Owen Sound
Grey Bruce

Shine On

Child Care Parent Handbook

School Age Program

YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce Child Care Parent Handbook for School Age Programs

Revised March 2026

Contents

YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce Child Care Parent Handbook for School Age Programs 2
- Welcome 4
- YMCA Program Statement 5
  - Our View of the Child 5
  - Our Statement on Play 5
- YMCA Curriculum 6
- Curriculum Goals & Approaches 6
  - Promoting health, safety, nutrition and well-being 6
  - Supporting relationships 7
  - Encouraging children to interact, communicate, and self regulate 7
  - Fostering exploration, play & inquiry 7
  - Providing child initiated and adult supported experiences 8
  - Planning learning environments to support every child's learning 8
  - Incorporating indoor, outdoor, active, rest and quiet activities 9
  - Fostering engagement & communication with parents/guardians 10
  - Involving community partners 10
  - Supporting educators' continuous professional learning 10
  - Documentation 11
- Staff 11
  - YMCA Staff Requirements 11
  - College of Early Childhood Educators 12
  - Volunteers and Students 12
  - Our Child Guidance 12
  - Prohibited Practices 12

Families Our Partners 13
Communication with families 13
Role of the Family 13
Expectations of Behaviour 14
Inclusion 14
Complaint Policy 14
Escalation of Issues or Concerns 15
Confidentiality 16
Conduct 16
Safeguarding Children and Youth 16
Social Media 18
Registration 18
Enrolment/Wait List 18
School Age Program Registration 19
Forms 20
Fees 20
School Age Fees 20
Late Fees 21
Income Tax Receipts 21
Withdrawal Notification 22
Program Information 22
Hours and Days of Operation 22
Arrival/Departure 23
Program Procedures 25
Serious Occurrence Reporting 25
Minor Accident Reporting 26
Emergency Management 26
Illness 26
Medication / Over the Counter Products 26
Life-Threatening Allergies (Anaphylaxis) 27
Nutrition – Meals/Snacks 29
Withdrawal of Service/Schedule Change Request 30
Thank you for choosing the YMCA 31

Welcome

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce is a charity that has been offering Child Care in our community since 1955.

Today, we provide care for children ages 18 months to 12 years in 20 locations across Grey and Bruce Counties, including:

- 5 full-day Licensed Child Care centres
- 15 School Age programs (Before and After School)

All of our programs are licensed by the Ministry of Education and follow the requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA).

We are proud to have subsidy agreements with both Grey County and Bruce County, helping ensure that child care is accessible to families across our region.

Our Mission

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce is a charity dedicated to building a caring, healthy community by creating opportunities for all people to achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body.

Our Vision

Our YMCA is a community leader focused on improving the health and well-being of Owen Sound and Grey and Bruce Counties.

YMCA Core Values

Belonging • Caring • Honesty • Respect • Responsibility

YMCA Child Care promotes and teaches these values through our curriculum, our interactions and our relationships with children and families. We invite families to join us in embracing and supporting these values as part of our shared community. values.

YMCA Program Statement

Our program statement describes how our programs support and foster early learning. It outlines our view of the child, our philosophy and curriculum as well as the goals and approaches used to ensure healthy child development.

It also outlines how we evaluate our programs to maintain quality and how we support the professionals who work with the children in our care.

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 parents/guardians 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 as 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.

Our Statement on Play

Each child can reach his or her full human potential through play. Our intention is to provide the best possible environment that allows the best possible play for all children in our care. We endeavour to meet the play needs of all children and must do whatever possible to support the natural urge to play. Play helps the child to be both engaged with everyday realities and to be absorbed in an ecstatic self-forgetfulness. It ensures involvement, enjoyment, and various forms of success. Play can be powerful or profound, but it is always purposeful. Play is a vehicle that propels learning and development. Play and development are intertwined; neither precedes the other. All domains of development are supported by play, and play has the additional benefit of being self-initiated and therefore a joy rather than a chore. Play makes discovery pleasurable, but it also propels the child into the vast realm of learning. Play provides a way for children to be healthy in body, mind and spirit.

Play fosters skill development. It offers opportunities for gaining new skills as well as refining existing ones. Play is directly linked to the child's learning. Their cognitive development and academic success are enhanced by the play experience.

Play is physical and increases activity levels, fitness, balance, gross motor skills and fine motor actions. A wide range of scientific, mathematical, perspective-taking and other cognitive processes in discovery and other types of play. Play is social and aids in language learning while supporting social skills development. Self-concepts and emotions are better understood through play, as is the building of emotional intelligence. Important self-regulatory skills may be acquired and reinforced through play.

Play builds resilience and can help children manage stress. There are often therapeutic benefits to play. Typically, children direct their play in ways that address their own socio-emotional issues.

YMCA Curriculum

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce has a well-established, research-based approach to early learning. We implement the YMCA A Place to Connect™ curriculum for children ages 6–12, and our school age educators participate in comprehensive training to deliver it effectively.

YMCA A Place to Connect™ curriculum focuses on children engaging in fun activities that the children help to plan and direct with a qualified educator. A major component of this program is creating a positive social environment where children engage in physical activity for a minimum of 45 minutes per day. The curriculum includes opportunities for physical activities indoors and outdoors, dramatic performances, works of art, nutritious snacks, clubs and tournaments, developing leadership skills, problem solving and developing moral understanding.

