



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®**  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# DEVELOPING FIRST STEPS FOR SUCCESS

Sonoma County Family YMCA  
Piner Preschool Program

**YMCA PRESCHOOL**  
Parent Handbook  
2018-2019 School Year

**Piner Preschool**  
2590 Piner Road, Santa  
Rosa, CA 95401

**SONOMA COUNTY FAMILY YMCA**  
1207 College Ave., Santa Rosa, CA  
95404  
707-544-1829 • [www.scfymca.org](http://www.scfymca.org)



The Y is a non-profit, community organization. Financial assistance is available.

# WELCOME TO THE SONOMA COUNTY FAMILY YMCA!

Welcome to the YMCA Preschool Program. We are very excited to be providing preschool services to your family!

The YMCA is committed to the healthy development of your child through a “child centered” environment that provides for individual attention and encouragement as well as group participation. Our goal is to provide a safe, secure and caring place in which s/he can make friends, learn new skills, continue to develop positive self-esteem, and have fun!

Please keep this handbook as a reference to answer your questions regarding program policies, fees, etc. If at any time you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, please feel free to speak to your Site Director or to a management staff member. Again, Welcome!

## Financial Assistance

The YMCA welcomes all who wish to participate and believes that no one should be denied access to the Y based on their ability to pay. Through our Financial Assistance Program, the Sonoma County Y provides assistance to reduce fees for youth, adults, and families based on individual needs or circumstances. Please stop by the Y or visit our website to pick up an application.

## Our Areas of Focus

The Y is a cause-driven organization that is for youth development, for healthy living, and for social responsibility. That’s because a strong community can only be achieved when we invest in our kids, our health, and our neighbors.

### Defining our Areas of Focus

**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:** Nurturing the potential of every child and teen.

**HEALTHY LIVING:** Improving the nation’s health and well-being.

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Giving back and providing support to our neighbors.

### Opportunities for All

The Y is for everyone. Our programs, services & initiatives enable kids to realize their potential, prepare teens for college, offer ways for families to have fun together, empower people to be healthier in spirit, mind, and body, prepare people for employment, welcome & embrace newcomers, and help foster a nationwide service ethic. And that’s just the beginning.

## YMCA CHILDCARE MANAGEMENT STAFF

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## **YMCA PRESCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide a high quality early childhood education program in which children will grow in spirit, mind and body. We are dedicated to the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. The preschool provides an environment that allows for the child to make discoveries and construct their own knowledge. Through developmentally appropriate activities and guidance from professional and nurturing staff, we seek to empower children to make positive choices in their lives that will guide them in future years.

### **Our mission is accomplished by:**

- Recognizing the diverse needs, abilities, interests and cultures in a setting where each child is valued and respected as a unique individual.
- Recognizing the importance of working closely with families and acknowledging family involvement as an essential link to the development of the whole child.
- Providing a curriculum that includes age-appropriate and individually appropriate activities, equipment and material in a manner that children have the opportunity to be actively engaged in the learning process.
- Allowing children the time and freedom to explore the environment and make discoveries about their knowledge and abilities.

### **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

It is our philosophy that children learn best by interacting with their environment under the guidance and nurturing of the teachers. Learning takes place through a combination of child initiated and teacher facilitated activities. Using developmentally appropriate practices in a safe and supportive environment, our goal is to allow children to develop cognitive, social and physical skills at their own individual pace.

**Preschool Director:**

**Emma Kerns- 707-542-9202**

**2590 Piner Road**

**Santa Rosa, CA 95401**

### **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

The Sonoma County Family YMCA Preschool does not discriminate based on race, color, gender, origin or religion.

All children need to meet the following criteria:

- Be between ages of 2-5 without having entered kindergarten.
- Be physically, emotionally and socially developed to the extent that the child is not a hazard to themselves and doesn't endanger the well-being of the other children in the program.
- Be ready for the type of group and program offered by the Y and be able to benefit from the program.
- Children with special needs, as well as all children, will be accommodated, providing we can meet the child's individual needs as well as the group's needs.

### **PROGRAM YEAR**

The YMCA Preschool Childcare Program runs the calendar year, July through July. **You will need to re-register each year. You will receive registration packets in May of each year.**

### **HOURS**

Our preschool hours are 7:00 AM until 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Half/Full Days are available for 3, 4 and 5 days per week. Refer to payment structure below. The YMCA Preschool Program is located at 2590 Piner Road (Northwest Charter School).

### **YMCA PROGRAM OFFICE HOURS**

The Program Office is located at 1207 College Ave. in Santa Rosa and is open from 9am-6pm Monday through Thursday, and from 9am-2pm on Fridays. The Program Office can also be reached by phone at (707) 544-1829 or fax at (707) 544-4432.

### **PAYMENT STRUCTURE & REGISTRATION**

A \$65 annual registration fee (\$45 for each additional child) is required upon enrollment. Payment of this fee guarantees a space for your child in the program. This fee will not be refunded if you cancel and does not apply to any monthly fees. Priority registration for current participants is held each Spring for Fall enrollment. A sibling discount of 10% will be applied to each additional child's monthly fees. The discount only applies to the current contracted fee schedule. No second child discount will be given for any additional care needed.

