or auxiliary aids and services.

Preparing for the First Day

The first day of school is very exciting. Your program staff will inform you of any specific opportunities to foster a smooth transition to the program. We encourage you to have positive conversations about the beginning of school with your child leading up to your child's first day. Also, as the first day approaches, you will have the opportunity to connect with the program staff to discuss the best ways to provide a smooth transition.

Drop-Off for Before School Care: You will be informed of the specific drop off location for before care prior to your child's start. **Children must be signed in with a YMCA staff member each day at arrival by a parent/guardian or adult.**

Pick-up/Policy on the Release of Children:

- Children must be signed out each day by a parent/guardian or authorized individual unless the parent/guardian has authorized their child to walk home without an adult. A permission slip to walk home must be submitted in the registration system. Children are never permitted to leave the center with unauthorized persons. Your child will only be released to the persons that you have authorized in the registration system.

- Persons picking up your child will be asked to present a government-issued photo identification (i.e. driver's license, passport). Please verify that these individuals will be available to come for your child when you cannot and also remind them to bring a photo I.D. when picking up.
- Be sure to update your authorized list/emergency contacts in the registration system including names and phone numbers whenever a change occurs. In the event of an emergency or unexpected situation and you need to add someone to your authorized pickup list, please contact your center administrator.
- If a parent or authorized person appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired while picking up, we will not release the child. Staff members will attempt to contact parents and persons authorized by the parent for pick-up and emergency contacts. If staff is unable to arrange for the release of the child within one hour past the program's closing time, the staff member will call the Division of Child Protection & Permanency 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline (877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

Personal Items

Please do not send your child with toys, jewelry, or electronics from home. The YMCA is not responsible for these items in the event they are lost or damaged.

Nut Safe Policy

To promote a safe environment for all students, the YMCA has a "Nut Safe" policy because so many children have life-threatening allergies. This is a strategy to educate parents and staff about reducing the risk of exposure to life-threatening foods. It is important to note that the safety of children with severe reactions requires the cooperation of the entire community. Please read carefully so that you fully understand the guidelines that will be in place.

1. All snacks provided by the YMCA will be free of peanuts/nuts.
2. Children must refrain from bringing into school ANY products that contain peanuts/nuts. This includes all snacks as well as lunch items.
3. If a lunchbox is found to have peanut or nut products, those items will be removed and an alternative nut-free item provided.
4. We do not allow food sharing at school unless it is a special occasion (holiday parties, fruit and veggie sharing days, and other special events). We do check ingredient lists during these events to eliminate any possible reactions.
5. Any baked items brought in for celebrations should be nut-free or should be store-bought with the ingredient label intact.

Please read the ingredient labels of all snacks, including those on this list, to ensure that it does not contain any nuts at all or any of the following: peanuts/nuts, peanut/nut butter, peanut oil, peanut/nut flour, peanut/nut meal, or any variety of the statements, "contains peanuts" and "may contain traces of peanuts/nuts".

Helpful Peanut Allergy Info

(<http://www.foodallergy.org/page/peanut-allergy>)

Some Unexpected Sources of Peanut:

- Sauces such as pesto (pine nuts), salad dressing, gravy and salad dressing
- Some vegetarian food products, especially those advertised as meat substitutes
- Potato pancakes
- Glazes and marinades

Your support and understanding of this policy is greatly appreciated!

Late Pick Ups

A late fee of up to \$15.00 per 15 minutes is charged for late pickups. If you cannot arrive before the scheduled closing time, it is your responsibility to arrange for an emergency or alternate pick-up for your child. Please call to notify the program supervisor of any changes. Continuous late pick-ups may result in termination from the program.

Failure to Pick Up

If the parent/guardian or person authorized by the parents fails to pick up a child by the time of the program's closing, the following procedures will be followed:

- The child will be supervised at all times.
- Staff will attempt to contact a parent/guardian or persons authorized by the parent/guardian for pick-up and emergency contacts.
- If the staff is unable to arrange for the release of the child within one hour past the program's closing time, the staff member will call the Division of Child Protection & Permanency 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline (877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

Leave of Absence & Vacation Time

Enrollment is ongoing. Any leave of absence is subject to termination of enrollment. If you plan to return, you will be required to re-register and pay the registration fee. This includes a leave of absence for any reason including vacation while school is in session. Your child will be placed on a waitlist if enrollment is full.

