



# **Central Lincoln County YMCA Youth Handbook**

## **Child Care Programs: Pre-K, Preschool, Infant, and Toddler**

## **Before School Care and Thrive at the Y Afterschool Program**

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### **CLC YMCA Mission**

To strengthen individual families and the community guided by Christian principles including the universal values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

### **Our Vision**

The vision of the CLC YMCA is to nurture the potential of youth, promote healthy living for all and foster social responsibility.

### **Our Philosophy**

The CLC YMCA Child Care offers opportunities for children to interact in an inclusive, child-directed environment. We focus on learning through the developmental areas of cognitive, social-emotional, language and physical development. We monitor and assist children in the acquisition of new skills, believing that children learn at their own pace, developing skills, as they build upon gained knowledge.

Families are an integral part of our program. Teachers help to introduce diversity through cultural, physical and economic differences, while working with the children and families involved in our programs. Our goal is to create an environment that nurtures, encourages respect, promotes self-esteem and trust. Our hope is that the experiences we offer will promote unique and positive outcomes for the children and families we serve.

### **Program Goals**

The CLC YMCA Child Care Center is a safe, caring environment where each child is encouraged to learn new skills, express himself freely and explore the environment. Teachers facilitate independence, self-esteem and model and support problem-solving skills.

Teachers provide an environment designed to promote social-emotional, cognitive, physical and language skills. Using process-oriented activities, children learn risk taking and build self-confidence.

Our day is designed with individual and group activities as well as free and structured work time. Daily, teachers observe and interact with children attempting to maintain an environment that is stimulating and meets the needs of each child at his/her own level of readiness. Ultimately, in keeping with the purpose and philosophy of the YMCA, we strive to help children develop fully in body, mind and spirit.

### **Infant / Toddler/ Preschool Curriculum**

We believe that children learn through play. Therefore, the environment in our Child Care programs is designed to allow the children to explore and create independently. It is our goal to provide a thematic, developmentally appropriate curriculum, which will enhance the healthy growth of your child as an individual. Through observation, teachers will design creative activities that teach skills needed to move to the next developmental stage.

### **Pre-K Curriculum**

We strive to foster creativity, curiosity and exploration within a traditional setting. The classroom is filled with many opportunities to help a child explore and learn through language, math, science, social studies, practical life and sensorial opportunities. The program uses the Teaching Strategies curriculum to help students progress in academic, social emotional and physical development. The teacher(s) work with local schools to ensure the students are prepared to enter area Kindergarten programs.

### **Thrive at the Y**

Thrive at the Y is our afterschool program serving children Pre-K through 5th grade. The program encourages children to achieve, build relationships and feel a sense of belonging. The afternoons' activities are planned to promote physical activity with our Catch Curriculum, academic enrichment through our STEAM program and connections with local foods with our FARMS at the Y program. Thrive runs till 5:30 pm each day and children are provided a healthy snack.

### **Admission Information**

The YMCA admits families without regard to sex, race, national origin, religion, political beliefs, marital status or disability.

- Enrollment is limited and structured to provide the most positive experience for the children
- All our programs are licensed through the State of Maine Child Care Licensing Department
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### **Child Staff Ratio**

All programs will follow the Maine State Rules for Licensing of Child Care Facilities. The ratios of children to staff are as follows:

<b>Age of Child:</b>	<b>Number of Staff:</b>
6 weeks to 1 year	1:4
1 year to 2 ½ years	1:5
2 ½ years to 3 years	1:7
3 years up to 5 years	1:10
5 years +	1:12

## **Child Care and Available Pre-K Hours of Operation**

6:30 am-5:30pm

Monday through Friday for children  
6 weeks through 5 years

## **School Age Hours of Operation**

Before School (GSB Only)

6:30 am – walked to school

Thrive

Picked up at school – 5:30 pm

## **Staff Trainings**

It is our belief that quality care happens when staff have education and training. Therefore, we will offer educational trainings to staff when available. We will try to provide these trainings on days when care is not offered or in the evenings. However, we reserve the right to close Child Care for trainings. We will provide at least two-weeks' notice for parents to find alternate care.