**Fees are due by the 1st of each month.** For all late payments, a **\$20 late fee** (flat rate, not per day) will be assessed to your next month's billing. You will receive your bill in the mail. However, if you don't receive an invoice, you will still be accountable for the payment by the 1st of the month. You may call the Program Office (544-1829) to inquire about your balance.

Check or money orders payable to the Sonoma County Family YMCA. Payments may no longer be made at the sites, but instead should be mailed to 1203 College Avenue. The YMCA can withdraw funds automatically from either a credit card, or a debit card with a Visa, MasterCard, or American Express logo. A Credit Card Authorization Form needs to be filled out and returned to the Accounts Receivable Clerk for processing.

**Payments must reach the YMCA Billing Dept. no later than the 1st of the month to avoid the late fee. Payment envelopes will accompany your bill.**

The Sonoma County Family YMCA reserves the right to discontinue service to anyone falling delinquent in their childcare payments until all charges are cleared.

Outstanding balances will result in not only discontinuing care, but also not being eligible for priority registration for both Sunshine Company, YMCA Camp, or other YMCA programs.

All participants are responsible for payment on time even if the 1st falls on a day that your child does not attend (e.g., during holiday breaks, full day programs, etc).

Should your child for any reason (example; suspension due to non-payment) become ineligible to attend the program and are not reinstated, it will be treated as a cancellation. No credit will be given for days not attended during the remainder of the month in which this occurs. Additionally there may be a prorated charge for the following month to satisfy 2 week notification requirement.

If you need a payment due date of the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month instead of the 1<sup>st</sup>, this may be arranged on an as-needed basis. All account holders requesting a 15<sup>th</sup> of the month pay date **MUST** opt for an automatic payment option. Account holders wishing to use a non-automated payment option may only use the standard 1<sup>st</sup> of the month due date.

## **STAFF**

## **DAYS OF OPERATION**

The YMCA childcare program is open Monday through Friday.

The preschool will be closed in observe of the following:

- Veterans Day
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following
- Close at noon on Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Close at noon on New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- President's Day
- 1 week closed prior to summer camp starting

## **CREDIT**

Credit is not given for any days missed (Except for extended illnesses or vacation). Please call the program office with any questions regarding your statement.



## **Returned Checks & Expired Credit Cards**

Parents will be charged an additional \$25 for any checks returned unpaid by your bank. Two such returns will result in the requirement to pay by cashier's check, money order, or cash payments only. There are no exceptions to this policy. Returned checks must be cleared within 5 days of the date of notification in order to continue childcare services. Once the check has been returned, payment on returned checks must be made in person at the Program Office. This policy also applies to expired or declined cards being used to automatically pay fees.

The primary role for all staff is to provide a safe, secure, stimulating environment for all of the children in our care. The Sonoma County Family YMCA's goal is to employ a trained, qualified preschool staff that sincerely cares about your child and is available to hear your concerns.

All staff members meet the requirements as outlined by the State of California Community Care Licensing. Directors generally have an AA or BA degree and a variety of experience. Teachers have a minimum of 12 units and experience. Teacher Aides must have experience working with children and are encouraged to obtain college credit courses. Educational requirements may be in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Recreation or related coursework. Staff receive additional training through the YMCA (e.g., CPR, First Aid, and Child Abuse Awareness/Prevention). Staff/Child ratio is 1:8/12.

**CURRICULUM AND DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENTS**

We plan our curriculum off of teacher observations and children's interests. We make weekly observations of the children and then use those observations to plan our curriculum for the following week. Because of this, we cannot anticipate what our curriculum will be and therefor will not have monthly "themes". We will always include early reading and writing skills, early math skill and social-emotional awareness into our curriculum but the ways in which we include these will change weekly. We will post the curriculum on the parent board every week.

We do DRDP (Desired Results Developmental Profile) assessments every 6 months (twice a year). These assessments look at the child's self-regulation skills, social and emotional development, language and literacy development, English language development, cognition (including math and science), physical development, and their awareness of social science and visual arts. We then have parent teacher conferences after each DRDP to share our findings with parents and to discuss how their child is doing overall in the classroom.

We also send home Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQs) within the child's first week at the center. This is an assessment that is completed by parents. We know as teachers that there are things that your child may be able to do that we don't see at school. The ASQ is a great tool that allows parents to share

with teachers the development that the child is showing at home.

**SAMPLE OF TYPICAL DAY**

*Schedule subject to change based on children's needs*

<b>7:00 AM</b>	<b>Arrival &amp; Kid's Choice</b>
8:30 AM	Inside & Outside Kid's Choice
<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Circle Time</b>
10:15 AM	Snack Time
<b>10:15 AM</b>	<b>Stations (art, games, puzzles)</b>
11:00 AM	Outside Play
<b>11:50 AM</b>	<b>Bunny Rabbits in for lunch</b>
12:00 AM	Bears & Wolves in for lunch
<b>12:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
12:30-3:00 pm	Nap Time
<b>3:00 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon Circle</b>
3:15 PM	Snack Time
<b>3:15 PM</b>	<b>Stations (art, games, puzzles)</b>
4:30 PM	Outside Play
<b>5:30 PM</b>	<b>Inside Kid's Choice</b>
6:00 PM	Preschool Closed

**PRIMARY CARE**

We divide the children into groups. Two year olds (Bunny Rabbits), three year olds (Bears), and four and up (Wolves). Each group has a teacher that plans curriculum for their group, takes care of their diaper needs, and completes developmental assessments. Your child will be added to one of these groups and their primary care teacher will become your main contact person regarding your child's day to day activities. Having primary care teachers allows your child to bond with one particular teacher thereby providing a sense of security. The Director will introduce you to your child's primary care teacher on your child's first day.