After School Activities Administered by Your Child's School

Please help the Y keep your child safe at all times during after school hours. If your child is to attend non-YMCA after school activities such as scouts, sports programs, or enrichment programs, please inform the program supervisor in writing at least one day in advance. Please indicate the location of the activity within the building and the approximate time your child will be returning to the Y After School Program. If this is an ongoing activity, you may indicate all the dates the activity will take place. **Please ensure that an authorized adult from the activity will escort your child to the program and then back to the YMCA After School Program. Your child must be signed in with our staff upon return to the program.**

If your child will be transported to the YMCA After School Program on a bus, please inform the program supervisor of the estimated time of arrival so that proper arrangements can be made to receive your child.

Scheduled Early Dismissals & Emergency/Weather-Related School Closings

Our Before and After School programs follow the public school calendar. Care will be provided during scheduled half days at no additional cost. Please send your child to school with a nut-free lunch on those days.

The after school program will be closed when the school closes due to inclement weather or an emergency during normal school hours. If during the school day or after school, the weather forecast is predicting a snowstorm, we recommend that you arrange to pick up your child or contact an adult on your emergency list or an alternate pick-up person for early pick-up. This includes emergency school closings, holidays, and weather emergencies. If in doubt, please visit the Y's website or Facebook page for up-to-date information on program closings at metroymcas.org.

Holiday & Vacation Camp Program

Vacation camp programs for elementary and middle school-age children offer a great variety of activities at the Y to keep your child engaged and happy, while you're at work during scheduled school closings. Activities are organized around seasonal themes and may include swimming, sports and games, arts and crafts, cooking, and trips. Pre-registration is required. Please ask your program supervisor or check the Y website for your program

information, fees, hours, and contact information.

Parental Responsibilities

Please be sure to read through the entire Parent Handbook and policies provided during registration. You are required to complete and sign all enrollment, parent information, and medical release forms before your child starts our program. Your child will not be allowed to start the program with incomplete paperwork. We ask that you inform your child's school and teacher that they will be attending the After School Program. This helps to minimize any confusion on the first day or when schedules change. Please keep us informed of any changes and information you think will help us better serve you and your child. Please contact the program supervisor to discuss any questions or concerns about the program.

Parent Notification/Open Communication

The YMCA utilizes several methods to communicate with families regarding our programs. Information may be sent via email, posted on our website, or posted on social media including Facebook. Phone calls and text messages may also be used to communicate information. Please be sure to update your email address on file to ensure that you can receive updates and information about the program. Parent satisfaction surveys will also be administered via email.

Each program has a direct phone number that can be called during program hours. Please use this number to notify the staff if your child will be absent. You may also leave a message or send a text message if your call is not answered. YMCA staff may contact parents/guardians to verify an absence or to notify a parent/guardian of illness, injury, or other urgent information.

It is against YMCA policy for staff to provide members and participants with their personal cell phone numbers. Staff may not use their personal cell phones to contact parents.

Open Door Policy

Parents/guardians may visit the program at any time. Please contact your program supervisor to arrange for a tour of the program or meeting if needed.

Feedback & Complaints

We want to know about your experience. Please be sure to participate in the satisfaction surveys that are distributed throughout the year. This is our way of gauging your satisfaction and learning ways to improve our programs and services. If you need to issue a concern, complaint, or grievance, please notify your program supervisor immediately. There are several options for you to let us know about your concerns including in person, by phone, or by email. Confidentiality is critical to help ensure all concerns and complaints are reviewed and (as appropriate) investigated objectively and fairly by everyone involved. Please know that all concerns and complaints are important to us; however, depending on the nature and complexity of the issue, it may take time to evaluate the concern. Participants may also issue feedback, concerns, or complaints by speaking directly with a staff member or administrator.

Social Media

The Y recognizes the value of social media and other online communication tools for business purposes, such as connecting with members, staff, donors, and volunteers. To protect the Y, all employees are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the Y's values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility and to abide by this policy when using social media or other online communication tools for work-related purposes. This policy applies to all social networking sites, blogs, electronic boards and forums, videos, and similar sites, including those subject to personal subscription (herein referred to as "Social Media"). The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.

Home Language

We make every effort to communicate with children and families based on their primary language. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share words in their home language with our staff to help make their child feel more comfortable in the program. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to share books or other materials in their home language.

Services for Children with Disabilities

Our programs comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Our staff will make reasonable accommodations to meet the needs of individual children. Please request a meeting with the program supervisor to discuss information such as your child's IEP or 504. Your cooperation and communication are essential to your child's success in our program. If you believe our program is not in compliance, you may contact the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety or the United States Department of Justice to file a complaint.