Curriculum Goals & Approaches

Promoting health, safety, nutrition and well-being

Keeping children healthy and safe is a priority at the YMCA and we understand that the well-being of their child is a parent's number one concern. Therefore, we have developed comprehensive, research-based procedures to support children.

Some of the procedures in place at the YMCA include:

- safe supervision of children
- child and youth safeguarding procedures and training
- sanitation and disinfection procedures
- menu planning following the Canada Food Guide
- communicable disease prevention
- emergency procedures
- Standard First Aid and CPR training
- WHMIS training
- Health and Safety training
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act training (AODA)

Supporting relationships

At the YMCA we understand that young children flourish in all areas of development when they are in positive and responsive relationships with adults. YMCA educators build a foundation of trust with children by being available, sensitive, responsive, and caring.

YMCA educators create an inclusive and respectful environment to foster positive, equitable, and collaborative relationships. When children feel safe, secure, valued and a contributing member of their world they can explore, discover, try new things, grow, learn and develop.

To support your child's care, growth, and development, YMCA educators interact and communicate with parents daily, sharing observations, documentation, and reflections.

Encouraging children to interact, communicate, and self regulate

The YMCA believes that it is the role of the adult in a child's life to support them to learn how to interact effectively with the world around them including other children, adults, and the environment.

Generally self-regulation involves gaining a degree of control over one's bodily functions and impulses, managing one's emotions, changing one's behaviours and maintaining focus or attention on something or someone.

Some of the YMCA educators' approaches to positive interactions among children include:

- Providing small group experiences that allow for more one-on-one adult attention.
- Modelling inclusive, respectful, and collaborative interactions with children and other adults.
- Creating a flexible learning environment that allows educators to respond in the moment and build on or scaffold the children's interests.
- Making toys, equipment, and materials available to children at all times and giving them the freedom to choose.
- Playing with children to demonstrate prosocial skills including promoting discussion, problem-solving when conflict arises, and understanding how their actions affect others.
- Staying up to date with educator training on self regulation, resilience, and self-regulation strategies, including Dr. Stuart Shankar's Five Practices of Self-Reg (The MEHRIT Centre).

Fostering exploration, play & inquiry

Children are born with a natural sense of curiosity and wonder. They play naturally.

As parents and educators, we watch children explore their world through their senses, repetition of tasks, imitation, asking questions, pretending. But what are children really doing? Children are putting together all the pieces of how the world works through exploration, play and inquiry.

YMCA Educators understand the importance of play. They foster, expand and support this natural talent called play by being:

- active participants
- architects of the playscape
- keen observers
- planners
- reporters
- collaborators
- reflective practitioners

Observing a day-in -the-life of a YMCA School Age program, you will note that most activities are directed by the children. Children decide where, when, what and how they wish to play. Their decisions are based on their interests and curiosity.

The educator responds by adapting the environment by adding new toys, materials and equipment, posing questions, and being a play partner. This sets the stage for further play, inquiry, discovery and learning. The educator's role is to support play so that learning and development flourishes.

Providing child initiated and adult supported experiences

Children and parents are warmly greeted upon arrival and after a brief check-in to share news from the evening before, the children get down to the serious business of playing.

The space is set up with a variety of activities that support the observed interests of the children. The children might join some friends at the creative art table to work collaboratively on a collage, or they might work on a Lego structure they safely stored on the counter to complete the next day.

There are no expectations imposed by the educator or curriculum on where children play, or whom they play with, or how long they play at one activity. That is for the child to choose based on their interests.

Planning learning environments to support every child's learning

YMCA School Age programs are in various schools throughout both the Bluewater District School Board and the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board. These partnerships have helped to create a seamless day for your child.

At the YMCA we understand that the parent is the child's first teacher, the YMCA educator is the second teacher, and the learning environment is the child's third teacher.

The YMCA's unique approach to planning and creating learning environments supports children's play so that early learning and healthy development is maximized. YMCA School Age programs are designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children.

We strive to create home-like environments that include soft furnishings, items from nature like plants and pets, family photographs, and accessories that are intended to make children feel comfortable and safe.

YMCA educators understand that children learn holistically and not in one area of development at a time. We understand that doing some activities involves gross motor and fine motor skills, but the play children engage in while in the activity involves much more - communication skills, social skills, etc.

Therefore, you may find books, paper and crayons in the block area because children are using these items to figure out how to build a bridge from one shelf to another.

Incorporating indoor, outdoor, active, rest and quiet activities

YMCA educators design a schedule that meets the needs of the children and provides for a balance of activities throughout the program times. Consideration for the care requirements, age, developmental level, energy level, and interests of the children are included. Generous blocks of time for children to explore, play, and inquire are included both indoors and outdoors.

The schedule is not rigid but operating in small groups is mandated. One small group of children may be outside with an educator, while the other small group may prefer to stay indoors doing crafts. Periods of active and quiet play are interwoven throughout the day both indoors and outdoors.