## **Snow Policy**

The programs will follow the CLC YMCA Policy for late or no opening:

Please tune in to Storm Center on Channel 6 or on their website [www.wcsh6.com](http://www.wcsh6.com) in the morning and first look to see if local schools are closed. If they are, then scroll down to Maine Private and this is where the CLC YMCA Child Care Center and CLC YMCA Pre-K will be if we are delayed or closed. Please note: although we try to follow the school closing, there are some cases in which we do not follow the local schools. If the local schools are canceled or delayed, our Before Care and Thrive programs will be closed.

If the center is open and if the weather should worsen, we will contact parents and let them know what time they will need to pick up their child/ren.

## **Enrollment**

**Child Care:** We take caring for your children very seriously, and we want all families to feel welcome and safe in all our programs. We require incoming families to arrange an appointment with our Child Care Director to learn about our programs and to tour the Center. We will then arrange for a second visit to observe the program with your child.

It is important to have questions answered, view the design of the classroom and observe interactions between children and teachers. It is also important

to discuss the type of transition available to your child. As with all changes, a period of adjustment is to be expected when a new child joins our group. Enrollment is offered year-round. If needed, a wait list will be developed and as openings occur, they will be filled in the order complete applications were submitted.

**Thrive:** We take caring for your children very seriously, and we want all families to feel welcome and safe in all our programs. If you have questions regarding our Thrive at the Y afterschool program, please contact the Y.

### **Registration**

The following forms must be submitted before your child begins our program:

- 1 Emergency Information
- 2 Child Care Contract & Fee Agreement
- 3 Child's Immunization Record
- 4 Release & Waivers of Liability
- 5 CACFP Worksheet

### **Tuition**

Weekly tuition is due the Friday before the next week of care. In other words, **tuition will be paid prior to the week of service.** Direct withdrawal from debit/credit, checking or savings account is required to enroll a child in the program. A two week written notice is required to withdraw from our Child Care and Thrive programs. We require a \$75 deposit for our Thrive program and this will be applied to the last week(s) of school. We charge \$10 for returned payment. We charge \$15 for children who are not picked up by 5:30 pm. **If there is an emergency and you can't be here on time, please call the Child Care Center and let us know. Inclement weather is not a valid excuse. Please plan accordingly. Thank you!**

We reserve the right to terminate services when tuition is not paid, or a parent is repeatedly late.

Parents may apply for Financial Assistance thru the State of Maine, DHHS, Child Care Subsidy Program. Applications may be obtained from the Site Coordinator, Director or the Business Office. Parents are responsible for the full private fee until a formal agreement has been received by the State of Maine CCSP. Fee waivers for unplanned emergencies may be requested in writing to the Site Coordinator and forwarded to the Day Care Director for approval. The Day Care Director shall note the date and amount approved and forward to the Business Office for account adjustment.

## **Child Care Developmental Screening**

One of the early childhood agencies with whom we collaborate is Child Development Services. This organization screens, evaluates and provides the following services to children with disabilities from birth through school age five:

### Free Developmental Screenings

- 1 Evaluations in the area(s) of concern
- 2 Early intervention services for eligible children
- 3 Service coordination to support the family and monitor the child's progress
- 4 Transition planning for public school entry

All children are eligible for evaluation by a CDS professional. The Child Care Director may make referrals with parental permission. Also, any family may request a developmental screening by contacting CDS:(207) 563-1411.

## **Behavior Management**

**In our classrooms, we use various techniques to guide each child in using appropriate behavior yet encouraging them to manage his/her own behavior. In our classroom design, we create "areas" in which the children can access material independently and provide more than one of the most interesting materials to alleviate conflicts.**

Another technique we use is **language**. We use conversation, songs and books to broaden language skills. As skills increase, we assist each child in communicating his/her needs to peers directly, encouraging problem solving.