**POLICIES**

**Dual Parent Accounts & Dual Custody**

The enrolling parent is the responsible party for financial and registration arrangements. If two separate schedules or two separate parent accounts need to be set up in order to split fees, it is the responsibility of the parents to sign up separately. This would include paying separate registration fees and filling out two financial agreements. Days and hours for which each parent is responsible must be designated, if applicable.

If parents have a split account (separate accounts with each paying half for same schedule), the delinquency of either payment would subject both accounts to possible suspension. However, if parents have separate schedules or separate days on which children attend, the delinquency of one parent would not necessarily subject the other parent's account to possible suspension

If special custody arrangements exist that the staff should be aware of, a copy of custody papers and any current restraining orders must be submitted, to be kept in the child's file, prior to the child's attendance.

### **Child Protective Services**

As mandated by state law, the YMCA staff must and will report any suspicion of child abuse, neglect, or endangerment to Child Protective Services.

### **Change of Emergency Information**

It is important that the YMCA childcare facility maintains current and accurate records on each child so that parents can be contacted in case of an emergency. This information includes: addresses, home and work telephone numbers, work locations and names of individuals authorized to pick up your child(ren). It is extremely important to your child's safety and well-being that we be informed of changes. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO NOTIFY THE SITE DIRECTOR OF ANY CHANGES. We assume no responsibility for missed communication resulting from incorrect information.

### **Sign In and Out & Release**

No child will be allowed to leave the center with anyone other than the enrolling parent, guardian, or other persons listed in the authorization list without specific written instruction from the parent. Proof of identification will be required if the person is on the release list, but is unfamiliar to the staff.

Each day upon arriving at the preschool site, children are to report to the Site Director accompanied by their parent/guardian to sign them in. *Parents / guardians or other authorized persons must sign their children out at the end of the day.* (Siblings under 18 or the child him/herself cannot do this.) Full signature is required.

Due to licensing regulations, the PARENT/GUARDIAN must sign their child in/out unless there are

extenuating circumstances. In the case of extenuating circumstances, a special exception to this policy must be requested.

Please limit drop off/pick up of children during naptime or after naptime. Naptime begins at 12:30 pm and finishes at 2:00 pm. If the answering machine picks up phone calls from 12:15-1:00 pm, we are helping the children get ready for naptime and will call you back in a timely manner. If you are calling with an emergency please call 707-544-1829.

### **Financial Agreements**

Registrations cannot be processed without a financial agreement. During the school year, if a change must be made to the financial agreement, the amended form must be reviewed, signed and returned to the Program Office within a two week period or suspension may be enforced.

### **Notification of Absences**

Please notify the Site Director if your child(ren) will not be attending YMCA Preschool for any reason. Notify the Director by phone or in writing as early as possible regarding your child's absences. We need to know where your child is every day for their safety and our accountability.

### **Illness & Credit for Extended Illness**

Fees will not be reduced for brief absences due to illness, etc. When you enroll your child(ren), you are reserving the time, space, staffing and program materials for your child whether s/he attends or not.

You may receive illness credit for any continuous absence of 5 consecutive days or more (limited to 1 month) in extenuating circumstances. You need to notify the Director of extended absence due to illness and apply for a credit in writing to the Program Office. *A doctor's note is required for credits requested due to extended illness.*

### **Vacation**

Two weeks per year may be taken as vacation without paying tuition fees. Vacation credit must be requested in writing 14 days in advance of the start of vacation taken. Vacation credit is given for 1 week or 2 weeks (consisting of consecutive days) increments only - not broken into singular days.

No verbal requests will be processed; everything must be done via a Change Request form or in writing.

### **Late Pick-up**

The YMCA Preschool Program is open until 6:00 PM, Monday – Friday. Our staff cannot leave until every child is picked up, and we ask that you are sensitive to appointments or commitments they may have after 6:00. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time. If you are going to be late, please contact the Site Director. If we have tried to contact you and all emergency contacts and it has been one hour, the police will be called to assist in the situation. *There will be a \$1.00 charge per minute, per child, that a child remains after 6:00 PM.* This surcharge will be assessed on your following month's bill. Following three late pickups within a 30 day period, your child may be suspended from the program.

### **Extra Care**

If you are scheduled to pick your child up at a designated time prior to 6 pm and do not arrive on time, you will be charged an additional fee of \$6.65 per hour used or portion thereof along with your next month's charges. If for any reason you need care beyond the hours you contracted, charges will be added onto your account within the following month. Regardless of whether the extra time was prearranged, the hourly fee remains the same.

### **Program Withdrawal**

You may withdraw your child from the program at any time with two weeks' notice, submitted in writing. Re-admittance to the program will depend on space availability. If you withdraw with no notice, you are responsible for payment for the two weeks, even if your child is not attending. A prorated refund will apply only to the month in which you are withdrawing. Since the fees are spread evenly over the entire school year, there may be additional money owed for care used.

### **Change of Schedule or Option**

You may change your option or schedule no more than twice during the school year. If you wish to change your child's days of attendance, contact your Site Director who will submit a form to the Senior Program Director for approval. You may only change your child's schedule twice during the school year. This is due to the impact on the program in regards to billing, planning, staffing and programming.