At the YMCA we don't let the weather stop us from having fun in nature. The children love to bundle up in warm dry clothes and head out to jump in puddles or make snowballs. Therefore, during the afternoon program, the children will be outside at least 30 minutes each day, weather permitting, unless otherwise approved by a physician or parent of the child in writing advising against it. In very poor weather active play takes place indoors so that children get the physical activity their bodies require.

Many times, throughout the year staff and children seek out opportunities to enhance the learning by visiting and exploring the community, particularly on full day program days. By exploring various places within the community for example the grocery store or maple sugar bush, staff and children may have a better understanding of what is within their community. These visits will also foster great learning opportunities that can be extended into the programming for a longer period.

YMCA educators are trained to keep transitions from activity to activity to a minimum, so children get to play more. Our daily routine includes active and quiet

times, time with friends and time to play alone. Many opportunities are given for your child to interact individually or as part of a group. These schedules are posted within each classroom space.

Fostering engagement & communication with parents/guardians

At the YMCA we understand that parents/guardians are the most important people in a child's life. YMCA educators play a supporting role while parents/guardians go to work and school.

Getting to know family members is critical as an educator and including family members in programming helps a child to feel a greater sense of belonging.

Other strategies to engage parents and gain input include:

- celebrations and events
- parent surveys
- displays of children's artwork, sculptures, and creations
- photographs of children at play
- posting planning documents that include observations of children's interests and activities introduced by YMCA educators

Involving community partners

While our range of community partners is broad, the largest and most important is the education system. Our School Age programs are located in schools, so relationships with principals, faculty and staff are critical.

The YMCA works closely with local community agencies and partners to support the children and families in our programs. We view the community as a valuable resource and our staff plan learning opportunities to engage the community in our programs.

The YMCA actively seeks out opportunities to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community through networking opportunities, community planning tables and conferences.

Supporting educators' continuous professional learning

The YMCA is committed to the ongoing professional development of all our educators. After all, what the educator learns informs practice and the benefit is passed onto the children.

YMCA educators attend a series of YMCA curriculum training sessions throughout their career with the YMCA. Additionally, the YMCA provides opportunities for educators to attend external learning events, conferences and keep legislated training requirements like Standard First Aid and Infant and Child CPR up to date.

As a Registered member of the College of Early Childhood Educators, staff are committed to a continued learning practice that guides staff to reflect on their practice and plan for, engage in and document professional learning experiences

linked to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. All Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE), regardless of employment status or title, must complete the Continuous Professional Learning Portfolio components.

On a day-to-day basis the School Age program supervisor is responsible for the leadership, mentorship, coaching and development of educators. Based on the learning needs of the educators the supervisor may meet with staff to suggest strategies, conduct learning huddles to focus on a particular area of YMCA curriculum with the entire team, conduct regular staff meetings to reflect and plan, invite speakers from other YMCA departments or community agencies to attend the centre, or provide materials including links, articles, and various readings to supplement educator's professional learning.

Documentation

YMCA educators participate in a continuous cycle of observation:

- documenting play and its significance
- determining the children's interests
- planning activities that support the interests
- discussion with team members
- reflection that informs the planning of activities and the learning environment

Links are made between theory, research, YMCA curriculum, the YMCA Program Statement, government pedagogy, and children's interests to inform the planning decisions YMCA educators make.

You will see this cycle reflected in the toys, materials, and equipment provided in the play areas, the furniture arrangement, the creative work of children, the activities children are engaging in, on the planning documents posted weekly for parents to read and discuss with the educators and in photographs and written descriptions of activities.

This process of continuous program assessment is called reflective practice. Daily, educators are observing and engaging with children and evaluating the effectiveness of the learning environment to build on children's interests. Weekly, they review, plan, and discuss with their team and supervisor to ensure they are supporting children's learning and development. Monthly they meet as a team to look back on what did and didn't work and then plan accordingly.

Staff

YMCA Staff Requirements

YMCA staff must go through a rigorous screening process that includes demonstrating their values and skills, providing a police vulnerable sector check that is renewed every three years, and holding a valid Standard First Aid and Infant and Child CPR certification. Once selected, new YMCA staff participate in orientation

and training on YMCA policies and procedures, Ministry of Education regulations, and YMCA curriculum.

College of Early Childhood Educators

The College of Early Childhood Educators is the professional regulatory body for registered early childhood educators (RECEs) in Ontario. The College's role is to protect the public interest in setting requirements for registration to practice as a RECE, setting ethical and professional standards and holding RECEs accountable to the practice. RECEs are trained in child development and the planning and delivery of child-based learning and care programs.

YMCA staff with an early childhood education diploma or equivalent degree must be current members in good standing with the College. RECEs must renew their membership with the College on an annual basis.

Volunteers and Students

YMCA programs are enhanced by the involvement of volunteers and placement students. Volunteers and students in our Child Care programs are always under the supervision of a YMCA staff member and never alone with children.

All volunteers and placement students must provide a police vulnerable sector check before interacting with children and are required to adhere to all YMCA policies and procedures and Ministry of Education regulations.

Our Child Guidance

Our YMCA is committed to helping children grow to their fullest potential in a safe, caring and nurturing environment. However, it is necessary at times to set limits and standards of appropriate behaviour. YMCA staff are guided by the YMCA Child Guidance Procedure which they are always required to adhere to when interacting with children in a YMCA program. Staff are required to review this procedure on an annual basis and a behaviour management review is completed at least quarterly by the program supervisor.