Teachers use **modeling** as an effective teaching tool in behavior management. Teachers model the appropriate use of language, positive affect and problem-solving skills. Using this technique, children can observe appropriate strategies to use when they enter a difficult situation. In addition, teachers facilitate suitable responses when a child is unable to respond appropriately.

We offer many **choices** for children during the day including the materials they use as well as self-care routines (toileting, meals) and how to solve the problems that arise in group care. In using choices, we are enabling the child to learn skills to resolve problems independently. As an example, "Would you like to leave the book on the shelf or take it to the playground with you?" If a child is not able to make a choice, we may prompt them by counting to three, and sometimes make the choice for him/her.



When these usual techniques become ineffective, a teacher may suggest or require that a child take some **time away** from the group, child or activity causing the disturbance. Allowing the child time to think about the consequences of his/her behavior and the effects of his/her behavior on another child or the group, enables the child to return to play when he/she is more able to be productive. Teachers support the child as he/she refocuses and rejoins the classroom by setting limits and encouraging the child to recognize and talk about his/her feelings.

For children in our Thrive at the Y program, we may collaborate with your child's classroom teacher to come up with a plan for success.

**Supportive holding** will be utilized in rare cases of emergency where a dangerous threat to a child exists. The teacher will hold the child only long enough to remove him/her from the dangerous situation and when appropriate, return him to safety.

Supportive holding is characterized by:

- 1 Holding for a duration of less than five minutes
- 2 Picking up a child and moving him/her to a safe location
- 3 Adults intervening in a calm and predictable manner. This will be considered only in the following situations:
  - o A child's safety is at risk
  - o The safety of other children or adults is at risk
  - o The child must be moved in order to be safely supervised
  - o The child demonstrates a sustained behavior that is highly disruptive and/or upsetting to other children necessitating moving the child

*At no time do we use shaming, withholding of food or outside time, verbal abuse or corporal punishment as a means of managing behavior.*

### **Conflict Resolution**

Our primary concern is to provide a safe environment for all children, all the time. The teachers in each program have been trained in using conflict resolution and will work to model this approach to the children in their care. The guide we will use is as follows:

#### **Conflict Resolution—Problem-Solving Steps**

1. Help children calm down
2. Identify the problem
3. Generate solutions
4. Review solutions and choose one
5. Check back

## **Center Procedure for Dealing with Difficult Behavior**

When a difficult behavior is observed, we have a plan to support those involved. The procedure is as follows:

Observations Recorded by Teachers in Program or Center Director The teachers in the program or the Director will record observations regarding the child's behavior and interactions in the classroom. These observations will be shared with the parent(s) in order to: discuss concerns with teacher and parent(s), suggest strategies to support the child and reduce behavior.

### Continued Observations

The teachers in the program will follow the plan for a period (approximately two weeks) and document any changes. If the behavior increases or becomes harmful to other children, the child himself or other teachers, a meeting will be called to discuss the next step.

### Referral to Collaborating Agency

If the plan does not seem to improve the behavior or if additional concerns are present, a referral will be made to an early childhood support agency. **This referral can only be made with parental consent.** This will allow experts in the early childhood field to observe the child in the program and offer suggestions or support the child. This may include developmental therapy, a support staff to work with the child, other types of therapy or additional services.

## **CLC YMCA Child Care Center Biting Policy**

Even though biting is a perfectly normal stage of development during childhood, it is required by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing and Regulatory Division that CLC YMCA Childcare Center maintain a safe and healthy environment for all our children.

Biting occurs for many reasons whether it is teething, a lack of language, frustration, attention getting, being overly tired or simply just trying to get a reaction from someone.