Changes may also only be made if there is space available. A new financial agreement must be completed and turned in by the 14th of each month in order to be effective by the 1st of the following month.

Steps to be followed when making a schedule change:

1. Changes must be made two weeks prior to going into effect.
2. Changes must be made in writing, or by using the Change Request Form. These forms are available at the site or the Program Office. *No verbal requests or retroactive changes will be granted.*
3. The change needs to be approved prior to its implementation.

We must be notified of any changes by the 14th of each month for the change to go into effect by the 1st of the following month and be reflected on the following month's bill.

### **Natural Disasters**

If school closes due to a natural disaster, childcare will also be closed. If school is open, the childcare program will also be open. If school is open when a natural disaster happens, childcare facilities may need to close if conditions have become unsafe. This policy is based on safety for the children first.

### **Exclusion from Program Due to Illness**

State licensing requires us to refuse admittance to any child who shows sign of illness. Should any parent or guardian become aware of communicable disease or exposure, with the child or family, the center must be informed immediately in order that we may inform others. If your child becomes ill while at the center, a parent, guardian or someone on the authorization list will be contacted to pick up the child immediately.

### **Exclusion from Program Due to Illness**

State licensing requires us to refuse admittance to any child who shows sign of illness. Should any parent or guardian become aware of a communicable disease that a child has or has been exposed to, the center must be informed immediately. If your child becomes ill while at the center, a parent, guardian or someone on the authorization list will be contacted to pick up the child immediately.

### **Symptoms that may predicate exclusion include:**

- high fever (above 100.0)
- diarrhea (defined as more than one watery bowel movement or one watery bowel

movement that is unable to be contained in diaper)

- vomiting
- weeping eyes (discharge, excessive watering, redness)
- communicable diseases (chicken pox, head lice, hand, foot, mouth)
- undiagnosed skin rash or extreme, unexplainable hives
- persistent and congested cough
- child being unable to participate in daily classroom activities

Children must be symptom free for 24 hours in order to return. Children with head lice must be nit-free to return. Children who become ill at school will not be accepted at any YMCA childcare program.

### Communication File

Each child has a file folder with their name on it called our "Communication File". It is the parents' responsibility to check this file daily for notices, calendars, "Ouch Reports", and newsletters. If you do not check this file, we cannot assure you of complete communication.



### Telephone Answering Policy

During periods of operation at the Preschool, staff are not always available to answer calls. The answering machine is on at these times. If you call regarding an emergency at a time when the staff are outside or do not hear the call, please state clearly that your call is an emergency and leave your name, and number where you can be reached. Your call will be responded to immediately when calls are checked. If you need to reach someone more immediately, you can call the program office at 544-1829 to help facilitate this process.

### Field Trips

Field Trips to locations in Sonoma County may occur for the older students. When such a trip is planned, a signed permission slip and parent involvement may be required. A nominal fee may be charged.

### Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs may participate in YMCA Preschool provided there is no adverse effect upon other program participants, either through direct behavior of the child or by taking away staff time needed by the other children in our care.

A meeting with the Director will take place prior to the start of the child participating in the program. The YMCA encourages parents with children of special needs to strongly consider if placement at a YMCA Preschool Program is the most appropriate placement for their child.



### SUBSIDIZED CARE THROUGH SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES

#### YMCA Guidelines & Agency Policies

Parents receiving subsidized care are required to read and acknowledge receipt of the policies document at the time of registration. It will explain many of the points below in detail. It each parent's responsibility to be familiar with all YMCA Handbook guidelines and Agency Policies.

#### Registering for Subsidized Care

Parents receiving subsidized care must provide the YMCA with documentation that of eligibility and/or approval for subsidized services through a specified agency. Care will not be approved unless all documentation is on file and the Social Service Coordinator has called the parent to confirm that care can start. Complete documentation includes a finalized certificate from the paying agency, which must include dates of coverage, a stated rate of reimbursement, and a signature from the agency representative. This process can take up to two weeks.

### **Registration Fee**

Parents receiving subsidized care are responsible for paying the annual non-refundable registration fee at the time of enrollment. The YMCA will bill the subsidy agency in accordance with their regulations. If the subsidy agency pays the YMCA for the fee or any portion thereof, the YMCA will reimburse the parent for the amount paid.

### **Monthly Timesheets**

Subsidizing agencies require that parents complete their monthly attendance record in order for the YMCA to be reimbursed for childcare. This requirement is in addition to the regular YMCA sign in/out sheet. The attendance records are to be filled out daily by the parent/legal guardian or other authorized signers. The YMCA may terminate childcare if the timesheets are not filled out properly. It is each parent's responsibility to make sure timesheets are completed on time; otherwise the YMCA will not be paid by the subsidy agency. Any unpaid childcare costs will be billed to the parent/legal guardian and are due immediately.

### **Extra Hours, Extra Days, & Late Pickup**

Parents are contracted for a set schedule through the subsidizing agency and the Y. If children are picked up late or extra hours/days are used, parents will be responsible for paying these fees to the Y since they are not contracted to be covered by the agency.