Prohibited Practices

A prohibited practice is any behaviour that puts children at risk or inhibits the growth, self-esteem and healthy development of a child. The following practices are unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment.

- Corporal punishment
- Physical restraint of a child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purpose of discipline in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting themselves or others. Is used only as a last resort and only until the risk or injury is no longer imminent.

- Any forms of abuse which includes physical and/or emotional ill-treated, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence, and exploitation which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship, trust or power.
- Depriving a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding, medical treatment, or participation in activities
- Leaving children unsupervised.
- Deliberately using harsh or degrading measures or threats, use of derogatory language directed at, or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect or self worth.
- Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining a child or confining a 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.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- Using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine a child when separating them from other children.
- Interacting or relating to children outside of the YMCA program activity (e.g. weekend home visit, babysitting, online chatting, etc.)

A complete copy of the YMCA Child Guidance Procedure can be attained from your program supervisor.

Families Our Partners

Communication with families

Program Evaluation

Parents will be requested to fill out a parent satisfaction survey periodically. Comments are welcome anytime.

Information Changes

It is most important to let the centre Supervisor of program staff know of any changes in your child's life which would affect your child's situation in the program. Be sure to inform them about any significant or permanent changes to drop off and pick up times, immunizations, allergies, addresses and phone number and authorised persons, etc.

Role of the Family

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the program whenever possible. Parental involvement is a key element to the success of the child's experience in the YMCA Child Care. Participation can include verbal or written feedback, sharing information about the child's development, attending meetings, workshops, fundraising events or volunteering on field trips or in the classroom.

Expectations of Behaviour

At all times, staff will role model, encourage and assist children to be courteous to others, use appropriate language to express themselves, respect the ideas, property and personal well-being of others and use "peace-making" as the preferred method of conflict resolution. The safety of all the children is our primary concern. The provision of our service is conditional on both you and your child's demonstration of these expectations. Staff will work with children and families to provide consistency in self-regulation techniques. Behaviour which poses a safety hazard for the other children and the staff will not be accepted and could result in immediate withdrawal of services.

Inclusion

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce, in keeping with our mission and vision, believes in the development of healthy, confident children. We are committed to treating children with respect and dignity and helping them grow and develop to their full potential in a safe nurturing and learning environment.

Central to our work at the YMCA is diversity and social inclusion. We believe that all children and families should have an inclusive and respectful and positive experience in our program.

- YMCA programs are designed to develop children in spirit, mind and body, every child is a unique individual and adds value to our program.
- Parents and families are involved, consulted and informed partners with the YMCA staff and volunteers (where appropriate).
- YMCA staff and volunteers (where appropriate) strive to ensure the environment, and the programs are adapted to meet the needs of all children.
- YMCA staff and volunteers (where appropriate) seek out community partners to enhance our ability to support children with special needs through training and consultation.

We will strive to be able to support families and children with our available resources. If we are unable to support the children and families, we will work collaboratively, to find a solution for their child to have success.

Complaint Policy

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our School Age program and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage

parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by staff and management of the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial, and respectful to the parties involved.

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Manager and Director of Child Care. If the complainant is not satisfied with the findings or the corrective action, he/she may submit a written appeal to the CEO within 10 days of receipt of the communications. The decision made at this level is considered final.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (i.e., 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.

Contacts

Director of Child Care: Cyndy Jefferson - cyndy.jefferson@osgb.ymca.ca

Manager of Child Care Operations: Cheri Auckland - cheri.auckland@osgb.ymca.ca

Hanover Child Care: hanoverbeforeafter@osgb.ymca.ca

Kincardine Child Care: kincardinebeforeafter@osgb.ymca.ca

Ripley Child Care: ripleybeforeafter@osgb.ymca.ca

Port Elgin Child Care: portelginbeforeafter@osgb.ymca.ca

Owen Sound Child Care: owensoundbeforeafter@osgb.ymca.ca

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

College of ECE 1-888-961-8558 or complaints/discipline inquiries – discipline@college-ece.ca

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (i.e. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Privacy of information

All staff and volunteers understand that they may have access to confidential information about children and families. As such they have agreed in writing to keep this information in strictest of confidence. Before sharing information about a child with outside agencies or schools, staff will obtain parental consent. All documentation of consent to share will be kept on site in the child's file (if applicable).

Conduct

Our program maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated by any party. If at any point a parent/guardian, provider, or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

The YMCA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to suspend or refuse services for inappropriate behaviour.

Safeguarding Children and Youth

Duty to Report

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce has a legal obligation to report any suspicions of child abuse to the Bruce Grey Child and Family Services.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

For more information visit http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx

For the complete YMCA Complaint Policy, please connect with your program supervisor.

Procedure

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Program Room-Related i.e., schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the classroom staff directly **or** - the supervisor or licensee.	- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised **or** - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 2 business days. Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include: - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral. Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter. Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as
General, Centre- or Operations-Related i.e., child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the supervisor or licensee.	
Staff, Supervisor, and/or Licensee-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly **or** - the supervisor or licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be	

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
	reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.
Student / Volunteer Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student **or** - the supervisor and/or licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	

Social Media

Our programs must respect the right to privacy for all of our families, staff, volunteers etc. therefore no parent/guardian, staff member or any other community member will be permitted to post pictures of any individuals or groups involved in our programs onto any social media site i.e. Facebook, web sites etc. without the prior written approval of every individual involved.

