FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



# EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

## FAMILY HANDBOOK – EFFECTIVE 2026

**LOCATIONS**

Early Childhood Program at GBYMCA | 298 College Street | Burlington, VT 05401
Y Early Childhood Program at Winooski | 405 Main Street | Winooski, VT 05404

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Oversees daily program operations while providing leadership and guidance to staff in curriculum implementation, learning environments, and the overall well-being of children and families. Leads teacher recruitment, retention, and professional growth initiatives, fostering a positive workplace culture that supports staff well-being and engagement. Also provides administrative support in staff training, program planning and development, enrollment management, and payment processing.

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Oversees daily program operations while providing leadership and guidance to staff in curriculum implementation, learning environments, and the overall well-being of children and families. Leads teacher recruitment, retention, and professional growth initiatives, fostering a positive workplace culture that supports staff well-being and engagement. Also provides administrative support in staff training, program planning and development, enrollment management, and payment processing.

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## Early Childhood Educators

Our team of educators work together to provide an enriching environment for children and families. Teaching teams consist of caring and skilled early childhood professionals, qualified by education and experience who model the Y's core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility. The Y requires on-going professional development for staff with quality educational opportunities throughout the year.

## Students and Volunteers

We have students and volunteers that supplement our educators in several capacities ranging from post-graduate projects and clinical placements to college student internships and vocational-technical and high school students completing coursework in early childhood education. **All volunteers must submit a Y volunteer application and background check.**

Greater Burlington YMCA is partnered with the University of Vermont's College of Education and Social Services to serve as a training site for students. We serve as mentors to these students. We are honored for the opportunity to train high-quality educators and feel a sense of prideful obligation to support the next generation of teachers. Early childhood is a demanding yet rewarding profession and we are confident our program will be a positive educational experience for everyone involved. Our highly qualified teachers are excited to embrace the opportunity to have a meaningful impact on these students as they begin their journey to become teachers.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE GREATER BURLINGTON YMCA

## Our Mission

The mission of the Greater Burlington YMCA is to build a strong community by involving youth, adults and families in programs and activities that develop spirit, mind, and body.

## Our Focus

We focus our work in three key areas, because nurturing the potential of kids, helping people live healthier lives and supporting our neighbors are fundamental to our cause: to strengthen the foundation of our community.

**Youth Development**. We believe all children deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. Through our Y, youth today are cultivating the values, skills and relationships that lead to positive behaviors, better health and educational achievement.

**Healthy Living**. The Y is a leading voice on health and well-being. Our programs are designed to bring families closer together, encourage good health and foster connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, youth, adults, and families are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind, and body.

**Social Responsibility**. Our Y has been listening and responding to our communities' most critical social needs for nearly 175 years. Whether developing skills or emotional well-being through education and training, welcoming and connecting people within communities, or preventing chronic disease and building healthier communities through collaborations with policymakers, the Y fosters the care and respect all people need and deserve.

## Our Core Values

Through our mission, in the work of our staff, and among the families we serve, we strive to instill these core values.

**Caring:** Showing a sincere concern for others.
**Honesty:** Being truthful in what we say and what we do.
**Respect:** Treating others how you wish to be treated.
**Responsibility:** Being accountable to expectations and actions.

These values are instilled in how our educators show up every day to serve our children and families. Our core values are threaded in our curriculum and in play.

## A Call to Action Against Racism

The Y Core Values are a declaration of principles for our organization and our community. They leave no room for racism. Creating a place where everyone truly belongs is the work of our whole community. So, here we offer ways to put these values into action against racism. We stand against racism. We stand together; Y Strong.

**Caring:** Demonstrate empathy and compassion for the racial injustice experienced by others.
**Honesty:** Acknowledge your own inherent biases and our nation's history of racism.
**Respect:** Recognize and honor the strength of a racially diverse and affirming community.
**Responsibility:** Take action and speak up. No act of racism is acceptable.

## Early Childhood Program Mission

We are here to support families and their children through meaningful play and connections as they experience the world for the first time. We honor all children and families' identities and celebrate the optimism and joy they bring to the world. At the Y we…

- Support Social/Emotional Growth
- Celebrate Diversity
- Foster Curiosity
- Strive to Inspire and be Inspired

## WELCOME

Welcome to the Y Early Childhood Program. We look forward to having your child(ren) in our program. This handbook has been written to explain our program — its philosophy, goals, procedures, and policies. Please feel free to ask questions and make suggestions. Our goal is to provide your child with a quality program.

The Greater Burlington YMCA is one of the largest providers of child care in Vermont. The Y offers child care, early education, and school-age programs to more than 1,200 Vermont children each week. The Y's experience in providing quality child care for decades ensures that the care provided is of the highest quality. The five-star rating by the VT Stars Quality rating system further validates the high quality of our facilities, staff, and programs.

### Philosophy and Goals

The philosophy of the Y Early Childhood Program is to provide a quality program for children ages eight weeks to five years. We strive to foster social, emotional, physical, cognitive, creative, and healthy development through enriching experiences and positive relationships.

Our goals are:

- To provide a safe, inclusive, warm, and welcoming environment in which each child can build strong, positive relationships with adults and other children around them.
- To develop positive self-concepts by creating an atmosphere geared to successful experiences.
- To provide opportunities for each child to develop their whole body through small and large muscle activities.
- To provide a stimulating, creative and rich environment for each child.
- To promote character development by teaching and demonstrating the YMCA Core Values of Caring, Respect, Honesty and Responsibility.
- To respect each child and family as having unique abilities, feelings, needs and wants.
- To develop relationships with families that encourage reciprocal communication and that foster trust and mutual respect.
- To support culture and community.

## OUR SPACE

Our program is housed in facilities that are designed specifically for children to achieve an optimal child-centered, familial environment. Our facilities are smoke-free.

We have seven infant/toddler classrooms on the first floor and three multi age preschool classes on the second floor. Behind the facility, there is a fenced-in playground that provides a safe and secure outside play area for multiple classrooms at a time.

While our program is in the same building as our Health and Wellness center, access to the child-care wing requires an activated key card. Upon enrolling in our program, each family will receive

two key cards that allow access to the childcare center. Cards are activated to access the center between 7:30 am and 5:00 pm.

All parents coming in between 9:30 am and 3:00 pm (as well as visitors, partner staff, and students) must **sign in and out** at the office.

There are several parking spaces designated for families to use for drop-off and pick up. These marked spots are located directly outside of the childcare center to ensure a safe drop-off and pick up. Please be aware that there are only two handicapped spots for the building, so by law, family spots can also be utilized by those with handicapped plates or placards.

## Hours

The Y Early Childhood Program maintains a yearlong program. The new year begins in late August and runs through the following summer. The Y Early Childhood Program at GBYMCA is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00am-5:00pm. Families may use before care from 7:30-8:00am for an additional fee.

## Group Size and Ratios

Our early childhood programs are designed for children aged eight weeks to five years of age. Children are grouped by ages and the size of the groups are in accordance with recommended ratios outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

| Age | Adult/Child Ratio |
|---|---|
| 8 weeks to 24 months | 1:4, max 8 |
| 24 to 36 months | 1:5, max 10 |
| 32 to 42 months | 1:6, max 15 |
| 3 yrs to kindergarten | 1:10, max 20 |

## ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

We strive to make the enrollment process smooth for all families. Enrollment is subject to the constraints of space and staffing.