Enrollment, Tuition & Payments

Registration is completed through our online Activenet portal. Families are encouraged to register their child online during the designated registration period. The number of children accepted into a program is determined by our license capacity issued by the NJ Department of Children and Families. Registration will be closed once the program capacity has been met and children registered thereafter will be placed on a waitlist. There will be a 48-hour business day minimum waiting period from the time of registration for new participants to begin attending the program. This will allow staff to prepare to receive your child. Your child may not start until health records have been submitted.

Before enrollment, families will need to activate their Activenet account. Families will receive detailed instructions to perform the one-time activation.

Enrollment and tuition are annual. Your annual tuition will be charged in weekly installments that will begin the Sunday before your child's confirmed start date. Payments will be automatically charged every Sunday to the authorized credit/debit card or checking account you provided during registration. Partial week schedules are fixed. Switching of days due to illness or closures is not permitted. We are not able to make up days due to absence or vacation. Tuition will not be prorated for any reason.

A charge of \$25.00 may be imposed for any returned check. An alternative form of payment such as prepaid debit, money order, or credit card, may be required after two returned checks.

In the event the parent/guardian is in default and fails to make payment, the parent/guardian is responsible for all costs of collections, including collection agency fees and legal costs. The Y will suspend services while collection efforts are pursued. Re-enrollment in any program requires prior satisfaction of all balances due, including collection costs. Child care services may be terminated for failure to make payments or continuous late pick-ups.

Additional fees may be applied for the following:

- Annual registration fee
- Late pick-up fees of up to \$15.00 per every fifteen minutes after closing
- Service fee of \$20.00 for schedule changes
- Annual tuition does not include vacation camp and snow day camp. Additional fees apply.

Third-Party Payments: The Y accepts third-party subsidies at most locations.

- Parent/guardian is responsible for submitted all required paperwork
- Annual registration fee is due at the time of registration

- Registration must be for 5 days per week
- Parent/guardian is responsible for making sure contacts including email and phone number are current
- Parent/guardian will be responsible for any unpaid balance by the third-party provider
- Services may be interrupted or terminated for failure to make payments on time

Schedule Changes & Withdrawal from the Program

The Y offers flexible program options and allows you to select days of service based on your needs. You must choose specific days your child will attend the program during your initial enrollment for the school year. Changes to your child’s program schedule, including changing, adding, or reducing days, must be submitted 48 hours in advance in writing via the schedule change form on our website. A change fee will be charged to your account. Schedule changes will take effect on a mutually agreed-upon date. If your child is absent on their scheduled day, you may not make up that day later in the week. Program credits or refunds will not be provided for missed days. **Thirty days’ written notice is required to withdraw from the program.**

Changes and withdrawals can be made on our website:

- Go to: <https://www.metroymcas.org/main/child-care/before-after-school>
- Select your YMCA branch location
- Select Schedule Update Form
- Complete and submit the form

“Y For All” Financial Assistance

The Y is a leading 501c3 nonprofit organization for youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Through funds raised from the Annual Campaign and special events, we can provide financial assistance to qualifying individuals and families so that everyone has a chance to learn, grow, and thrive at the Y. If you or your family would like more information about financial assistance or to donate, please contact your program administrator.

Our policy does not allow us to accept donations in the form of used toys, books, furniture, and/or equipment. Please visit [FAMILYHOOD CENTRAL](#) for information on other organizations that may accept these types of donations.

Court Orders & Confidentiality

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order, the Y must be provided with an original certified copy of the most recent court order and all amendments for our files. If a court order is not on file with the Y, both parents will be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees on a need-to-know basis to ensure we can provide the most appropriate care for your child. Employees are strictly prohibited from disclosing confidential information about other children in the program.

Off-Site Trips

In accordance with the Manual of Requirements, we must provide parents advance notice of any field trip, outing, or special event involving the transportation of children, and receive written consent of the parent before taking a child on such a trip. In the event of an emergency that requires the school to be evacuated, YMCA staff will escort children off the school grounds if instructed by emergency responders. Permission is granted by signing the Parent Agreement during registration.

Photographs & Media

We respect the privacy of our participants. No photos or videos will be taken of any child without your consent. This includes the use of cell phones and cameras. Your child’s photo may be taken for Y marketing purposes and used in newsletters, media advertisements, or articles. This footage and use will be shared in advance with you for

your approval and knowledge.