Registration

Enrolment/Wait List

Parents/guardians may call the closest Child Care centre to determine if there is a YMCA School Age program at their child's school. If so, the supervisor will direct the

parents/guardians to the Provincial Data Base "Onelist" for programs in Bruce County and those who reside in Grey County are directed to our website (https://ymcaowensound.on.ca/school-age-program/) to complete and submit a waitlist application.

Enrolment is full time only (Monday – Friday).

Space accommodation is based on a variety of factors. When placing children on a waitlist the supervisor will consider the following factors, and priority may be given to the following:

a) YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce staff
b) children transitioning from YMCA Child Care to YMCA School Age program
c) siblings of children already attending
d) children needing specialized support (if funding and staff availability for 1:1 care)
e) space availability based on age of the child

Using these determining factors the supervisor will be able to determine where the child will be placed on the waitlist. In some cases, the supervisor may be able to predict when the request for care could be granted. The supervisor would then follow up with the family to provide them with this information. The family then will be able to determine if they wish to remain on the waitlist or to seek alternate care. If the family chooses to remain on the waitlist the supervisor will then let them know of the follow up procedures.

When a space becomes available the supervisor will notify the parent/guardian to see if they are still interested in the space and if so, they will be given a date to start. Families are always welcome to check in with the supervisor to see where they are on the waitlist.

School Age Program Registration

Our School Age program runs September to June, for children in JK-Grade 6. The programs are held in various schools throughout Grey and Bruce counties. Families currently using the program have priority in establishing their child's spot for the following September by re-confirming their registration each spring. *Please note that all Child Care and School Age financial accounts must be in good standing to qualify for registration for the next school year.*

Children transitioning from YMCA Child Care to the School Age must contact the supervisor to get added to the School Age program waitlist – enrolment is not guaranteed. Information regarding program registration will be made available to you by our program staff.

Forms

Registration forms will be completed via our online **Digibot** registration system. Families will be sent the link once enrolment has been confirmed. All forms and mandatory information **must be completed prior to the first day**. All information must be completed including a minimum of three emergency contact persons, to ensure the safety and security of your child.

The release of information must also be signed. This gives permission for your child's school staff and our YMCA staff to be able to give information regarding your child to one another.

Please note that all financial paperwork (monthly receipts, Income Tax receipts, etc.) will only be provided to the parent/guardian as identified on the Pre-Authorized Payment Approval form.

Fees

School Age Fees

The YMCA licensed Child Care and School Age programs have enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System(CWELCC). As such rates for eligible children have been reduced based on the current provincial guidelines. For more information, go to: The Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system.

Monthly fees are processed on the 20th of the month (or the next business day) for that month's care. Payments may take 2-3 days to process. Any adjustments from previous invoices will be applied at this time.

We accept credit card and pre-authorized debit as payments methods. Please see our Fee Schedule for further information.

Families are required to pay full fees for their child's registered schedule, even if a child is absent due to illness, inclement weather (unless the program is closed), changes in work schedule, or vacation. School Age program fees include statutory holidays.

If an account has an outstanding balance for two consecutive months, the child's space in the program may be permanently withdrawn.

Fees are calculated based on registered days of care from September to June. Registration for school break programming (PD Days, March Break, Winter Break, and Summer Break) is separate.

There will be a $25.00 service charge on all N.S.F. payments.

Effective September 1, 2025				
Fee Schedule	**Before School Daily**	**After School Daily**	**Before & After School Daily**	**School Closure Daily**
JK/K	$8.75	$11.25	$12.00	$18.19
School Age (6-12 years old)	$10.78	$13.93	$24.71	$43.24

Base fees have been reduced by 25% for eligible children** as per the CWELCC agreement to a minimum of $12 per day.*

*Base Fees refers to fees charged as of September 1, 2025

**Eligible children means any child, until the last day of the month in which the child turns 6 years old (irrespective of the type of licensed child care program in which they are enrolled); and up until June 30 in a calendar year, any child who, turns six years old between January 1 and June 30 in that calendar year; and is enrolled in a licensed infant, toddler, preschool or kindergarten group, a licensed family age group, or home child care, as defined in the CCEYA).

Subsidy

Fee subsidy may be available through Grey or Bruce County for families who qualify. The YMCA has agreements with both counties, and your program supervisor can provide more information.

Late Fees

A late fee will be required from all parents picking up their child(ren) after our closing time (by school clocks) – this includes families who receive a fee subsidy through the County.

A late fee payment of $1.00 every minute per child will be added to your bill. Consistent lateness may jeopardize your child's enrolment in the program. If there is an emergency and you are going to be late, we ask that you call the program to notify us as soon as possible (late fees still apply).

Check with the School Age program supervisor to determine the hours of the School Age program at your child's school, as it may vary from one school to another.