### Enrollment Process

- Once an inquiry application is received, the child is placed on the center's waitlist. Our waitlist is sorted first by child's date of birth, then by date of waitlist entry. We move children up the waitlist as they age so that they remain on the correct list as they get older.
- When space becomes available in a classroom, a director will review the waitlist for that age group. First priority for enrollment is given to siblings of currently enrolled children/families. If there are no current families in need of a spot in that age group, we will reach out to the first family on the waitlist. It is at this point that we offer tours of the program to the family that we are offering a spot to.
- If that family declines the spot, they drop to the bottom of the waitlist and the date of waitlist entry becomes the date of decline. We then move to the next family on the waitlist.
- Once a family accepts a spot, the director will send the enrollment link and registration documents to complete. Families who are re-enrolling will receive these materials in the spring. Enrollment materials include:
    - Enrollment Application
    - Billing and EFT Agreement
    - Child and Family Information Form or Entering Infant Family Information Form
    - Program Census form
    - Health Clearance form
    - Immunization Record or permission to access the Vermont Immunization Registry.

Note Regarding Health Clearance Form: Families must provide a current Health Clearance form and up to date immunizations within 30 days of enrollment. If your child's medical provider does not have a standard form, we can provide one for them to complete.

In addition, new families will receive a link to create an account in Lillio so they can access daily information about their child. Please see the Communications section for more information about Lillio.

Once a child is eligible to attend Kindergarten, space is no longer guaranteed in the program for that school year. Please speak with the director as soon as possible about the availability of space if you wish your child to attend an additional year of preschool.

### Billing and EFT Agreement

Upon enrollment, you will be asked to sign a Billing and EFT Agreement. This agreement outlines the various conditions of the child's participation in the program as well as your financial obligations and commitments. As stated in the Agreement, families are financially responsible for those times the child is scheduled to be at the center regardless of whether the child is in attendance. For

additional time above the contracted allotment, financial adjustments will be made.

Families are obligated to pay for their contracted number of days (51 weeks) even if children do not attend the program and for any closures.

Families with a child moving to kindergarten in the fall must notify the program directors by March 1st if their child will not be present during the summer months leading up to the kindergarten. Families who do not notify the director of a June departure are responsible for tuition payments through the end of August.

The Y Early Childhood Program requires a two-week written notice for withdrawals. Failure to give a two-week notice will result in tuition responsibility for the two-week period.

If a child's behavior endangers themselves, other children or staff and cannot be managed effectively, your child may be asked to leave the program. Our policies align with Act 35 and Act 166 which regulate suspension and expulsion in children under the age of eight in Vermont. The **director will provide written notice to the family at least five (5) days** prior to the date of program removal.

## Scholarships

The Y is committed to serving families regardless of their ability to pay,  as such, partial scholarships may be available to families who qualify for tuition assistance. We welcome you to contact our Business Office at scholarships@gbymca.org, about eligibility requirements. To qualify for Y scholarships, a family must first have applied for Vermont's childcare subsidy program. Please note that corporate site sponsored programs may have different financial policies. Please refer to your program's addendum.

## Payment Process

The Y requires payment to be made by debit card, bank draft from a checking or savings account, or credit card. Please note that a 2.5% service fee is added to all payments made using a credit card. You may choose to have your payment processed Friday for the following week or on the first day of the month, covering all weeks of that month. If your payment is declined, the Y will attempt to reprocess the payment one additional time before contacting you.

Failure to pay fees may result in termination of your child's enrollment. If you are having trouble paying your balance, please reach out to the directors for assistance and coordination with the Business Office.

The first week of care is due as a non-refundable deposit upon registration. Families joining the program will also be charged a one-time $30 registration fee. Families receiving Vermont subsidy assistance will not be charged a deposit or registration fee.

## State Subsidy

Our early childhood program sites have received five Stars from the State of Vermont Quality Rating and Improvement Scale. This allows our early childhood programs to accept financial assistance (subsidy) from the State of Vermont through the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP). Subsidy guidelines are as follows:

- Families are granted 30 allowable absences, calculated July-June each year (Not January-December). After a family has used all 30 absences, subsidy may not cover the cost of your weekly payment. Additional absence days may be available upon request from your eligibility specialist. This means a family may be responsible for paying the tuition rate if additional absence days are not approved by subsidy eligibility specialists.
- It is the family's responsibility to communicate with the director when they plan to use vacation/absence days.
- It is the family's responsibility to keep their subsidy certificate up to date and to renew expiring certificates.

## Act 166: Universal Kindergarten

The Y is a participant of Act 166 Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK), often referred to as Early Learning Program (ELP). Act 166 provides access to publicly funded prekindergarten or preschool for all Vermont students. Children who are three to five years of age who are not eligible to enroll in kindergarten qualify for 10 hours a week of care through ELP funds. Children must turn three on or before September 1st to begin receiving ELP funding.

These funds are available for the first 35 weeks of the school year as determined by the family's home school district. Families will see an increase in tuition during school vacation weeks and beginning in June due to UPK eligibility guidelines. The Y is not able to spread funds over 52 weeks of the program; however, families may be eligible for financial assistance during the time ELP funding is not received.

For more information on Act 166, please visit the State of Vermont Agency of Education website or refer to the ELP letter in the enrollment documents.

## Failure to Submit Payment

If your payment declines, the Y will notify you of the decline and balance amount due. It is the family's responsibility to communicate with the Y's Business Office to ensure that your balance is paid in full. If there is no communication and the balance is not paid in full, the Y reserves the right to cancel your enrollment in the program. If your child is enrolled in other Y programs such as camp, sports or aquatics, these programs will also be placed on hold until the account is paid in full.

The Y is here to work closely with your family to ensure none of the above steps are taken. Please contact the Y immediately if your financial circumstances change and you are unable to make your tuition payments, prior to your weekly or monthly withdrawal.

# CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHIES

## Play-Based

The Y focuses on a play-based approach known as Emergent Curriculum. Learning experiences and projects are guided by the teacher based on children's interests, incorporating a multi-sensory and hands-on approach. Children learn by using all senses to explore and develop an increased ability to think, reason, question, and experiment. We place emphasis on building social competency skills in an environment rich in language development.

Our classrooms are set up to provide children with a variety of activities and play centers. Activities may include art, water play, blocks, dramatic play, manipulatives, science, writing center, and early literacy. Additionally, our curriculum provides opportunities for experiences with music, movement, cooking, math, social studies, field trips, and other enrichment opportunities. We follow the guidelines set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS).

## Environments

Reggio Emilia–inspired centers emphasize connections to nature and community, using place-based learning to help children see themselves as citizens of expanding circles—from family to the natural world. Thoughtfully designed indoor and outdoor environments foster curiosity, social connection, and foundational academic skills like hypothesizing, testing ideas, persistence, and resilience. Learning is interdisciplinary, inquiry-driven, and learner-centered, using the community as a classroom and encouraging children to explore ideas from multiple perspectives to deepen understanding.

## Loose Parts

We utilize loose parts play in our indoor and outdoor classrooms. Loose parts materials include natural and synthetic materials that can be used in open-ended ways. Children use loose parts to explore concepts and make connections without preconceived notions of use. For example, a pipe has been used for tunnels, as a flagpole, oars for a ship and fishing poles. Loose parts also provide materials that are free from our perceived biases as adults.

## Process Art

Our philosophy around art is grounded in honoring the process of creation through exploration of materials and child self-expression. Process art focuses on making, experimenting, and discovering. Each child's art will be their own and unlike any other, each child will experience this process differently. This idea that the journey is more important than the end product aligns with our philosophy that children learn through experiences that are meaningful to them and driven by them.