Behavior & Discipline

The Metro YMCA utilizes a progressive behavior response plan to ensure that our responses to challenging behaviors are consistent, focused on assisting the child to succeed in our programs, and involves the engagement of the parent or guardian in addressing the child's needs. If your child consistently has issues with challenging behaviors, you may receive a behavior report intended to inform you of the behavior, communicate how we are working to address the underlying needs of your child and engage you in strategies to support your child.

Positive discipline is used to help promote social and emotional growth. We use two methods for promoting positive behavior. First, we reinforce acceptable behavior with verbal rewards. Second, we talk with children making inappropriate choices to educate them about making better choices in the future and allow the child to rejoin activities. The following behaviors are considered to be inappropriate:

- Behavior on the part of the child that interferes with the safety and well-being of himself/herself, or any other person
- Verbal disrespect of YMCA staff or other children
- Lack of respect for property and/or the property of others
- Abusive language or gestures

The goal of our expectations is to create an environment of shared values, working together with parents, to correct behaviors and separate negative actions from a child. If appropriate, we may have the child take a timeout for no longer than one minute for each year of the child's age. During this time, the child will be removed from the group and remain under the supervision of staff. As per the YMCA Staff Code of Conduct, a child will never be deprived of food, struck, name-called, threatened, or ridiculed by staff. No child will be isolated or left unsupervised at any time. If the remedial actions do not work, parents/guardians will be advised verbally and/or in writing. We encourage parents/guardians to share any appropriate behavior management strategies to help their child make better choices in the future. **Inappropriate behavior that cannot be redirected may result in the following:**

1. Verbal warning from the site supervisor
2. Written communication of the child's inappropriate behavior
3. Communication requesting a meeting
4. Suspension or expulsion from the program

Suspension & Expulsion

If the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's behavior warranting a suspension or expulsion. The parent/guardian will be informed about the length of the suspension and the expected behavioral changes required for the child to return to the center. Failure of the child to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the program. In case of expulsion, the parent/guardian will be given a specific date that allows sufficient time to seek alternate child care, whenever possible.

A child cannot be suspended or expelled from the program as a form of retaliation if the parent/guardian has made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a program's alleged violations of the licensing requirements, reported abuse or neglect occurring at the program, or questioning the program regarding policies and procedures.

Child Health & Wellbeing

The following guidelines are required by the NJ Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing:

A physical examination must be completed before a child is allowed to participate in our program. We must have an up-to-date immunization record on file for your child. Any additional immunizations must be added to your child's file. Each child must have a health examination by a licensed physician within:

- **six months prior to admission for children up to 2 ½ years or**
- **one year prior to admission for children over 2 ½ years**

Illness

The Metro Y is committed to ensuring the safety and health of your child and our employees. If your child is ill and will be absent, please notify the program as soon as possible. If your child develops symptoms while at the program, we will contact you to request that you pick up your child immediately, and follow the guidelines related to your child's condition.

Your child may return once they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of medication, or with a doctor's note stating the child is well enough to participate in activities and does not pose a health risk to others. **To maintain a healthy environment and prevent the spread of illness, we kindly ask for your cooperation in keeping your child home if sick. Keeping sick children home helps protect other children and staff from getting sick, prevents outbreaks of contagious illnesses, and ensures your child gets the rest and care they need to recover fully.**

A child who has any of the illnesses or symptoms of illness specified below shall not be admitted to the program on a given day unless a medical diagnosis from a health care provider, which has been communicated to the program supervisor in writing, or verbally with a written follow-up, indicates that the child poses no serious health risk to himself or herself or other children. Such illnesses or symptoms of illness shall include, but not be limited to, any of the following:

- Acute diarrhea, characterized as twice the child's usual frequency of bowel movements with a change to a looser consistency within a period of 24 hours, or bloody diarrhea;
- Two or more episodes of acute vomiting within a period of 24 hours;
- Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit or over or axillary temperature of 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or over in conjunction with behavior changes;
- Red eyes with discharge;
- Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness;
- Severe pain or discomfort and/or too ill to participate in activities;
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin;
- Infected, untreated skin patches;
- Difficult rapid breathing or severe coughing;
- Undiagnosed skin rashes with fever, behavior change, or increasing tenderness or open blisters;
- Weeping or bleeding skin lesions that have not been treated by a health care provider;
- Mouth sores with drooling; or
- Stiff neck
- If your child is suspected to have lice, we will ask that you pick your child up immediately and have him/her treated. Your child may return when free of lice and live nits.