### **Schedule Changes**

All schedule changes require a two week written notice. The requested change must be approved by each parent's agency case manager, the site director, and the social service coordinator before the change can take effect. We will not make any schedule or option changes initiated by the agency, including cancellations, until they are confirmed by the parent in writing. Parents are responsible for any costs resulting from changes that become effective on a different day than your agency has approved.

### **Family Fees & Co-Pays**

All family fees/co-pays set by your agency will be billed to parents by the YMCA and will be due the month before care is used. Fees billed are an approximate amount based on contracted time, and any additional hours will be billed the following month. If fees are not received within 14 days of a due date, a late fee of \$20 will be assessed. If

default occurs on payments, parents will need to pay the Y's reasonable costs to collect the balance due, including attorney fees, court costs, collection agency fees and fees paid for other reasonable collection efforts.



## **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES**

### **General Health & Safety**

Our facilities and staff comply with the Licensing standards of the State of California. The center meets state and local regulations concerning fire and building codes, zoning, health and sanitation. In addition, the Y follows recommendations on National YMCA Standards set for YMCA School-Age Day Care.

### **Daily Health Check**

Your child's health will be observed each day. This is done informally; however, if your child appears to show signs of illness, a more formal evaluation will be done (temperature taken, check for swollen glands, rashes, etc.). If program personnel determine your child to be ill, the parent will be called and expected to pick up child **within one hour**.

### **Exclusion from Center**

Please refer to Policies section earlier in handbook.

### **First Aid**

All staff are certified in basic First Aid and CPR. First aid supplies kept on hand include:

- First Aid manual
- Sterile dressings
- Bandages and roller bandages
- Scissors
- Thermometer
- Ice Packs

## **Injury**

If your child is injured, the staff will take whatever steps are necessary to care for your child, including emergency medical care if warranted. These steps may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Attempt to contact parent or guardian
2. Attempt to contact persons listed on the emergency information form
3. If we cannot reach parents or emergency contacts, we will do any or all of the following:
  - a. Call paramedics
  - b. Have the child taken to a hospital in the company of a staff member

Please note: The Y does not provide insurance for medical costs incurred by individuals in our program. Any costs incurred must be covered by parents / guardians.

## **Medication**

We can only dispense medication if it is in the original container with the doctor's prescription attached. A medication release letter must be written and given to the Site Director along with the medication. "Over the counter" medicine will only be administered if a written order from the child's physician accompanies it.

No medication may be in the possession of children (including cough drops, vitamins, etc.).

## **Allergies**

It is critical that you let your Site Director know of any known allergies your child might have.

## **Accident / Injury Reports**

Parents are informed through an "Ouch Report" when an accident or injury occurs which requires basic First Aid. These reports are informational, consisting of how the injury occurred and what treatment was given.

## **Head Lice**

Head lice is very common among school-age children. If your child develops head lice, we need your help to control and prevent the spread of this condition.

Please follow these procedures:

1. Examine your child carefully for any signs of lice and nits

2. If lice or nits are found, follow treatment recommendations and report symptoms to Y childcare personnel
3. Children with lice or nits will be excluded from the Y childcare program until treatment is given. In order for a child to return to the program after treatment, their hair must be nit (egg) free. Inspections will be carried out by Y personnel prior to re-admission. If a child is sent home 3 times with head lice or nits, they will not be able to return for 5 school days and will need a doctor's notice stating a clean bill of health.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Healthy Eating & Physical Activity**

Our Y is committed to a set of Healthy Eating & Physical Activity standards in all of our programs. Children in the morning and afternoon will receive a healthy snack that has no or low sugar and always includes a fruit or vegetable and a grain.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide a lunch each day for their child. We ask that you bring your child's lunch in a lunch box and place it on our lunch box shelf in our classroom. We ask that if you have items in your child's lunch that must be kept cold that you pack an ice pack in your child's lunch box.

Our refrigerator is used to keep the fruit that we use for snack preserved and we discourage lunch boxes being kept in it. However, if you bring milk for your child to have at lunch time, you may put it in our refrigerator as long as it is in a sealed container labeled with the child's name and the day's date.

Teachers sit with the children at meal times to assist them with opening and closing of containers. We have very busy mornings and lunch time is the time for your child to refuel for the rest of the day. We ask that when making choices of what to pack in your child's lunch, that you pack as many healthy options as you are able. Foods like processed fruit snacks, cookies, chips, and candy tend to cause children to crash later in the day. Foods such as sandwiches, veggies, fruit, yogurt, applesauce, crackers, or cheese provide the lasting energy that your child needs to get through the rest of the day. Please make sure that your child's lunch is ready to eat "as is".

Foods that require adult preparation (ie EasyMac, microwavable ravioli, and uncooked ramen noodles) are not good choices for preschool. We also ask, when choosing what to pack in your child's lunch, please consider choking hazards. Whole grapes, hot dogs, and cherry tomatoes can be dangerous for young children.

Also, if your child stays after 5 PM, you might want to send an extra snack in case they become hungry. (Please do not send soda, foods that don't conform to Y healthy eating standards, or foods that require heating).

In addition to our healthy eating standards, children will be given opportunities for play time that includes moderate to vigorous physical activity at least 30-60 minutes per day. As weather permits, children will also be given outdoor activity time every day.

Please ask your site director for more information on our Healthy Eating & Physical Activity standards.