## Big Body Play

Children use their bodies to learn through all stages of life, birth through school age. Pulling, rolling, hugging, pushing, swinging, running, jumping, tumbling, tagging, etc. Big body play can be individual or with multiple children. We will honor big body play when it occurs and the children's right to choose whether to engage in this play. To support big body play we will:

- Provide safe and appropriate indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Provide multiple opportunities for big body play throughout the day.
- Train staff how to supervise and model big body play.
- Acknowledge the natural risk of play and the benefits children gain from learning risk management.
- Supervise children for safety and use children's play as a vehicle for development.

## Anti-Bias Classroom

Our Youth Development programs strive to teach children in an inclusive environment. This includes the physical environment, behaviors, and attitudes of our staff. Classrooms will provide children with non-stereotyped books, dolls, and learning opportunities that reflect a variety of people of different ages, abilities, genders, ethnicity, etc. Curriculum plans may include traditions of the children enrolled in the program, other traditions, and foods from different cultures. We will engage in spontaneous and intentional conversations about people's differences and similarities. These conversations will include the concepts of respecting differences, recognizing unfairness, and speaking up for others.

## Celebrations

We will acknowledge birthdays and other important events in your child's life. Each classroom will create celebratory traditions for children in their class. Every family has different traditions; therefore, each class will develop their own traditions and let families know how they can participate. Please refrain from bringing in food or special treats for celebrations. Party favors, special trips, or visitors (e.g., clowns, performers, etc.) should not be included as a part of the celebration. Latex balloons and candy are also not permitted in any of our programs. If you are planning a party outside of the Y, we ask that you do not distribute invitations on site. Teachers will create a classroom directory to distribute at the beginning of the year so families can plan celebrations and play dates outside of school.

In keeping with the Y's philosophy, we have developed the following statement regarding holidays: Using an anti-bias, developmentally appropriate approach, holidays can be explored to enhance children's knowledge of others' traditions and heritage. We wish to be thoughtful in providing diverse exposure to all children in our care. We may at times include holidays of different cultures and their traditions to teach children respect and caring. Celebrations will be a form of honoring and observing various traditions, rather than focusing on parties and commercialism. We may use books, arts and crafts, food, music, games and other age-appropriate materials and activities. We welcome family and community involvement as well.  We will be sensitive to all our families when planning activities. When celebrating a holiday with children, our programs will take into consideration the families we serve, the other holidays occurring around the same time of year and the appropriateness and value of the activity for the age children in each group.

## S.E.E.D. Certified School

S.E.E.D. Certification was developed by early educator Alyssa Blask Campbell, M.Ed., founder of SeedandSew.org. SEED stands for Schools Excelling in Emotional Development and is designed to support "teachers with the tools they need to respond to kids' big emotions with self-awareness and self-regulation, creating a collaborative, inclusive environment in which teachers and tiny humans thrive."  Through this certification program, some of the trainings our teachers have completed include Emotion Coaching for Emotion Processing, Sensory Integration for all Classrooms, Supporting the Development of Children's Regulation & Language Through Play, Anti-Bias Curriculum in Action, and Connecting with Families. Our participation in these training courses highlights our commitment to the philosophy that children thrive when they are actively taught the social skills they need to be successful.

As a SEED Certified school, all families have free access to the training, "Tiny Humans, Big Emotions". Please see the directors for the coupon code. Seed & Sew (seedandsew.org)

## Outdoor Classroom

Outdoor play is an important part of our curriculum. We will spend as much time outside as possible. Our playground is a good example of an outdoor classroom. This is a space where children can explore building and creating with loose parts and engaging with natural elements in our sensory areas and garden boxes. We also utilize spaces in the community, visiting local trails and green spaces such as the waterfront, Perkins Pier, the green at UVM, Finney Quad at Champlain College, Smalley Park, and Centennial Woods, just to name a few.

It is important that children have appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions. We request that children have weather-appropriate coats and boots (rain and snow), swimsuits, sun or winter hats, snow pants, and waterproof gloves or mittens. It is helpful to send in two pairs of mittens for your child so that they have a dry pair for the afternoon. The center has a few extra seasonal items in each classroom. Please let your director know if you need assistance with any of these items.

VT Child Care Regulations state that teachers must wash their hands between children when applying sunscreen. Families are requested to apply sunscreen at home or at school prior to drop-off so that time outside can be maximized. Each child needs to have sunscreen at school for re-application throughout the day.

## Daily Schedule

- Arrival and classroom exploration. The following activities will be available during free exploration: art, dramatic play, block play, manipulative/cognitive area, music, books, and sensory play.
- Snack, circle time and large or small group activity time based on children's interest and developmental focus; outdoor play and adventures may also occur during this time.
- Lunch, rest/quiet time.
- Closing small group activities, free play (activities as listed above) and outdoor play, games, special events.

We always strive for flexibility in our daily schedule to reflect the needs and capabilities of groups and individuals.

## Aquatics Program (if available)

Our preschool classrooms participate in swimming lessons. Each session is designed to expose children to water safety and enjoyment. Swimming sessions take place at The Greater Burlington YMCA Aquatics Center and are in a group swim format. The toddler classrooms participate in water play on the splash pad. Please see your classroom teacher's schedule for specific information about when your child may be involved in swimming.

Families will need to provide a swimsuit and towel for this activity. Trained aquatic staff and the classroom teachers swim with the children in addition to a lifeguard being on the pool deck. The focus is allowing children to feel comfortable in the water, getting their faces wet, and introducing

swimming skills and water safety. On swimming days, we appreciate clothes that are easy to put on independently as children have lots of transitions and this may lead to added frustrations.

## Field Trips

To enrich our programs, most classrooms will take three to four field trips each year. Some activities may include walking to or using public transportation or a contracted bus service to get to the destination. Families should note that walking trips may occur without prior notice. Other field trips may require additional chaperones to attend, at which time, classrooms will put out a request to families. Additional field trip fees may be necessary for participation. Families will be notified in advance of field trip expenses, if any.

## Clothing and Attire

To foster independence and self-help skills, please send your child in clothes they can manage independently. Children should be dressed in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing, and other energetic activities. Clothing should also be weather appropriate. Appropriate foot attire, such as sneakers, are recommended to allow your child to play safely during high-energy activities. Flip flops should only be worn in the Aquatic area, as they can easily slide off a child's foot during play.

Families should provide at least two complete sets of labeled clothing or more if their child is toilet learning. Teachers may label a child's item if it comes to the classroom without a label.

## Toys from Home

To keep special items safe and prevent loss or damage of personal toys, we ask that families leave these at home. While toys from home can be exciting or novel, young children are not developmentally ready to share items with peers, which can cause conflict in the classroom. In addition, it is difficult for teachers to ensure that items brought from home are kept safe in a busy classroom.

## Support Items

Support items are things that a child may use to calm or regulate and are not intended for sharing with others.  We recognize that some toys may be transitional items that support children through challenging moments and can be an  important part of the morning drop-off routine. Teachers will be mindful and support each child as they settle into the day.

## Community Shares

We do encourage children to share favorite books, letters or cards, a photograph, something from nature or something they made as a part of community building in their classroom.

## Nap and Rest Time

State licensing regulations require childcare programs to provide children *with access* to quiet rest time daily.