The CLC YMCA Child Care Center policy on biting is as follows:

- If your child bites 3 times (if the skin on the other person is not broken) on any one day then your child will be sent home for the remainder of that day.
- If at any time the skin is broken due to a bite then the child will be asked to go home immediately for the remainder of that day.
- If the biting continues and is severe to where it becomes necessary to send the child home daily or is adding undue stress on the other children or the environment, it may become necessary to terminate Child Care

arrangements. This is not something that CLC YMCA Child Care Center likes to do and please know that this would be a last resort.

How we minimize biting at the Center:

- Shadow the biter so that he is she is always near the providers or within arm's reach.
- Provide lots of language such as "Biting hurts," and "We use our teeth for food."
- Provide frozen teething rings for those who need something to chew on. ▫ Provide supportive information to parents who are worried about their child biting and offer suggestions of how to stop the biting habit.

### **Dismissal**

The parent/teacher relationship is crucial to supportive care for children. If the parent decides to refrain from support and the behavior continues, the program will decide based on the individual specifications of the child. If a difficult behavior or condition exists which threatens the health and safety of children or teachers in the program repeatedly on any given day, the child may be dismissed from care for the remainder of the day and perhaps longer. It is our hope to work with all children and families collaboratively to avoid this situation, but we know that our program will not meet the needs of all children.

### **Disenrollment**

On rare occasions, the CLC YMCA may disenroll a child from programs. The CLC YMCA reserves the right to terminate Child Care services at any time. Here are some examples of times when a child may be disenrolled:

- 1 If a behavior or condition exists which threatens the health and safety of children or teachers in the program
- 2 Non-payment of tuition or assessed fees

### **Unenrollment**

A parent may unenroll their student without financial penalty by giving the Y a two-week written notice.

## **Reporting Abuse**

The CLC Family YMCA believes strongly that the safety of ALL children in our care is our utmost responsibility. Essential to this responsibility must be that parents believe in the State Policy which considers physical, sexual or emotional abuse intolerable and that immediate action will be taken if such an allegation is made. The following procedures will be followed in the event of an allegation:

- 1 The alleged victim will be our primary concern ensuring safety, protection and comfort;
- 2 The staff person, as soon as he or she is accused of abuse, will be suspended immediately with pay until the investigation is completed and a report issued;
- 3 The accusation, suspicion or risk of harm will be reported immediately to the appropriate State authority;
- 4 The CLC YMCA will cooperate fully with the investigation;
- 5 The CLC YMCA will act responsibly when the investigation is over to ensure that all children in our program are protected.

CLC Child Care staff are mandated reporters. Staff is required, by law, to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Maine Office of Child and Family Services.

## **Resolving Parent Issues**

At any time, a conference or brief meeting with the Director or teaching staff may be requested. For programmatic issues, lead teachers are an excellent resource. The Director is available to assist with policy issues as well as support classroom issues. The CLC YMCA feels that positive parent-teacher communication is necessary to create the best possible environment for children. When you have concerns or questions, we encourage you to communicate them to us in a timely manner. Only in this way may we hope and expect to be responsive to your needs.

## **Holidays/Days Closed**

### **Child Care Center:**

Our Child Care programs will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Eve Day (close at 12 pm), New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve Day (close at 12 pm) and Christmas Day.

### **Pre-K:**

Our Pre-K program follows the AOS 93 calendar. School vacations will be followed along with Teacher and Staff Development Days. A copy of the calendar will be provided with enrollment.

\*\*Tuition will remain due on days closed for all children as it states in the CLC Contract form. Families will not be charged on vacation weeks.

### **Photography**

We believe in the use of photographs in the classroom to promote a sense of self and encourage an understanding of multi-cultural differences. Additionally, we use photographs in our curriculum, in art projects, for bulletin boards, etc.

### **Volunteers**

At the CLC YMCA we welcome volunteers. Prior to volunteering, all prospective volunteers must complete out volunteer training. At the training the volunteer will receive a complete Volunteer Training Handbook including our policies about working with youth.