Administration of Medication

Medication will be administered to your child only under the following circumstances:

- The physician-prescribed dosage schedule does not allow the parent to administer the medication to the child before or after child care.
- Medication is in its original container.
- The parent has provided written permission to administer medication to the YMCA.

- One staff person will administer the medication while another observes. Both staff persons will sign the Medication Log.

Communicable Diseases

Children and/or staff with an excludable communicable disease (see list below) shall not be permitted to attend the program until the following requirements have been met:

- A note is received from a physician that states that the child or staff member has been diagnosed and presents no risk to themselves or others.
- The program supervisor contacts the Communicable Disease program at the State Department of Health and is told that the child or staff member poses no health risk to others.
- In the case of chicken pox, the program supervisor obtains a note from a parent or staff member that at least six days have lapsed since the onset of the rash, or that all sores have dried or crusted.

Table of Excludable Communicable Diseases			
Respiratory Illnesses		Contact Illnesses	Gastrointestinal Illnesses
Chicken Pox	*Mumps	Impetigo	*Campylobacter
*German Measles	Strep Throat	Scabies	*Escherichia coli (E Coli)
*Hemophilus Influenza	*Tuberculosis	Shingles	*Giardia Lamblia
*Measles	*Whooping Cough		*Hepatitis A
*Meningococcus			*Salmonella/Shigella

*Reportable Diseases: If an enrolled child or staff member has been diagnosed as having contracted or is suspected of having a reportable disease, then the program supervisor must report it to the local health department. If there is any outbreak of an excludable disease at the program, each parent whose child may have been exposed to the disease shall receive a written notice of the outbreak.

Injuries & Medical Emergencies

If a minor injury occurs during the program, the Office of Licensing Accident/Injury Report will be filled out and presented to the parent/guardian for signature. If a more serious injury occurs, then the parent/guardian will be notified by phone. If the injury requires medical attention, then the parent/guardian will be asked to come to the program immediately to pick up their child. Staff members cannot take a child to the hospital or doctor in their vehicles.

In a medical emergency, the proper authorities will be called to transfer the child to the local hospital. The parent/guardian will be called immediately. If the staff is unable to reach a parent/guardian, the next person on the family's emergency contact list will be called. A staff person will accompany emergency personnel and will stay with the child until a parent/guardian or an authorized emergency contact arrives. The permission-to-treat form that is completed during registration will be brought to the hospital by the staff person.

Child Safety & Abuse Prevention

Safety is our primary concern. Our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are part of everything we do. Our policies and procedures include our child abuse prevention policy, staff and volunteer expectations, and responding to allegations of abuse. We place great value on creating the most child-safe environment possible. For additional information regarding our child abuse prevention policies, procedures, and additional resources, please visit www.metroymcas.org/main/child-abuse-prevention/.

Babysitting

Per the Metro Y's Child Abuse Prevention Policies and Staff Code of Conduct, staff members are not allowed to sign out any child from the program or transport any child in their car unless the staff and the child or child's

family or guardian are related. Staff members may not be alone with the children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation and are subject to prior approval by the Executive Director.

Supervision

Proper supervision is critical in providing a secure environment where children can learn and grow. The Metro Y is committed to providing continuous, attentive, and appropriate supervision to all children in our care.

- Staff-to-child ratios will adhere to state regulations and licensing requirements.
- Children will be supervised at all times, including indoor and outdoor activities, bathroom visits, snack times, and during transitions between activities.
- Extra care will be taken during transition times to ensure all children are accounted for and supervised.
- The playground and outdoor areas will be inspected before children are allowed to use them. Any identified hazards will be immediately addressed and documented in the facility management system.
- Children will be supervised during bathroom visits. Privacy will be respected while ensuring safety.
- Staff will ensure children are released only to authorized individuals listed on the child's enrollment form.
- During special activities and field trips, additional staff or volunteers may be used to maintain proper supervision.
- All staff will receive regular training on supervision techniques, safety procedures, and emergency response.

National Sex Offender Screening

We conduct checks through the National Sex Offender Registry on all adult (18 years and older) members and visitors through a web-based platform that will notify us instantly if a sex offender is attempting to enter the building. Anyone with a sex offender record, including visitors, vendors, contractors, family members/friends, and staff, will not be allowed access to the building and/or children in our care.

Praesidium Accreditation

Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges has achieved full accreditation from Praesidium Inc., the leader in abuse risk management. This prestigious honor publicly demonstrates that Metro Y has worked to achieve the highest industry standards in abuse prevention.