## Infants

In partnership with families, teachers will assist infants to sleep when they are tired, using the infants' sleep cues to direct when they need to nap. Infants' sleep schedules are constantly changing and will be guided by the needs of children and families.

In alignment with Vermont childcare regulations and best practice:

- Infants will be placed in cribs on their backs.
- Children under 12 months may not have soft objects, toys, or loose bedding in their sleeping area.
- Position items will not be used in an infant's sleeping area unless required by the child's health care provider.
- Infants shall not be swaddled for sleep. Sleep sacks that fit the infant properly and are specifically designed to meet safe sleep practices may be used. Safe sleep sacks fit snugly around the torso, are appropriate for room temperature, and do not have sleeves unless recommended by a pediatrician
- Pacifiers may be used with family permission, providing they have no cords, clips, or soft objects attached.

## Toddlers and Preschoolers

While our younger toddlers rest or nap according to their individualized needs, for most of our groups, rest time is a period following lunch. This time could last up to two hours depending on the ages of children and the needs of the group. We are required by state licensing regulations to provide children with the opportunity to rest each day. It is physically and mentally demanding for a child to keep pace with peers all day long. Sleep is a major requirement for good health, and for children to get the recommended amount, some daytime sleep is usually needed. Vital physical and mental development occurs in early childhood, and naps provide much needed downtime for growth and rejuvenation. A child's need to rest at some point during the day is important. If families have individual requests regarding their child's sleep pattern, we will make all reasonable efforts to come to a mutually agreeable plan. Children will rest on washable mats: parents provide a sheet and a blanket.  Children will be sleeping head to toe or will be spaced three feet apart. Special items such as teddy bears may be brough in for naptime. We ask that all naptime materials (pillow, blanket, stuffed animal) be kept in a special bag (plastic or laundry bag with a drawstring or small duffel bag) and washed weekly. Any children who do not sleep will still have a rest time with books or puzzles on their own mat for 15 minutes and will then have quiet activities to do in a designated area or table where they will have space and adequate lighting for quiet play.

On any given day

- Naptime begins when the child gets on their mat.
- Children will not be asked to be on their mat for longer than 30 minutes if they do not fall asleep.
- There will be a table with a quiet activity such as playdough or coloring for children who do not sleep.
- After 3:00 pm, lights will be on and shades will be up. The mats will be put away by 3:30 pm.

- Naptime will be approximately 2 hours, but no later than 3:00 pm
- Parents who request that their child not sleep should be able to plan with their teacher for what quiet and engaging activities can be used.
- If children fall asleep on their own and parents have requested they be woken, teachers will gently wake them after they have had a chance to sleep for an hour.
- After 2 hours of nap, the classroom will be back to normal sound and light levels and children will be encouraged to wake up.

*Individual sleep plans may be made in partnership with families

# INTERACTIONS

## Positive Guidance

Positive guidance promotes a child's self-control, teaches children responsibility, and helps children make thoughtful choices. Early Childhood Educators recognize that it is important to understand and prevent undesired behavior by communicating clear expectations and will guide, correct, and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. When a child's efforts toward improving behavior are acknowledged, it leads to a healthy development.

## Guiding Behaviors

It is our goal that every child be successful in our program. Many behaviors we observe are developmentally appropriate. We guide children as they learn to make positive choices about their behavior. At the Y, we focus on setting clear behavior expectations and creating an environment that facilitates positive behavior. We practice preventative techniques such as informing children of consequences, following through, consistency, redirection, and the use of humor.

Children are encouraged to talk though their problems when conflicts arise and to make choices to correct inappropriate behavior, with the teachers acting as mediators rather than problem solvers. It is our philosophy to teach children to take ownership of their behavior and learn to make good choices. We value frequent communication between families and teachers to further support children as they learn to navigate complex social relationships. We strive to meet the individual needs of every child enrolled in the Y early childhood programs.

## Intervention Strategies

To ensure the success of each child, a variety of resources may be explored. Intervention strategies may start with observation and documentation, various behavior modification strategies, and environment and expectation adjustments. If more support is required, early educators will work in partnership with families and community support resources to develop a plan for success. When any intervention strategies are used as part of an individual plan, the rights and privacy of each child and family will be respected. Anyone in need of additional information is welcome to make an appointment with the director.

If we feel we have exhausted all resources and are unable to accommodate the child's needs, we

may adjust their schedule or meet with family and/or community professionals to develop a plan to better meet the child's needs. As a last resort we may determine it is mutually beneficial to remove the child from the program.

If a child's behavior endangers themselves, other children or staff and cannot be managed effectively, your child may be asked to leave the program. The director will provide written notice to the family at least five (5) days prior to the date of program removal.

## Managing Child Conflict

From time to time, children will engage with each other, and conflicts may evolve. When conflict occurs, children involved will be given the opportunity to work it out together and then with teachers acting as mediators rather than problem solvers. It is our philosophy to teach children to be accountable to their behavior and learn to make good choices.

## Biting

Biting is common in older infant and toddler groups but can be very emotionally charged. There are many reasons that toddlers bite. Sometimes children bite to express feelings they cannot yet express with words, if they are frustrated, or even excitement of a happy moment. Biting is unpredictable, but our teachers are ready to help toddlers who do bite to learn other behaviors. Teachers will also provide treatment, sympathy and support to children who are bitten.

There are some strategies our educators use to prevent biting and our response when it does occur.

1. We thoughtfully plan the day to try to avoid boredom, frustration, and over-stimulation. We strive to provide a calm and cheerful atmosphere with a mix of stimulating and soothing age-appropriate activities, and multiples of favorite toys. We also work to model acceptable and appropriate behaviors for children, helping them to learn words to express their feelings and giving them tools to resolve conflicts.
2. If a bite does occur, we focus our attention on and help the child who is bitten. We reassure him or her and care for the bite. First, we clean the area with soap and water. If the skin is not broken, we use a cold pack. If it is likely the area bitten may get dirty, we will cover it to keep it clean.
3. We also respond to the child who bit. We show the children strong disapproval of biting by responding immediately, directly, and sternly. Our specific response varies by circumstances, but our basic message is that biting is not okay.
4. We actively teach all children socially acceptable responses to big emotions. For instance, rather than biting, you can say "my turn", or "it looks like Susie was too close to you. You can say 'space please' or move your body away." Teaching social skills takes time and consistency, but those skills are some of the most important to learn in early childhood.
5. If biting is an ongoing behavior, teachers will work with the program directors to analyze the cause of ongoing biting and develop a plan to address the causes of biting. The focus is kept on the children's safety and helping those who are stuck in biting patterns. These plans will be shared with families.

If your child is bitten, we will contact families about the incident. Teachers complete an incident

report that is signed by a director. A copy will be provided to you at pick up and one will be kept on file. We also contact the family of the child who is biting, so that all are aware that this is happening. To help teachers manage this behavior, we ask families to keep us informed if their child is biting at home. Children who bite in our program do not necessarily bite at home; however, if your child is biting in both places, it is important for all of us to be consistent in our responses. Communication and consistency in response are very important to help your child to minimize or stop biting incidents for the future.

**It's important to understand that biting behavior by infants or toddlers is not considered a violent behavior because it is not malicious in intent. Children this age do not understand how their behavior impacts others.** Because we know that biting is a relatively common behavior for many children of this age, we do not have an exclusion policy. However, if a child is having a particularly rough time and is biting persistently, we may have to separate the child from the group for the day. We want what's best for all the children in our program.