### **Parent Participation**

Parents are welcome to visit, observe and participate in our programs. Parents are welcome at any time. Although it is not necessary to notify the teachers that you will be dropping in, it is preferred parents set up an observation time in advance so children can be informed and to ensure it will fit into our schedule.

There will be times when we may request extra helpers in order to provide your child the opportunity to experience field trips. If you would like to share your professional, special talents, a game or your favorite story with our children, please contact one of the teachers or our director.

We believe that children learn through modeling and we, as teachers, work to interact respectfully with each other. Therefore, we ask that parents follow similar guidelines when they interact with others in the classroom environment.

- 1 Use respectful language
- 2 Listen attentively
- 3 Talk or meet outside the classroom, away from children
- 4 Please understand that the children are our first concern, and the discussion may need to be postponed until coverage can be found.
- 5 Avoid adult conversation in front of the children

### **Child Care Parent Conferences & Meetings**

Parent/teacher conferences are held twice during the year (late fall & spring). Teachers are always happy to meet with parents upon their request in addition to these conferences. Please contact your child's teacher to set up a meeting.

### **Weather Preparation and Daily Attire**

Children should wear clothing appropriate for freedom of movement and active exercise. Daily clothing should also be easily washable, because as you know these are the active and dirty years. State law requires that your child be given access to the outdoors with a minimum of two hours daily, weather permitting. This will include winter weather, so remember those boots, mittens, hats and snow pants. Summer brings some program changes, including a more relaxed daily schedule to provide for extended project work outside, or special events, or field trips. Please prepare your child for summer activities with appropriate clothing and sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Some other suggestions include a wide-brimmed hat and water shoes.

We ask that you provide an extra set of seasonally appropriate, clothes.

Please keep in mind your child's developmental abilities when selecting clothing as we encourage your child to do things for himself/herself while at school. We suggest shoes of an easy on and off style as well as clothing that allows for independent dressing and undressing.

\*\*\*Please mark all clothing with your child's name in a conspicuous place with a permanent marker to avoid loss and confusion.

### **Naptime**

Since our Child Care programs are designed with various activities to utilize each child's whole body and mind, a naptime is included to allow time for each child's body to rest. The Center provides each child with his/her own personalized cot/crib. Every cot/crib is cleaned and disinfected weekly. Each child is asked to rest quietly for the first half hour to an hour. Then, for children who no longer nap an alternative quiet activity is provided. Offering nap time to children is a state licensed requirement.

We ask that you provide a blanket or favorite covering from home, clearly labeled. This will help provide a sense of security and the realizations that they haven't left everything at home. Due to State Licensing, pillows will not be allowed. However, you may bring a favorite, small stuffed animal.

## **Meals, Nutrition & Exercise – HEALTHY LIVING**

Practicing healthy living is an important role of quality programming at the CLC YMCA. The children in Child Care are served breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack when at school. The menus are all created under the guidelines of the CACFP. Children enrolled in our Thrive program will receive and after school snack.

We support your child's healthy food choices by:

- 1.) Offering fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods at all snack times.
- 2.) Celebrating all holidays and other special occasions with mostly healthy foods and or non-food treats.
- 3.) Serving only whole milk to children younger than 2 years old and fat free or 1% milk to children age 2 years and older.
- 4.) Making drinking water clearly visible and freely available to children always.
- 5.) Limiting the availability of sugary beverages (like soda, fruit drinks, sports drinks, sweet tea, etc.) to **less than** one time per month, if served at all.
- 6.) Limiting 100% fruit juice to no more than 4-6 ounces per day, if served at all.

Providing good nutrition for your child is a partnership. We ask for your support. For celebrations and holiday parties, please provide healthy foods, especially fruits and vegetables.