Income Tax Receipts

Child Care tax receipts will be issued on or before February 28th of each year for the prior year's fees. Tax receipts will only be provided to the parent/guardian as identified on the Pre-Authorized Payment Approval form. There will be a $15.00 administration fee for any additional copies requested by parents/guardians.

Withdrawal Notification

If you choose to withdraw your child from their YMCA School Age program, one month's written notice is required. Full fees will be levied if enough notice is not given. Parents must also pay any outstanding balances for care up to and including their child's last day of care at the time they give notice of withdrawal. Payment information remains on file and payments will be processed on the 20th of the month until the account is paid in full.

Registration for PD days, March Break or Christmas Break programming is non-refundable.

Program Information

Hours and Days of Operation

School Age program sites provide care Monday to Friday; hours of operation may vary per site.

School Age programs are only available during the school year and only when schools are open. If a decision at the school board level has been made to close the school, e.g. snow day, the YMCA program will also close. For possible alternate programs for PD days, March Break, Winter Break and Summer Break, please speak to the program staff to see what options may be available in your area. We may also be closed for Professional Development days delivered by the County.

Program Closures

YMCA School Age programs follow a school-year operating calendar and are closed on statutory holidays, as well as on a limited number of planned program closure days each year.

School Year Statutory Holidays: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

When a statutory holiday falls on a weekend, the YMCA will observe the closure on the following business day.

Planned Program Closure Days: In addition to statutory holidays, YMCA School Age programs may be closed on select non-statutory days identified in the annual calendar (for example, Easter Monday).

Exact closure dates are communicated annually and shared with families in advance.

When the Child Care programs are closed at the discretion of the Administration (i.e. staff shortage etc.), parents will not be billed.

As a licensed child care provider, we must meet Ministry-required staffing ratios at all times to operate safely.

- JK/K Program: 1 educator to 13 children

- SK Program: 1 educator to 15 children

If we are unable to meet these required ratios, we cannot open the program or may need to reduce the number of children in attendance that day. These standards are in place to ensure a safe, high-quality learning environment for all children in our care.

In the event of a school closure due to weather or other circumstances where the Y operates a full day Child Care or a School Age program, the Y will comply with the school board's decision to close. If the program does not operate, parents will not be billed. If the program does open, but must close early, parents will be billed.

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather, we ask parents/guardians to plan to pick up their children as quickly as possible. This will help to ensure the safety of the children and staff. Please make sure the program has contact information for three or more authorized individuals who can pick up your children.

Arrival/Departure

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedure

The safety and well-being of all children participating in YMCA School Age programs is of utmost importance, therefore, we expect all parents to drop off and pick up their children from the school age staff daily. **While dropping off and picking up children, please ensure no children are left alone in your vehicle.**

Our responsibility begins when your child is signed in, do not drop off your child in front of the school and have them enter the school by themselves.

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy

Effective January 1, 2024

The intent of this policy and the procedures within is to support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care at YMCA Child Care centres.

This policy will provide educators, students, and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

The YMCA will ensure that any child receiving care is only released to the child's parent/guardian, or to an individual that the parent/guardian has provided authorization to release the child to. The centre will not release any children without supervision. Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, educators will follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures

Upon the child's arrival, staff must:

- Complete a Daily Health Check.
- Sign the child in on the classroom attendance record, indicating the time.
- Document in the Daily Communication Journal any change in pick-up arrangements as indicated by parent/guardian.

When a child has not arrived by 9:30 a.m.

Supervisor/designate must:

- At their first opportunity, communicate via email, text, phone call or other means, with a family to confirm the absence. This communication will serve as the sole notification from the centre regardless of whether a response is received from the family. Families may choose to opt out of notifications by indicating in writing to the Supervisor/Designate.
- Document the child's absence on the attendance and any additional information in the Daily Communication Journal.

Before & After school programs:

- If a child does not arrive before the school bell rings, no additional steps will be taken, since the school will follow their own protocol regarding safe arrival.
- Follow the above procedure for non-instructional days only.

During a regular school day if a child has not arrived at the afterschool program the supervisor/designate will check the child's attendance with the school office. If the child is unaccounted for:

- check the school premise
- call the parent/guardian to confirm the child's absence
- call the police
- contact the Manager/Director
- complete the YMCA Incident/Accident notification and file a Serious Occurrence with the Ministry of Education

Releasing a child from care

At the time of pick-up, staff will only release to the child's parent/guardian or those individuals who are authorized by a parent/guardian.

If the staff does not know the individual picking up the child:

- Confirm authorization with another staff.

- Where the above is not possible, request the individual's government-issued photo identification, to verify the individual with the child's authorized pick-up contact list.
- When the parent provides the name of an alternative adult to pick up, check the government-issued ID against the name provided.

Extracurricular activities

If a child is participating in extra-curricular activities not part of our program:

- Written instructions from the parent should include the activity, location, date, time, and whether the child will go directly to the activity or the YMCA first.

If a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed, the staff must:

- Call the parent/guardian or authorized individual.
- Call an emergency contact when unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual.
- Notify the supervisor/designate who will notify the Manager/Director.
- After one hour, call the appropriate child protection agency if there has been no contact with the parent/guardian/emergency contact.
- Follow the instructions provided by the child protection agency:

Child Protection Agency	Phone Number
Bruce Grey Child and Family Services (Children's Aid Society - CAS)	(519) 371-4453 **or** 1-855-322-4453

Idle Free Zone

All of the parking areas for our programs are idle free. Please turn off your vehicle when parked or stopped at our programs.