## Family Involvement

While a lot of information can be informally shared during drop-off and pick-up, we do schedule regular fall and spring family conferences. With some notice we can arrange additional conferences, as needed.  These meetings will help us meet your child's needs if we know about any changes in your family's life (pregnancy, moving, divorce, death, new pets, etc.). You are encouraged to call or email your child's classroom at any time.

Family conferences are held twice a year for all classrooms. During the fall meeting, families and teachers have an opportunity to get to know each other, talk about the upcoming school year and to set goals and expectations for your child. In the spring, the teacher will share written information regarding your child's growth and development. Two developmental screening tools -- Ages and Stages-3 Questionnaire (ASQ, general development) and Ages and Stages-Social Emotional (ASQ-SE, 2nd ed.) -- are used with younger children and Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) are used in the preschool rooms, as required by the State. Both the screener and TSG Assessment are generally based on observations and data collected on an on-going basis in the classrooms.

We also encourage families to read or tell a story to the class, sing songs, volunteer to help children with a project, chaperone field trips, make classroom games at home or share a skill. We encourage you to volunteer in the classroom as many times as you can. It is fun to watch your child, and the class, change and grow in these social interactions. An added set of hands and eyes are always welcome and give the children more one-on-one time with an adult.

*We are always open to ideas for family involvement and would love to hear your suggestions. Please feel free to share them with the Director, and look for opportunities to become involved that are shared in emails and newsletters.

## Lillio

Our program uses the Lillio app to communicate with families. Through the app you will receive newsletters, daily notes, curriculum updates, portfolios, and photos. The app also allows for messaging between families and teachers. Out of respect for our teacher's work schedule, we ask that you not message teachers before or after our hours of operation. This will be our primary source of communication with families. If you are not registered or have trouble creating a Lillio account, please see the Director for assistance.

## Communication

We understand communication helps to create trusting partnerships between families and our teachers. Each classroom may communicate differently; however, we will all be held to these expectations.

Teachers will:

- Share daily notes for infants, and potty training notes for older children throughout the week.
- Create and maintain individual child portfolios that are aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards. These will be updated monthly and are available in the classroom for viewing throughout the year.
- Document daily learning in the classroom through posting the curriculum, photographs and anecdotal evidence in Lillio.
- Maintain a family board which includes curriculum, center calendar, photos of the children, relevant articles, and daily schedule to be updated monthly.
- Create a monthly classroom newsletter with updates about curriculum/themes, evolving skills, and upcoming community events and important dates to be emailed and posted on family board. A paper copy can be requested.
- Offer a conference in the fall and spring of each school year that are accessible to all families.

Directors will:

- Send weekly emails with center wide updates and resources, schedule changes and staffing updates.
- Update and maintain family resource board.
- Meet with the family committees throughout the year.

Families will:

- Record on the daily sheet when their infant woke up, was last fed, had last diaper change, and any other additional notes that will be helpful for the teachers to know.
- Report late arrivals and child absences.
- Provide written change in authorized pick up.
- Update program of any change of any family contact information including phone numbers, address, and emergency contacts.
- Communicate necessary accommodations.
- Ensure that teachers are informed of any allergies or health conditions that may affect a child's care during the day and that a formal plan is in place.

If you would like to discuss your child or their classroom, please reach out to your classroom teachers. If larger discussions are needed the director will be available.

## Partnership Agreement

Our program is a partner in your child's education, therefore we recommend that information resulting from consultation with specialized service providers be shared with us. These providers include, but are not limited to: Occupational, Physical, and/or Speech Pathologists; Behavioral Interventionists, Therapists and Pediatricians. Communication between other adults and providers in your child's life help us to provide stronger support for your child and your family.

Modifications of the program to accommodate the needs of children with qualified disabilities, including assignment of additional staff, may be made where such modifications are reasonable and necessary, if the modifications do not fundamentally alter the nature of the program and do not result in an undue burden on the Y. Requests for modifications or auxiliary aids should be made as far as possible in advance of a child's attendance in the program. The Y strives to make the program one which provides for the safety, well-being, development, and success of each child enrolled — and seeks to work in partnership with families in best accomplishing that goal.

## Transitions

The Greater Burlington YMCA Early Childhood Program has a model of transitioning children to new classrooms based on age and developmental readiness. There are several factors considered when transitioning children to new rooms. We have outlined below our philosophy and practice around those transitions.

- Ideally, we strive to maintain child-teacher relationships for at least nine months.
- Classroom teachers will speak to you personally about transitions, usually 2-4 weeks before they take place.
    - They will follow up by connecting you with your child's future teachers
- We try to transition children throughout the year to meet developmental needs as we are able.
- We project the number of spaces open throughout the year and as we near the transition date, we observe children closely to determine who will be moving.
    - This means that we don't make determinations too far in advance.
    - This is because children develop at such an individual pace.
- Typically, children move through four to six of our classrooms depending largely on their birth date.
- While age plays a role due to regulations around ratios, it is not the only factor considered.
- We try our best to transition in at least pairs, understanding that sometimes it makes sense to move only one child based on their particular needs, and developmental or physical age.
- Teachers share their observations and input with the team as decisions are made.
- Parent input is appreciated and considered along with these other factors, however, ultimately the school will decide the best fits for each child and classroom.

Each year, we try to move a small number of children at a time in intervals. We have found this helps ease the transition for both children and teachers. Typically, those intervals are in March, June, August and December.

When transitioning infants to young toddler rooms, we consider:

- the mobility of the child.
- whether their needs are more closely matched to those in the infant room or a one-year-old room including nap schedule, food types, and other developmental stages.

For all transitions, we consider:

- the developmental needs of individual children and the group as a whole.
- which rooms have space.
- the strengths and needs of the child.
- the other children in the room.
- the teaching team in the room.

When we create classroom communities each year, we take into consideration many moving parts while endeavoring to make the best decisions possible for the children in our care.

## FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION

### Allergies and Food Sensitivities

Please list any food allergies or sensitivities that your child has in the appropriate section of the child's registration form. This information should also be communicated to the program director and your child's teachers before or immediately upon enrollment. If there are allergies in the classroom, you will be informed by your child's teacher. The safety of every child is first and foremost in every Y program. If a child with a severe allergy is enrolled in the program, it will be necessary to have specific food restrictions in certain areas of the facility. We monitor food labels and will send home foods that pose a threat to other children.

### Allergy Sensitive Space

Any pod with a known life-threatening food allergy will have a table designated "allergy sensitive" in each classroom associated with that pod. That table will be cleaned with separate materials and all food at the table will be checked by staff for potential allergens.

## Nutrition

When planning cooking activities for the children we will work hard to do our part in providing healthy examples. There are many foods that pose a choking risk to children under the age of four. Please check with your child's teacher about food that may be prohibited and see the attached list at the end of the handbook.

Food that families provide will be given to children, regardless of content, unless they contain life threatening allergens that have been posted. We do ask that families do their best to provide numerous options, foods children like to eat, and food for 2 snacks and one meal. Additional foods for times when children's appetites are shifting are helpful. If children run out of foods in their lunch box options will be provided, per licensing regulations. If your family is navigating food insecurity, resources are available through our administrative team.

## Mealtime Philosophy

Classroom teachers will determine the place and time for meals and children will choose what to eat and how much they eat. If children finish their meals provided to them that day and are still hungry, we will supplement their meals with food from our pantry. This philosophy helps children learn to recognize their own hunger and fullnes cues.