We understand that active play is important for healthy growth and development of young children. Because of this:

- 1.) CLC YMCA Pre-K and Preschool students will receive at least 90 minutes of active play (both indoor and outdoor) each day
- 2.) Toddlers will receive at least 45 minutes of active play (both indoor and outdoor) each day.
- 3.) We will provide short, supervised and engaging tummy time activities for all infants two or more times a day when they are awake.

## **Arrival and Pick-Up Policies**

Safety is an important consideration here at the CLC YMCA. Our policy is to know where every child is, always. Therefore, an adult must accompany his/her child into and out of the classroom daily.

Written authorization from the primary caregiver must be given to the Center Director or teacher if someone other than the primary caregiver is to pick up a child.

## Illness Policy

The health of the group the top priority. Please assist us with reducing the transmission of childhood diseases by noting your child's behavior and checking for signs of illness. We use common sense in our decision-making regarding sickness and trust that you will follow these simple guidelines:

- 1 A child, who is not well enough to participate in all our daily activities, including field trips and outdoor play, **should not attend.**
- 2 A child who is presenting any of the following symptoms, should be kept home and will be sent home, if any of these symptoms are noted. Child cannot return until symptom free **without medication** in accordance with the latest CDC recommendations.
  - o Fever (of 100.4 or higher)
  - o Diarrhea or Vomiting
  - o An Unexplained Rash
  - o Discharging Eyes or Ears
- 3 Please monitor your child for any unusual symptoms. If your child has been exposed to a highly contagious disease, please notify us. Covid-19, *strep throat, pinworm, viral infections, measles, mumps, chicken pox, fifth disease, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis, diarrhea and impetigo* are among those conditions characterized as "highly contagious".
- 4 Another disease in which we need to be notified is *lice*. We have a no nit policy. If a child in our program has been identified, we will do head checks daily until we are no longer finding cases.
- 5 If a child has been exposed to a contagious disease, we will post notification to inform all parents of the possible exposure, symptoms to look for, as well as treatment. If your child has a contagious disease and there is a question as to when they should return to care, we may request a doctor's note stating it is safe for them to return to care.
- 6 If your child develops any of these symptoms, you will be notified to come and pick up your child. You will then be required to arrange for your child to be picked up within **one hour of the request.** Your child's return will be based on the most recent CDC guidelines.
- 7 When in doubt, please give your child a quiet day at home.
- 8 **ABSENCES:** If your child is sick or if you will be out of town, please notify your child's classroom teacher.

## Medication

Children requiring medication during program hours will receive it only if we have received a Medication Authorization Form. For medications needing refrigeration, please give the medication to a staff member along with the completed form.

Prescription medication must have written permission from the physician (or a medical label) that includes the child's name, name of medication, amount



to be given and the time to be administered. This medication must be in the original container.

Over the counter medications will not be given without written permission from the parents including the above-mentioned details.

### **CLC YMCA CHILD CARE ILLNESS READMISSION GUIDELINES**

These guidelines are established in consultation with our program physician and the CDC. Your cooperation is appreciated.

<b>ILLNESS</b>	<b>GUIDELINE</b>
Covid-19	return upon CLC YMCA's physician's recommendation
Chicken pox	child may return 7 days after rash first appears and after all lesions have crusted over
Conjunctivitis	child may return when there is no longer any discharge from the eyes and no sooner than 24 hours after medical treatment has begun.
Impetigo	child may return after 24 hours of oral and topical medical treatment has begun.
Head lice	child may return after documented treatment and all nits removed from head. Upon return parent may not leave the child until a staff member has done a thorough check.
Ringworm	child may return after medical treatment has begun and all lesions are securely covered. REQUIRES NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.
Scabies	child may return 24 hours after medical treatment. REQUIRES NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.
Strep throat	child may return 24 hours after medical treatment has begun but must have also been fever free for 24 hours without medication. REQUIRES NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.
Diarrhea	return until there has been no incident of diarrhea for 24 hours. Severe cases may require a note from your physician.
Fever over 101	in accordance with updated CDC recommendations