Program Procedures

Serious Occurrence Reporting

YMCA Schol Age staff have the responsibility to report serious occurrence incidents to the Ministry of Education-Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing branch within 24 hours; and post within the Child Care/School Age program information regarding the incident on the Serious Occurrence notification form for 10 days. A Serious Occurrence incident can include incidents that may require third-party medical attention, disasters on premises, and concerns over operations of the program and others.

For the full definitions and procedures please visit:
https://ww.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/offices

Minor Accident Reporting

Minor accidents and illnesses are common occurrences with children. YMCA School Age staff have been trained in standard first aid and infant child CPR to enable them to handle minor and more serious injuries that may occur. YMCA School Age staff have the responsibility to report minor incidents and share the YMCA accident report with families by the end of the day that the occurrence happens.

Emergency Management

Sometimes situations happen within our programs that may result in evacuating the site. This may include fire/flooding or a possible threat of danger. In the event of such a crisis, families will be notified by email, phone call, social media and/or by radio. Each of our locations has a comprehensive Emergency Management Policy that is reviewed by staff upon hiring, as well as signed off annually. If you would like to review this policy, please contact your program supervisor.

Illness

YMCA School Age programs follow the guidelines set out by our local Public Health concerning communicable diseases. Although some illnesses are inevitable in groups, we try to minimize this by practicing good hygiene, disinfecting toys regularly, and making daily health checks. If a child's illness prevents them from participating or being comfortable in normal program activities, the child will be considered too ill to attend the program.

If you notice symptoms such as diarrhea, fever or vomiting before you bring your child, please keep them at home. Your child may return to the centre after they have been free of these symptoms for 24 hours or 48 hours due to an increased number of illness in the centre and/or as directed by Public Health.

If Child Becomes Ill at Program

Should your child become ill, experience a fever of 100 degrees or more, and/or experience two loose bowel movements while at program, you will be contacted to pick up your child immediately.

Any changes to this policy will be at the direction of Public Health and parents will be notified at pick up.

Medication / Over the Counter Products

Whenever possible, parents/guardians should administer medication to their children at home, if this can be done without affecting the treatment schedule.

YMCA School Age program staff will only administer prescription medication or patent medication (Tylenol, Advil, Benadryl, etc.) prescribed in writing by a physician, nurse practitioner or other licensed health provider. Parents are required to sign a medication authorization form outlining dosages and times to be given.

For medication that is to be given on an “as needed basis”, specific details regarding the signs and symptoms for administration of the medication is required.

For safety reasons, medication must:

- be in the original container with the original prescription label attached
- be clearly labelled with the child’s name, date, and name of the drug, and clear instructions for storage and administration of the drug

Please give medication to a program staff member. Never leave medication in your child’s bag or cubbie.

The YMCA School Age programs administer over the counter products to children with a single "blanket” authorization without documentation of administration except if it is a drug as defined by the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act. The permitted products include sunscreen, moisturizing skin lotion, lip balm, insect repellent, hand sanitizer and diaper cream. These products will not be administered unless authorized by the parent and they will be labelled with the child’s name and stored in accordance with the instructions for storage on the label as well as administered in accordance with the instructions on the label.

Life-Threatening Allergies (Anaphylaxis)

YMCA School Age programs are committed to taking a pro-active position regarding the prevention of anaphylaxis. Any parent/guardian of a child with a life-threatening allergy is responsible for providing the YMCA with detailed information about their child’s known allergens, signs and symptoms of an allergic response and the steps to take in an emergency prior to their child starting care.

The purpose of the policy is to provide a process for dealing with anaphylaxis in the centre.

Strategy to Reduce Risk of Exposure

- Children with extreme allergies that the centre cannot accommodate will be asked to bring their own food from home.
- Foods with “may contain” nut warnings will not be served.
- All labels will be read by a staff member prior to serving.
- Staff purchasing foods on behalf of the centre must read food ingredient labels every time they purchase a product.
- Any persons supplying food to the program will be notified of all life-threatening allergies in the centre. List of allergies will be revised as necessary.
- All children and staff will wash hands before and after handling food.
- Children/staff/volunteers will be instructed to not share food.
- All surfaces will be cleaned with an approved cleaning solution, prior to and after preparing and serving foods.

- All cleaning supplies, medicines etc., that may be of danger or could produce allergic reactions will be stored away.
- Garbage bins will be removed from room and emptied at the end of each day.
- Special supervision of anaphylactic children during eating (i.e. sitting opposite /next to staff).
- During field trips children with anaphylaxis will sit within view of staff member.
- Playground areas will be checked and monitored for insects such as wasps. Staff will be notified immediately, and children will be forbidden to play in this area.
- On off-site trips, parents will be notified.
- Staff will take cell phone on all excursions.
- Consent is required for any child carrying their own Epi-Pen.

Communication Plan for the Dissemination of Information

- Parents will be informed via our parent portal of all life-threatening allergies in the centre.
- List of allergies will be posted in each room.
- Parents with children with anaphylaxis will provide an individual plan for their child prior to enrolment.