### **Nutrition**

Young children grow at a tremendous rate. Brain development or cognition develops at a rapid speed in the first two years of life. With brain development a child's language emerges, muscle control becomes evident, and the ability to socialize within a group is marked by the process of growth. With this in mind, parents and care providers see how important a nutrient rich diet is. Because a child's stomach is so small there is no room for empty calories. Remember your child's only meal from home is lunch. What a child eats does make a difference in their ability to grow and develop at their own true potential. Children do become tired, irritable, or depressed if their diet is not well balanced. This happens because of the energy spent on growth, and the need for children to replace nutrients.

The center provides a morning and an afternoon snack. The snack menu is posted on the center's bulletin board. Water is offered at snack times. Children need to bring their own lunch with a drink. Lunch boxes should be labeled. We can warm your child's food in the microwave, if needed. Please label containers to ensure they get back to you.

The following food items are not permitted at the center. Some for reasons of good nutrition habits, and some for choking.

- Candy
- Gum
- Doughnuts
- Twinkies or pre-packaged sweets
- Soda
- Lunchables
- Hot Dogs/Corn Dogs
- Fruit Snacks
- Gogurts
- Potato Chips/Cheetos
- Peanuts, Popcorn

### **Change of Clothing**

Our activities are fun and sometimes messy. Please make sure that you send your child to school in "play clothes". We paint, play with play dough, play in the sandbox and draw with chalk. Children's clothes will get dirty during their day with us. We use smocks and washable art materials, but even with these precautions we cannot guarantee you child's clothes will not get messy. We also ask that children wear closed toed, flat shoes. Shoes that have heels (even small heels), or shoes that slip off are not safe for the classroom. If your child wears rain boots to school, please send another pair of shoes for them to wear inside.

### **Your Child's Projects**

Your child puts a tremendous amount of effort into his/her projects and is anxious to share them with you. It is important that you check at the site each day for any treasures that are ready to go home.

### **Personal Belongings (Toys)**

Children are not allowed to bring personal belongings such as toys, games, electronic devices, cell phones, or trading card games to day care. We also discourage children from bringing valued treasures from home since it is difficult to keep track of these items. Please label clearly any items your child does bring to the site. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken items.

### **Lost & Found**

The YMCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen items or articles. Lost and Found items will be kept for one month. Clothing left at the site for a period of one month or more will be donated to Goodwill. *Mark all belongings clearly with your child's first and last name.*

## **Nap Time**

Every day we have nap time. While it is not required for your child to sleep during this time, we have found that children have a better, more productive afternoon when they are given the opportunity to rest during the day. Each child gets their own cot that we cover with a twin sheet and blanket. If you child requires a pillow, please bring a small travel sized pillow. If your child is not asleep after one hour they are permitted to play outside. Please bring your child's nap supplies in a small bag or pillow case, the more compact the better!

## **What Children are Learning**

**Creative Art:** Art projects give the child an opportunity to express his/her creativity. They allow children to express thoughts and feelings they are not prepared to verbalize and provide a chance for experimentation and discovery of color, shape and texture.

**Music:** Children love music. Through singing and other musical experiences such as experimenting and patterning of sounds and tones, finger plays, band instruments, recognition of basic pitch and rhythm, children develop auditory skills and build a foundation for a lifelong appreciation of music.

**Dramatic Play:** Provides an opportunity for role-playing, socialization, dramatization, problem-solving and practicing adult skills and behavior.

**Table Top/Cognitive Games:** These activities foster perceptual skills, hand-eye coordination, fine motor control, and reinforce basic skills and concepts.

**Movement:** Increases strength, flexibility, coordination and balance. Develops large motor skills and helps children orient their bodies in space. This increases body control, self-awareness and builds self-esteem and confidence.

**Sensory:** Sensory experiences are essential to the preschool child. At this age, children learn through their bodies - they sense and feel rather than think through their experiences. Sensory experiences provide the foundation for later abilities to understand more abstract concepts. Curiosity, exploration and discovery are encouraged in sensory play. It also offers an acceptable outlet for anger or aggressive feeling. Sensory play includes water play, sand play, cornmeal, cornstarch, pebbles, etc.

**Outdoor Play:** Improves and develops large motor skills; promotes physical health. Outdoor play also

foster enjoyment of and sensitivity to nature.

**Story time:** Reading aloud to children is essential. It expands their knowledge of language and improves their vocabulary. It also develops the desire to read, which is perhaps the single most important factor for a beginning reader.



## **Birthdays**

A child's birthday is a day for celebration. We would like each child to feel equally important, and the staff will recognize your child's special day with a birthday crown. If you would like to bring in a birthday treat for our afternoon snack, we ask that it is either a healthy option (ie applesauce pouches, muffins, fruit) or small bite size cupcakes. Regular size cupcakes tend to be too rich for little tummies and can lead to sugar crashes later in the day. Please check with teachers about any allergies that we may have in the center about making a decision about what to bring as a birthday treat. We also ask that any treats that you bring in have an ingredient label attached.

## **Art & Special Projects**

Your child puts a tremendous amount of effort into his/her projects and is anxious to share them with you. It is important that you check at the site each day for any treasures that are ready to go home.

## **Change of Clothing**

Our activities are fun and sometimes messy. **We cannot limit a child's activities because of the clothing worn.** Clothing should be comfortable and suitable to the weather conditions for outdoor play along with closed-toed shoes. No sandals, jellies or dress shoes. Extra sets of clothing must be left at the site in a bag marked with the child's name (which will be kept in their cubby). Please mark all belongings. The center will not be responsible for any articles of clothing left at the center. Soiled clothing will be bagged and marked. It is the

responsibility of the parent to check the child's cubby.