## Bottle Feeding

Bottles should be labeled as breast milk or formula with the child's name. To prevent confusion, please label all parts of the bottle with your child's name. Bottles should be pre-made by families and include the date and amount of milk or formula. If you wish to use a glass bottle for your infant, it must have a rubber/silicone sleeve around it. There should be a sleeve for each glass bottle. Mothers who are breast feeding are welcome to come to the center to nurse at their convenience. We will keep frozen breast milk as backup for up to six months, at which time it will be returned to the family.

Additionally, the Greater Burlington YMCA has a Mamava pumping station, generously donated by Champlain College, located on the second floor of the 298 College Street building.

## Labels

Please make sure to label all food containers and bottles in the lunch bag with your child's name. Please pay attention to the expiration dates. Teachers cannot serve any food items that are past their expiration date. All bottles and food containers will be rinsed and sent home each day.

## Reheating Food

We encourage glass or BPA-free containers for foods that require reheating. When those are not available, we will transfer the food to a microwave-safe container to be warmed.

## Choking Hazards and Safety

The following foods pose a choking hazard to children under age four (4). Small, round, firm foods that can slip easily down the throat, those that are stringy or sticky, and those that swell when moist are the most dangerous. If you plan to send these foods in with your child, we ask that you prepare them in a way that lessens their potential to cause choking. A good rule of thumb is to cut foods into pieces no larger than ¼ inch squares for infants and ½ inch squares for toddlers/twos.

**Apples.** Always chop apples and other firm fruits into manageable, bite-sized pieces or thin slices, or cook until soft in texture.

**Carrots.** Raw carrots should be finely shredded or cooked thoroughly until mushy to the touch.

**Celery.** Its stringy quality makes celery hard for young children to chew and swallow properly. With a peeler, remove the stringy outside layer of the celery stick, and cut it up before serving.

**Grapes.** Cut grapes in half (if large, cut into fourths) before giving them to your child (remove seeds). Similarly, cherries should be pitted and chopped before serving.

**Hot Dogs.** One of the most common foods to choke children, hot dogs must be cut up to become safer to eat. Slice lengthwise and then chop into irregularly shaped, bite-sized pieces.

**Nut Butters, Sunflower Butter.** The safest way to prepare a nut butter is to spread a very thin layer on a slice of bread and serve with a beverage. Children under age four should never eat large clumps of nut butter from a spoon or finger. (Please note that some of our programs are peanut and tree nut free.)

**Raisins/Dried Fruit.** Avoid giving raisins to children under age two. Serve plump, separated raisins or ones that have been cooked in breads or puddings

**Hard Candy.** Small sucking candies are dangerous because children tend to bite them and may accidentally swallow them whole, blocking their airway. *

**Nuts.** Peanuts (like hot dogs) are a leading cause of childhood choking. But all nuts pose a threat because of their size and shape and therefore should be avoided. *

**Popcorn.** Its size, shape, and sharp, irregular edges makes popcorn a prime choking food. *

*Keep these foods off-limits for children under age four (4).

Due to the nature of group care where children are sitting close together while eating, and the wide range of developmental abilities at mealtimes, these guidelines will ensure the safety of all children.

These are some of the things we have found young children like to eat. If you have other suggestions, let us know!

| **Breads/Starch** | **Fruits/Vegetables** | **Dairy/Protein** |
|---|---|---|
| Spaghetti | Fresh fruit (cut or whole) | Cheese |
| Pizza | Mashed potatoes | Yogurt |
| Muffins/quick breads | Applesauce | String cheese |
| Waffles | Fresh fruit with yogurt | Cream cheese & bagels |
| Toast | Celery, carrots, broccoli & dip | Baked beans |
| Macaroni & cheese | Fruit salad | Hard boiled eggs |
| Sandwiches | Salsa & chips | Rolled-up deli meat |
| Graham crackers | Vegetable soup | Pepperoni |
| Pancakes | 100% fruit juice | Tofu |
| Garlic bread | Peas or green beans | Cut-up hot dogs |
| Cereal bars/granola | Pickles/olives | Chili |
| Pretzels | | Pudding |
| Raisin bread | | Cottage cheese |
| Oatmeal | | Cream soup |
| Bagels | | Grilled cheese |
| Rice cakes | | Scrambled eggs |
| Crackers | | Chicken fingers/nuggets |
| Rice | | Hamburger |
| Tortillas | | Stir fry |
| English muffins | | Hummus |
| Animal crackers | | Tuna fish |
| Dry cereal | | |

## Water Testing

Our water was tested for each sink and water fountain within the center, including all bathroom sinks, classroom sinks and the water fountain in the hallway. All samples were the same and were <0.001 mg/L on 04/27/2023. Previous results in February of 2020 had the same result.

You can view school and child care results, remediation and any follow-up testing at LeadResults.vermont.gov.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## Diapering

Families should provide a minimum of 10 diapers at the center, along with diaper cream, which does not require a medication form.

For children who use cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering must be changed as a unit. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a wet bag provided by the family (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering. Wet bags will be stored during the day in a closed bin provided by the Y.

## Toilet Learning

Toileting philosophy:

We focus on autonomy, routine, and learning to recognize and trust the cues of one's own body. We recognize toilet readiness happens across a wide spectrum of time, and can be connected both to experience and internal cues.

We follow Zero to Three's Guidance around rewards seen below

"Many caregivers wonder about offering rewards for using the potty—a sticker, an extra sweet, or a little toy every time the child is successful on the toilet.

Although these kinds of rewards may encourage progress in the short run, the concern is that for some children, the pressure of "success" in the form of the reward creates anxiety or feelings of failure when they have a (very normal and even expected) potty accident. The other risk is that the use of rewards for toileting can lead children to expect rewards for doing almost anything—finishing a meal, brushing teeth, etc. When parents are matter-of-fact about potty training and don't make a big deal about it, children are more likely to follow their own internal desire to reach this important milestone."

A hard copy of this article or other toileting resources are available at your request.

## Emergency Procedures

If a child is injured or ill, the director or the appointed person in charge will take whatever steps necessary to obtain emergency medical care. These steps may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attempt to contact a parent or guardian.
- Attempt to contact a parent/guardian through any of the people listed on the emergency information form.

**Please make sure all contact information is accurate and up to date.**

If we cannot contact a family/guardian, or the situation warrants, we will do one of the following:

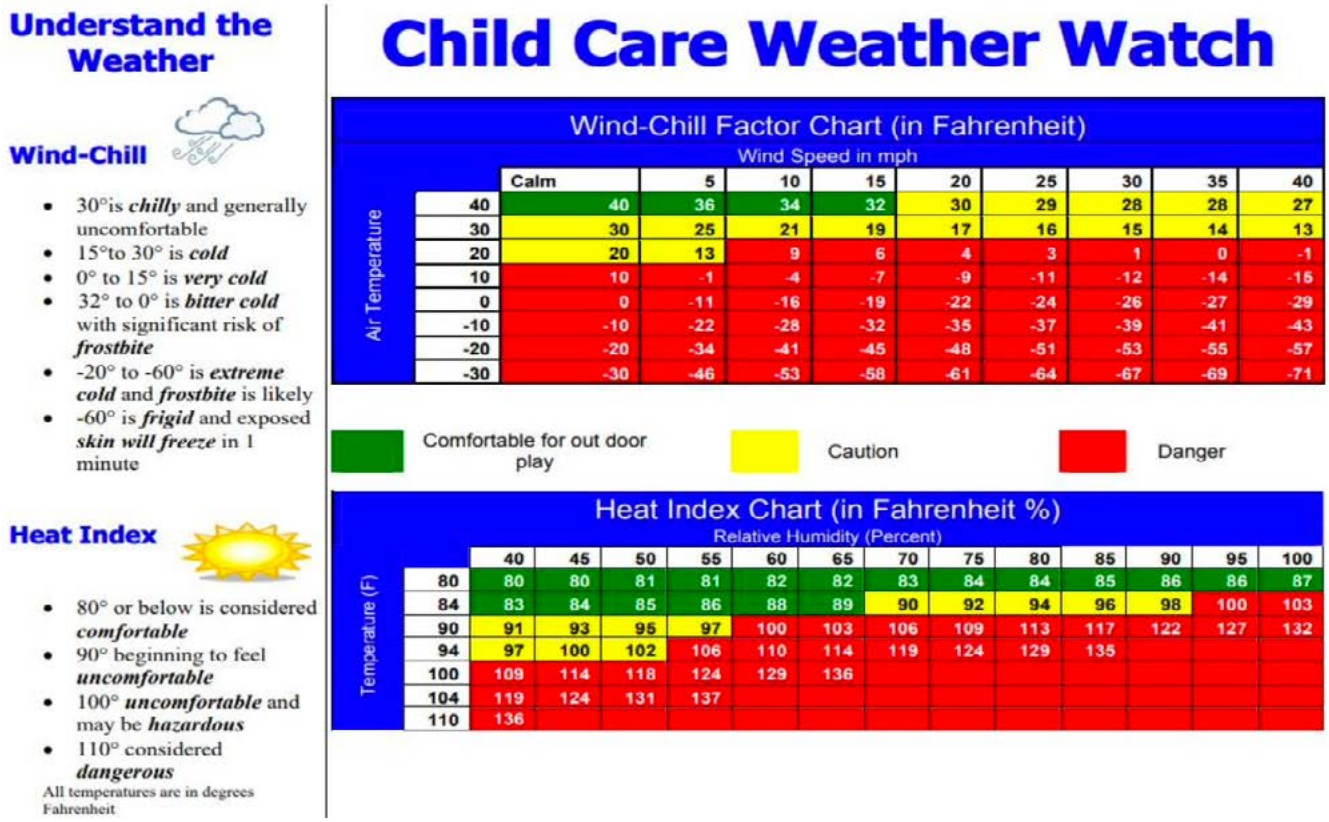
- Call 911.
- Have the child taken to a hospital or doctor's office in the care of the director/acting director.

## Fire Drills and Center Evacuations

Every program will conduct monthly emergency drills throughout the year. In case of an emergency evacuation that forces us out of the area, we will meet at the Fletcher Free Library, 253 College Street, Burlington, VT

## Outdoor Temperatures

We monitor the temperatures factoring in wind-chill and humidity using the weather chart (attached) as a guide.



**Understand the Weather**

**Wind-Chill**

- 30°is ***chilly*** and generally uncomfortable
- 15°to 30° is ***cold***
- 0° to 15° is ***very cold***
- 32° to 0° is ***bitter cold*** with significant risk of ***frostbite***
- -20° to -60° is ***extreme cold*** and ***frostbite*** is likely
- -60° is ***frigid*** and exposed ***skin will freeze*** in 1 minute

**Heat Index**

- 80° or below is considered ***comfortable***
- 90° beginning to feel ***uncomfortable***
- 100° ***uncomfortable*** and may be ***hazardous***
- 110° considered ***dangerous***

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

**Child Care Weather Watch**

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)

Wind Speed in mph

| Air Temperature | Calm | 5 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 30 | 35 | 40 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 40 | 36 | 34 | 32 | 30 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 |
| 30 | 30 | 25 | 21 | 19 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 |
| 20 | 20 | 13 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 | -1 |
| 10 | 10 | -1 | -4 | -7 | -9 | -11 | -12 | -14 | -16 |
| 0 | 0 | -11 | -16 | -19 | -22 | -24 | -26 | -27 | -29 |
| -10 | -10 | -22 | -28 | -32 | -35 | -37 | -39 | -41 | -43 |
| -20 | -20 | -34 | -41 | -45 | -48 | -51 | -53 | -55 | -57 |
| -30 | -30 | -46 | -53 | -58 | -61 | -64 | -67 | -69 | -71 |

Comfortable for out door play | Caution | Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)

Relative Humidity (Percent)

| Temperature (F) | 40 | 45 | 50 | 55 | 60 | 65 | 70 | 75 | 80 | 85 | 90 | 95 | 100 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 80 | 80 | 80 | 81 | 81 | 82 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 86 | 87 |
| 84 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 92 | 94 | 96 | 98 | 100 | 103 |
| 90 | 91 | 93 | 95 | 97 | 100 | 103 | 106 | 109 | 113 | 117 | 122 | 127 | 132 |
| 94 | 97 | 100 | 102 | 106 | 110 | 114 | 119 | 124 | 129 | 135 | | | |
| 100 | 109 | 114 | 118 | 124 | 129 | 136 | | | | | | | |
| 104 | 119 | 124 | 131 | 137 | | | | | | | | | |
| 110 | 136 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## Severe Weather Procedures/School Closings

In the event of emergency weather conditions or other unforeseen emergencies occur, the center reserves the right to declare an emergency closing for the appropriate time. Families will be contacted through the Lillio app as an automated phone call or text message, as well as announcing closures to WCAX news.

Weather-related closings will be made the morning of the predicted storm and announced before 6:30 am. Decisions to adjust the hours of operation due to severe weather (or other emergencies) may be made throughout the day and families will be informed of such decisions through the Lillio app.

**Please make sure all contact information is accurate and up to date.**

## Illness Policy

Our ultimate goal is to provide quality care to the children in our program. We ask for your cooperation in keeping everyone healthy. As we have learned from the COVID pandemic, health policy guidelines can change frequently. When in question, we always recommend that you consult your child's health care provider for advice on your child's illness about returning to school.

When your child shows signs of illness, keeping them at home to observe and monitor their symptoms for the first 24 hours assists us in helping the other children, teachers, and families in our program to remain healthy. **In the event your child is ill, please call your child's classroom to report the absence.**

If your child is demonstrating signs of illness during the school day, teachers will assess the child for the following before a family is called to pick up an unwell child:

- Mood, energy level and general disposition
- Ability to keep up with daily routine.
- Additional signs and symptoms of illness, including temperature, reported discomfort, or pain.

Children who become ill during the school day will be comforted until picked up by an approved family member or guardian. **Pick-up must occur as soon as possible and no longer than one hour after the call is received from Y staff**. Children who are sent home for illness may not return to the program the following day. For example, if your child is sent home on Monday, the earliest they may return is Wednesday, if their illness has resolved.

Our health policy is aligned with the VT Licensing Regulations. Children who are ill or who have contagious diseases should not come to the program that day. Please keep your child at home if they are exhibiting the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100 F or more with other symptoms of illness (i.e. congestion, irritability, cough, fatigue, etc.).
- Severe coughing.
- Onset of congestion/runny nose along with other symptoms (i.e. irritability, poor sleep, fever, cough, etc.).
- Has had vomiting indicative of a stomach virus within the last 24 hours.
- Has diarrhea that is indicative of a stomach virus, is leaking from a diaper or causing toilet accidents in children who are toilet trained.
- Is not able to keep up with the scheduled day or requires one-to-one care.