Individual Plan and Emergency Procedures

Prior to enrolment, the parent/guardian will meet with the Program Supervisor to provide input for the child's individual plan and emergency procedures. This plan will include but is not limited to:

- description of the child's allergy
- monitoring and avoidance strategies
- signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction
- Child Care staff roles and responsibilities
- parent/guardian consent for administering allergy medication, sharing information and posting Emergency Plan
- emergency contact information
- location of EpiPen and back-up EpiPen
- parent permission note to carry own Epi-Pen

Parents are requested to advise the Program Supervisor if their child develops an allergy, requires medication and/or of any change to the child's individual plan or treatment. Individual Plans will be revised yearly and as directed by the parent or physician.

Nutrition – Meals/Snacks

At our School Age programs we provide a nutritious afternoon snack. Our Lead program staff are certified in the Safe Food Handlers course, and they plan their menus and portions based on Canada's Food Guide. We encourage all children to try each type of snack.

If there are severe allergies in your child's school, restrictions in food will apply.

If your child is served food containing allergens at home prior to attending the program, please ensure they are rid of the allergen prior to their arrival (i.e. thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.).

Menus are posted, please ask the program staff if you would like a copy.

Food Being Brought into School Age Programs

Where food is provided from home for children, it must be peanut/nut free, nutritious and follow Canada's Food Guide. Please ensure that all food and drinks are be labelled with the child's full name (i.e. water bottles, lunch bags). Staff will ensure that appropriate supervision of the children is maintained so that food is not exchanged. If program staff have questions or concerns regarding both lunch / snack options as well as any information on food storage and preparation practices, we will follow the direction of the local public health authorities.

If your child comes early in the morning, you are welcome to pack a healthy breakfast for them to eat during the program time (fast food items i.e. Tim Horton's/McDonalds, etc. are not permitted).

If children have snacks left over from their day at school, they are welcome to have them during snack time.

Please ensure that all food and drinks are labelled with the child's full name (i.e. water bottles, lunch bags).

Bag Lunches for school aged children in attendance during PA Days, School Breaks or Summer Programs are required to be peanut/nut free and nutritious following the guidelines listed below.

- The bagged lunch and snacks are nutritious and follow Canada's Food Guide
- Lunch is provided in a labelled lunch bag with an ice pack.
- Foods that contain, or may have come into contact with, nuts are not in the child's lunch or snack.
- A refillable plastic bottle labelled that they could use to drink water throughout the day.
- Cola drinks, chips and food containing nuts are not permitted and will not be served.

Below, please find a variety of different suggestions to create interesting, healthy and delicious peanut/nut free snacks and lunches for your child(ren).

- breads, bagels, bagel crisps, bread sticks, whole wheat bread, buns, melba toast, pita pockets, whole grain crackers
- fruit, dried fruit, apple, banana, blueberries, pears, oranges, frozen grapes, frozen bananas, fruit salad
- vegetables, broccoli, carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes, vegetable juice, radishes, cucumber, celery sticks
- milk and dairy, cheese slices, cottage cheese, dips, milk, yogurt, fruit smoothies, pudding
- meats, cold cooked chicken, hard-boiled egg, tuna, turkey, roast beef, hummus, falafel
- extras, dried cereal, muffins, nachos and salsa, pizza, granola mix, pretzels

Withdrawal of Service/Schedule Change Request

One month's written notice is required to request a change in registered days (a request for a reduction to a set schedule could result in the loss of your School Age program space due to priority standings and extensive waiting lists). Schedule changes are not accepted for September and October.

Full fees will be charged if notice is not provided.

If you choose to withdraw your child from the program, one month's written notice of withdrawal is required and is to be given to the on-site supervisor. This will allow the supervisor to inform parents on the waitlist of a potential start date. Payments will be adjusted upon receipt of the withdrawal letter. Should a child be withdrawn without notice your account will be charged for one month.

The YMCA is an inclusive organization that strives to meet the needs of children and families. In situations where the program is having difficulty supporting the child's needs it may be deemed in the interest of the family and/or the YMCA to terminate care.

In the situation where it may be necessary for the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce to withdraw its services, it will make these considerations:

- Reasonable care has been given in assessing the child's needs, including the programs' ability to support those needs.
- Special needs resources and other outside agency supports are unavailable or have been exhausted.
- A minimum of two-week written notice of withdrawal will be given and documentation of meetings and discussions with special needs support staff (if applicable) will be shared with parents. In extreme circumstances termination of care may be immediate.

The following additional situations may be considered cause for terminating care:

- non-payment of program fees
- chronic late pick up
- situations that require specialized services at the YMCA is unable to provide
- parents or children who exhibit abusive behaviour toward staff, volunteers, other children and families
- children who are unable to manage in group care settings
- refusal by parent/guardian to meet with the YMCA staff and/or consent to use of support services for children

Thank you for choosing the YMCA

We're so glad you and your family are part of our YMCA community. Every day, we strive to ignite potential, nurture curiosity, and create experiences that help your child shine.

We can't wait to celebrate all the moments, big and small, as your child grows and thrives.

You can always find out more about our programs at:
https://www.ymcaowensound.on.ca/