### **Lost & Found**

The YMCA is not responsible for any lost or stolen items or articles. Lost and Found items will be kept for one month. Please make a point to check for lost items at least once a week.

*Mark all belongings clearly with your child's first and last name (i.e., lunch boxes, backpacks, coats/sweaters, notebooks, etc.).*

### **Diapers and Potty Training**

Diapers are changed every two hours or as needed during the day. When children start showing signs of being ready to start potty training, please let your child's primary teacher know. At the preschool, we follow the child's lead when it comes to potty training. We can take them to the bathroom and have them take potty breaks during the day but we will not force or insist that a child sit on the potty. Please talk to the director if you have any questions or concerns about diapering or potty training.

### **Parent/Family Opportunities**

Parents are encouraged to participate during the preschool operating hours and at our special events. The following is a list of ways to become involved:

- Share a story time. Reading to children is found to increase the child's vocabulary, and cognitive ability to reason.
- Assist with an art project
- Help prepare curriculum and projects
- Assist with skills daily

The following are some of our yearly events:

- Pajama Party
- My parents at work week
- Valentines Cookie Exchange
- Annual Support Campaign/ Phone Night
- Dr. Seuss birthday
- Race for the Y
- Spring Easter Egg hunt
- Mother's Day Tea Party
- Pre K Graduation
- Little Campsters
- St. Jude's Trike-a-thon
- Back to School Night
- Halloween Party
- Parent Appreciation Breakfast
- Holiday Concert/Santa Night

## **RULE INFORMATION & DISCIPLINE POLICY STATEMENT**

Children are expected to maintain reasonable behavior at child care as a condition of continued service. Children whose behavior has an adverse effect on the other children, either directly or through requiring staff time needed by other children, cannot be offered services.

In general, rules are made by the staff and children. Discipline is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior. Careful, safe limits are set in the classroom and the playground and teachers go over the rules with the children often.

Children feel secure knowing what they can and cannot do. Redirection is always used first when a child is having a hard time following the rules of the classroom or having a hard time with an activity. If a child continues to have a hard time following preschool rules, we have the child take some time away from the group. Children can easily get caught up in what they are doing and sometimes need time to "reset". A teacher will explain to the child what they were doing that lead to them being removed from the group and will also remind them of the rules and help them identify what they should be doing. Teachers will then help the child pick an appropriate activity or assist them in rejoining the group.

Parents are encouraged to discuss discipline methods with the Director.

The YMCA believes that children need both clear and consistent guidelines that serve to maintain health, safety, and respect for self and others.

### **RULES**

Our rules are designed to ensure the safety of all and to facilitate smooth functioning as a group. The rules and the reasons for them are carefully explained to the children and compliance is expected. An atmosphere of friendly cooperation, consideration of and respect for others is our goal.

#### **Indoors**

- Children walk, rather than run.
- Indoor or quiet voices are practiced.
- School toys and equipment are shared.
- Children keep their hands, feet and body to themselves.

- Children may not leave the room without a teacher or an adult.

### Outdoors

- Sticks, sand, rocks and toys stay on the ground.
- Children take turns with playground toys.
- Sand does not go in water fountain.

### Conditions for Student Termination in the Program

1. Parents/Guardians are habitually late in picking up their child(ren).
2. Tardiness in payment of tuition.
3. Repeat biting.
4. Behavior that is continually disruptive or dangerous to the child or others.

Parent/Guardian is non-cooperative with staff, operating policies or admission.

Children are expected to maintain reasonable behavior at child care as a condition of continued service. Children whose behavior has an adverse effect on the other children, either directly or through requiring staff time needed by other children, cannot be offered services.

In general, rules are made by the staff and children. Discipline is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior. This is accomplished through sensitivity, consistency, firmness, fairness, and follow-through.

Any form of discipline involves specific learning processes. Therefore, we must be very certain that the child is perceiving a positive rather than a negative picture of him or herself as an acceptable person and that only his/her actions are criticized.

The YMCA believes that children need both clear and consistent guidelines that serve to maintain health, safety, and respect for self and others.

If a problem arises, the following techniques will be utilized:

- Encourage positive behavior.
- Staff will redirect child's inappropriate behavior to a more acceptable behavior.
- A reminder of the rules and a discussion of the problem and consequences will take place with the child.
- If the behavior is of a serious nature and/or

the child has not responded to redirection, the child will be removed from the activity

- If necessary, a parent conference will be held to further address the problem. Parents will be informed of the problem and be involved in the solution. A behavior contract will be implemented.
- If the problem persists and the child continues to disrupt the on-going program for others or shows disregard for staff direction, the YMCA reserves the right to suspend the child for one day up to permanent termination.

\* In extreme cases if we feel the child's safety or the safety of others is in jeopardy, you will be asked to immediately remove your child for the day and a conference will be held.

Please refer to and make note of the Code of Conduct Guidelines enclosed in the Parent Packet.

No form of physical punishment, corporal punishment or violation of personal rights will be tolerated by the YMCA in the disciplining of children. Staff will not tease or belittle children.

Swearing and foul language by children or adults, including parents or guardians, is not acceptable.