Please keep your child home and consult with your child's healthcare provider to determine when your child can return to care for the following:

- Eye Discharge
- Unidentified Rash

These symptoms can have many different causes, not all of which are communicable to others, so it is important to have them evaluated by a health professional.

Below are our guidelines as to when children can return to the program following common childhood illnesses.

**Fever caused by illness:** 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication and symptoms of illness have begun to resolve.

**Conjunctivitis:** Please follow your child's doctor's advice. If medicated drops are prescribed, your child can return when drops have been administered for 24 hours as prescribed.

**Head Lice:** Please follow your child's doctor's advice. Children may return after using a prescription treatment. If symptoms persist, re-treatment may be recommended.

**COVID:** 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication and symptoms have begun to resolve.

**Influenza:** 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication and symptoms have begun to resolve.

**Strep Throat:** 24 hours fever free, and able to participate.

**Vomiting/Diarrhea "Stomach Bug":** 24 hours after last episode and child can tolerate food; fever free for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications.

**Coxsackie Virus or "Hand Foot and Mouth":** 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication, child is not drooling excessively from mouth sores and can eat and drink comfortably.

*The Y will follow the guidelines recommended by the VT Dept. of Health in the event of a pandemic. Parents will be notified if one should occur. Please use your pediatrician's recommendation for any other illness.*

## Measles

Anyone confirmed to have measles will stay home from work/school/child care and away from other people until they are cleared to return by a health professional and are no longer able to spread the measles virus to others

For children and adults who were exposed to measles, and who do not have protection against measles:

- They should be kept out of work/school/child care for several weeks during their incuba-

tion period – the time it may take for measles symptoms to develop in someone who is not protected against measles. The duration of time for exclusion depends on several factors, but it could be as long as three or four weeks.

The Y will follow the guidelines recommended by the VT Dept. of Health in the event of a pandemic. Parents will be notified if one should occur. Please use your pediatrician's recommendation for any other illness.

## Administering Medication

Medication can be administered during the program if it is prescribed by your child's health care provider.

The Medical Authorization form must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian for each day your child needs the prescribed medication, even if it is for the same medication for multiple days. You may provide these forms to your child's teacher, as they will be kept in the classroom. Medications should be in the original container with proper dosage noted on the label; if it is a prescription medication, the medication must be clearly labeled with the child's name, dosage, schedule and contents, and the date must be current and come with the prescription label. Medications will be kept in locked medicine boxes; they should not be stored in the child's lunch box, bag, or backpack. It is the responsibility of the family to ensure that directions for use are current, and all medications are up to date.  All medications will be returned to families at the end of the year when transitioning out of a classroom.

Our teachers are trained by a licensed health provider on how to properly administer medication. Please note that we may not administer medications if they do not conform with written instructions either on the container or from a physician. For example, should a family request that we dispense over-the-counter medicine to an infant when the label clearly states that a physician should be consulted before administering the drug to a child under the age of two, we could only administer the medicine with a physician's note outlining the medication and appropriate dosage.

## Pick-Up Authorization

An adult over the age of eighteen (18) must accompany the child in and out of the facility. Where applicable, that adult must sign the child in or out with a staff member in charge of the child's group. Once a family member arrives to pick up a child, they are no longer under the supervision of Y staff.

If your site has door codes and gates, we ask that only adults enter the codes and open doors and gates. Do not share the code with your child to prevent accidental sharing of this security measure.

Children will be released only to those people listed on the registration form as "authorized persons" for pick-up.  Any other person coming to pick-up must have prior permission from the family, and authorization must be communicated to the teacher or the program director by the family. We will not accept a note/message from the person attempting to pick up a child. Please arrange a time

for the staff to meet others who have permission to pick up your child so they will be recognized by staff. The pick-up person should be prepared to show I.D. if staff do not recognize them.

## Late Pick-Up Policy

If you arrive past the program's closing hours, you will be charged a late pick up fee of $1.00 per minute beyond closing. Teachers will inform the director of any late pick-ups and families will be invoiced for the late fee. The late fee will be added to your tuition plan by the Business Office.

## Babysitting Policy

The Greater Burlington YMCA takes the safety of our children, families, and staff very seriously. For this reason, employees of the Greater Burlington YMCA are not permitted to be alone with children of families who are enrolled in any GBYMCA programs outside of program hours. This includes employees babysitting for families or having children visit employees' homes. Staff place themselves in a vulnerable situation when they are alone in a home with children. The child care policies of the Y are in place to protect children from child abuse and to protect staff from accusations of abuse. We encourage professionalism in all our staff and feel that babysitting diminishes that teacher/family relationship. Professionalism is a part of the evaluation process, and our educator's professional relationships will be considered during evaluations. Babysitting by staff members is considered grounds for dismissal under YMCA employment.

## Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

As professional early childhood educators, we are mandated by the State of Vermont to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect immediately to the Department of Children and Families at 1-800-649-5285.

## Parental Freedom of Access and Complaint Procedure

Families are always welcome and have access to the program anytime during hours of operation. Questions, concerns, or complaints may be shared with a child's teacher and/or the director at any time in person or in writing. Every effort will be made to discuss and address areas of concern should they arise. Parents or Guardians additionally may request a copy of their child's records at any time. Portfolios are available to families on Lillio.

If an adult behaves in a manner that disrupts the program, is intimidating, or promotes fear, that individual will be asked to leave the facility and may be restricted in their access to the program and its premises. All individuals must respect the Y's Core Values and use respectful behavior and communications when interacting with each other and staff.

## Information Procurement Policy

Maintaining confidentiality is critical. Information about children or families will always be kept confidential. Children's files will be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer. All families and participants are asked to respect the confidentiality of any information you may inadvertently gain about other children and families at the program. Please refrain from passing along any personal information to anyone unauthorized to hear it, both in and outside the center.

## Photo and Video Release and Use

At the Y, photographs or videos are occasionally used for program brochures, staff training, or other Y related business. If you are concerned about your child being photographed, please notify the director.

Please be aware that Y families may take photographs of their children within our programs for their own private use. If the pictures include any children than your own, all such photos should be for private use only and should not be published or posted on a public media forum such as Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, Snapchat, etc.

## Non-Discrimination and Harassment

The Y will not tolerate any form of discrimination or unlawful or sexual harassment by employees, members, or participants. It is the responsibility of everyone to prevent harassment to avoid creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Harassment by any participant of the Y will result in further investigation by Human Resources.

In accordance with the laws and regulations cited below, the Greater Burlington YMCA will not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, handicap, age, or sex in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities.

Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 USC 6101 et seq.) 45 CFR Part 91.
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC 1681) 45 CFR Part 86.

Our anti-harassment policy is on file. Please contact:

Thomas Leitz, VP of Finance and Administration
Greater Burlington YMCA
298 College Street
Burlington, VT  05401

## Insurance

A comprehensive program of insurance issued to the Greater Burlington YMCA covers the center and its staff.

## Licensure

The center is fully licensed by the State of Vermont and the Department of Children and Families/ Child Care Division (1-800-649-2642), meeting all health, safety, and fire regulations. Regulations may be viewed at: https://outside.vermont.gov/dept/DCF/Shared%20Documents/CDD/Licensing/CC-CenterBased-Regs.pdf

Any concerns can be reported to the licensor on duty at 1-800-649-2642, option 3. Our designated licensor is Robin Rielly at robin.rielly@vermont.gov.