To achieve accreditation, the Metro Y staff underwent a rigorous, 12-month process that included a comprehensive review of the Metro Y's internal safety policies and procedures, staff interviews, and onsite facility inspections conducted by certified Praesidium staff. Metro Y now joins a small group of YMCAs around the world that have achieved this highly respected accreditation status. For more information, visit PRAESIDIUMINC.COM.

Steps to Protecting Children:

1. Learn the facts of child sexual abuse. Understand the risks. Realities, not trusts, should influence your decisions regarding children.
2. Minimize opportunity. If you eliminate or reduce one-adult/one-child situations, you'll dramatically lower the risk of sexual abuse for children.
3. Talk about it. Children often keep abuse secret, but barriers can be broken down by talking openly about it.
4. Stay alert. Don't expect obvious signs when a child is being sexually abused.
5. Make a plan. Learn where to go, whom to call, and how to react.
6. Act on suspicions. The future well-being of a child is at stake.
7. Get involved. Volunteer and financially support organizations that fight the tragedy of child sexual abuse.

Please educate your children about appropriate and inappropriate physical, verbal, and emotional contact. Make sure that your child knows that if they experience any inappropriate actions at our Y (or elsewhere), they should alert you immediately.

If you see warning signs from your child or adult, or you hear about something that sounds like abuse, report it immediately. If your child tells you about sexual abuse or inappropriate behavior, here's how to react. Your response plays a big role in how your child understands abuse and how he/she recovers.

1. Stay calm.
2. Comfort your child.
3. Listen carefully.
4. Ask for examples.
5. Do not threaten or criticize the person your child is accusing.

If what you learn from your child or if what you've observed or overheard at practice sounds like abuse, call the CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE at **877.NJ.Abuse (877.652.2873)** or the police. If what you learn from your child, or if what you've observed or overheard at practice, sounds like a boundary violation, suspicious or inappropriate behavior, or a policy violation in an organization, share your concerns with the individual employee, supervisor, or the person in charge of your organization. Be sure to follow up with both your child and the adult you've talked to.

Hate Speech Policy

Metro YMCA of the Oranges denounces the use of words or images to harass individuals or groups based on gender, gender expression, race, religion, sexual orientation, or any other aspect of identity. Hate speech of this nature is contrary to our mission statement, diversity statement, and core values. Individuals determined to have participated in such harassment may be subject to consequences including suspension and expulsion.

Emotional Wellbeing

The mental, emotional, social, and developmental health of your children is just as important to us as their physical health. We strongly encourage parents and guardians to share mental/emotional/developmental needs and/or existing management plans with the Center Director so that we can partner with you to provide the best care possible for your child.

To support mental, emotional, and social development, we utilize the HARMONY SEL curriculum. Harmony SEL is a social-emotional learning curriculum for pre-K through 6th grade intended to foster knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to develop healthy identities, create meaningful relationships, and engage productively with others. Lessons include topics such as diversity and inclusion, empathy and critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, and peer relationships.

To support the mental and emotional health of your children, select staff are trained and certified by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing in YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID. This training equips staff to recognize when youth and adolescents aged 12 – 18 may be struggling with a mental or emotional challenge, relate to that challenge, and offer support and referral to services if needed/desired.

Staff & Family Relationships

The Y encourages a positive and cooperative relationship between families and staff. This relationship is always professional, and must not extend beyond the classroom or the center. As per our Child Protection Policy, staff members are prohibited from babysitting any child that actively attends or participates in a Metro YMCA program including child care, or is an active member of the Metro YMCA of the Oranges. Please speak with your program supervisor if you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy.

Family Involvement

Our programs are strengthened by active family involvement. The Y maintains an open-door policy, meaning that any parent or guardian can visit the program at any time. In addition to visiting the center, there are several ways that parents can become involved such as volunteering for special events. Please speak with your program supervisor for additional information.

Family events may be offered throughout the year so that parents, children, and staff can gather socially. These may include international events, carnivals, picnics, and family nights. All caregivers are encouraged to participate in family activities and events. Events will be communicated through email and social media.

Information to Parents

Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 3A:52), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents and staff this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families. In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent and staff member's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf> or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1 (877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention, too. Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the OOL's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are available soon after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint OOL/Information to Parents/May 2019 Page 2 of 2 investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review or you can view them online at <https://childcareexplorer.njccis.com/portal/>. Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it. Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents. Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/(877) 652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292- 0422 or go to www.state.nj.us/dcf/.