### Children are responsible for:

1. Not hurting others.
2. Not hurting themselves.
3. Not destroying property.
4. No biting.
5. For learning to take the consequences for their own actions.
6. For respecting the rules that guide them during the program day, for controlling their feelings so that their actions do not harm anyone in the program.
7. For sharing equipment and facilities with all the children in the program.
8. For remaining with a staff member at all times and notifying them if they need to go to another area.

9. For returning materials and equipment to the place they found them for other children to find before taking out a new activity.
10. For carrying out an activity that they committed themselves.

**Parents are responsible for:**

1. Accepting and respecting the right of the child care staff to maintain order.
2. Reviewing and abiding by all procedures detailed in this brochure and explaining them to their children.
3. Cooperating with staff by carrying out appropriate discipline techniques.
4. Seeking advice from the staff and other appropriate agencies for assistance in improving the behavior of their children.
5. Notifying Director if child will be absent from program, before their scheduled arrival time.
6. Paying monthly bill by the 1st of each month.
7. It is advisable to label all clothing.
8. Participating is mandatory during Parents Nights and one fund raiser per year.

**Staff Members are responsible for:**

1. Reviewing and explaining the rules.
2. Establishing and modeling an environment of appropriate behavior.
3. Communicating with children and parents about behavior problems and proposed solutions.

*If at any time you have questions regarding discipline, please talk to your Site Director.*



**INSPECTION AUTHORITY BY COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING**

The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent.

The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical physician examine the child(ren).

The childcare staff are mandated reporters and required to report any signs of neglect, abuse, etc.

**Complaint Procedure**

If you have a question or problem with something that is happening or has happened at the site, please talk with the Site Director about it first.

If you feel they have not dealt with it to your satisfaction, please call the YMCA Program Office, (707) 544-1829, and ask to speak to the Program Director or Senior Program Director.

If you feel the Program Office has not dealt with the problem to your satisfaction, you may call or write to:

Community Care Licensing  
101 Golf Course Drive, Suite A-230  
Rohnert Park, CA 94928  
(707) 588-5026

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are always welcome to observe our program, help in some way, or share a skill. If you would like to share a special talent, please let your Site Director know so that this can be coordinated.

**Special Events**

Special events will be held periodically in the evenings for your families to participate in - your children want you to see what they are doing at YMCA Childcare, so your attendance is encouraged!

**Donated Items**

Our program can always use items which you may no longer want: games, craft items, children's music,

recyclable items, etc. Occasionally, lists of needed items will be distributed. Please inquire at your child's site.

### Reminders

You can help your child receive the maximum benefit of their time at Y Childcare if you:

- Take projects home
- Check communication file daily
- Read all notices, information, & bulletin boards
- Always sign your child in & out, with full legal signature
- Label coats, lunchboxes, belongings, etc.
- Encourage your child to talk about their day
- Participate in YMCA Family Events

### Parent / Staff Conferences

Parent/Director conferences may be arranged at any time by request of the parent or Site Director. Parents are also encouraged to express any concerns informally to the Site Director at any time. At the time of a scheduled conference, other staff members may be invited to attend as necessary.

### Annual Giving Campaign

We believe that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are & what they can achieve. *Volunteers are needed each year in February for the Y's Annual Giving Campaign.* During this campaign, over 100 volunteers raise money for the Y's financial assistance program, which helps us meet the growing need for support so more families can participate in Y programs and be healthier, confident, connected, and secure.

### Newsletters & Communication Files

Each month a site specific newsletter will be provided detailing upcoming events. In addition, the Communication File may have specific information for parents regarding program happenings. **Please read information sent home - it's important!**

### THE Y IS A RESOURCE

The YMCA, in addition to offering quality childcare programs, is also a non-profit agency that is a resource for families. If you have problems or concerns in the stresses of family life, we can assist you by referring to other service agencies, parenting groups, etc. which provide help to families.

### The Y's Many Program Offerings

Sonoma County Family YMCA has a variety of quality programs that you may be interested in for your family:

- Summer Camps (programs for ages 2-15)
- Youth Sports Leagues – Fall & Spring
- Monthly Overnights at the Main Y for kids ages 6-11
- Swimming Lessons
- Aikido
- Parent / Child Programs
- Family Group Exercise Programs
- Facility Memberships for individuals & families (includes access to our full-service fitness facility and reduced rates on many Y programs)

Call the Y at 545-9622, for a list of other ongoing family events throughout the year or visit the YMCA at 1111 College Ave. in Santa Rosa to pick up a program brochure or take a facility tour.

Sonoma County Family YMCA

[www.scfymca.org](http://www.scfymca.org) · 707-545-9622

1111 College Ave. Santa Rosa 95404

The YMCA is a not for profit community organization. Financial assistance is available.

### YMCA Program Membership Benefits

Your childcare registration fee reserves your child's space for attendance at the Preschool during the year and gives you a Program Membership to the YMCA. With this Program Membership, you are entitled to the following:

- Lower program rates for many Y programs, including camp, swimming lessons, and youth overnights
- Reduced rate for youth day passes
- 2 free visits to the main Y

The registration/Program Membership fee is non-refundable unless the YMCA cancels the child care program. This fee is charged each spring and is required for enrollment each year. Registration/Program Membership fee is a yearly fee in order to keep the Program Membership active.