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# *Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs Parent Handbook*

## **Meriden YMCA Little Rascals**

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## **Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Learning Center**

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## ***MERIDEN YMCA***

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### **DIRECTOR'S AUTHORITY**

*The Director retains the right to add, change or revise anything with in this contract. Such changes will be made in writing and parents and guardians will be given 30 days' notice.*

### **Meriden YMCA Childcare Philosophy**

The Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs serve the community by providing a proven, safe learning environment in the classroom that makes it possible for teachers to teach and children to learn. We provide quality supervision outside of the home for all children who are 6 weeks to 5 years old. The Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs create a comfortable, secure environment that allows each child to develop his/her sense of self-esteem, sense of belonging and a sense of accomplishment.

These programs encourage all to develop a partnership with families, working together to support children's optimal development and learning. We want children to choose their daily activities. our child care programs are designed to be comprehensive and based upon the fundamental factor of positive child development relative too physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language development.

### **Meriden YMCA Childcare Mission**

Our mission is to provide all children with high quality educational programs in a safe friendly environment that will develop trust and self-worth, build awareness, confidence and self-esteem. We challenge to accept and demonstrate the values of caring, respect and responsibility. We will develop a program that promotes family and community involvement which will enhance the well-being of our children.

### **Meriden YMCA Childcare Centers Program Goals**

The YMCA Childcare programs are designed to be a comprehensive childcare program based upon the fundamental factors of positive child development relative to physical, social and emotional, cognitive and language growth. The YMCA Childcare programs will provide a comfortable, secure environment that allows each child to develop his/her sense of self-esteem, belonging, security, accomplishment, self-worth, self-expression and experiences that make each child unique while having fun. Demonstrate a sense of self as a learner

#### **PROGRAM GOALS**

- Demonstrate a sense of responsibility
- Demonstrate effective functioning, individually and as a member of a group
- Demonstrate control, balance, strength and coordination in gross motor tasks
- Demonstrate coordination and strength in fine motor tasks
- Participates in healthy physical activity
- Practice appropriate eating habits, hygiene and self-help skills
- Demonstrate the ability to think, reason, question and remember
- Engage in problem solving
- Use language to communicate, convey and interpret meaning
- Establish social contacts as they begin to understand the physical and social world
- Use different art forms as a vehicle for creative expression and representation
- Develop an appreciation of the arts

#### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

- Encourage independence through tasks & programs
- Introduce children to new situations and provide children with support and comfort with these new situations
- Introduce children to group activities though circle time, learning time, music, story time and cooperating.
- Provide children with new experiences
- Encourage children and compliment children with their activities
- Provide children with experiences that provide children with fine motor skill development
- Each staff will encourage the development of self-esteem, security, belonging, accomplishment and self-expression.
- Provide children with opportunities that enable them to increase physical skills
- Encourage children to join each other through play, sports, sharing and cooperation

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- Provide children with opportunities to pretend and be creative through centers, art, play, activity and music

### **Classrooms and Curriculum(10B14)**

Classrooms are divided up according to age, ability and size. Working with families the Meriden YMCA Childcare staff, director and teaching assistants will make a collective decision as to when a child will move from one classroom to another. Please be advised that space is limited to licensed capacity, ratio's must be maintained at all times and group sizes for infants and toddlers cannot exceed 8. The breakdowns of the classrooms are listed below.

- Infant Nursery Room- 6 weeks – Mobility
- Infant Play Room- Mobility to 14 months
- Toddler 1 Room- 14 months – 2 years
- Toddler 2 Room- 2 years – 2 ½ years
- Toddler 3 Room 2 ½ years – 3 years
- Preschool Room- 3 years – 5 years

Per state regulations during the months of September, October, November and December a child may be 2.9 years old and eligible for the preschool classroom. However, after December 31<sup>st</sup> children are only eligible for preschool on or after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Preschool space is limited; depending on the availability your child may or may not be held over until a lot opens up. Children turning 3 years' old

after May will be held over until the next school begins in September. Toddler children turning 3 years old after May will be held over until the next school year begins in September. Toddler children will transition into a toddler 2 classroom during the month of August. Infants will not transition into the Toddler 1 classroom until they have reached the age of 1 and or have begun walking.

Please remember that space is limited in all of our programs, should you be interested in changing the schedules days that your child attends you must see the program director for availability. Here at the Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs our curriculum reflects the interests and needs of the children. Lessons and pre planned curriculum activities may or may not change depending on the interests of the children.

Our activities are themed based, play based and child centers. Our schedules are predictable yet flexible to the individual's needs.

### **Hours and Days of Operation**

The Meriden Child Care Programs operate between the hours of 7:00am and 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. The Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- The Day After Thanksgiving will be surveyed
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

### **Enrollment**

The Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs are open to all children ages 6 weeks through 3 years old. A child, who will be three years old between September 1 and January 1, may enroll in any of the pre-school programs that the Meriden YMCA offers. **Pre-School children must be toilet-trained.**

- Meriden YMCA Head Start
- Meriden YMCA Childcare Center (Crown Street)
- Little Panthers (Platt High School)
- Little Spartans (Maloney High School)
- Meriden YMCA Preschool @ Hanover School
- Little Rascals Preschool

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Families wanting to enroll their child into the Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs need to complete the registration packet. Vacancies in the program are filled on a first come first served basis. In addition to the child's application, a state issued health form, emergency permission slips, and parent handbook acknowledgement form must also be completed upon enrollment.

The Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs are open to all children regardless of race, color, national and ethnic origin. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs or athletic and other school-administered programs. The YMCA Child Care Centers do not discriminate on the bases of religious beliefs or physical/mental handicaps.

### **Open Door Policy**

The Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Program has an open door policy to assure you, the parents and your child that they are receiving the best care available while at our program. If at any time you would like to make an unscheduled visit to our facility, please do so.

### **Program Fees & Making Payments**

Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Childcare Fees

- 5 days a week- \$225.00
- 3 days a week- \$165.00
- 2 days a week- \$120.00

Meriden YMCA Preschool Fees

- \$179.00 a week

**\*\*\*Prices may increase \$5.00 annually in September**

Payment is expected every week even when your child is absent. You have reserved your child's spot. We do not replace your child's spot when he/she are absent so therefore payment is still expected every week.

### **Tuition Payments**

Child Care payments are due weekly in advance on Mondays. Payment is expected on a weekly basis whether your child is absent or present. Please remember that we are holding your child's spot. We do not replace your child's spot when they are absent therefore you are still responsible for payment if your child is out sick, on vacation, or is out because you took a day off from work. There are no acceptable excuses for non-payment. Should a parent or guardian fall 2 weeks behind on child care payments you will be terminated until the full payment is received.

**There is no reduction in weekly fees for delayed school starts or shortened days, absences due to illness, inclement weather, holidays, emergency closings, etc.**

### **Termination**

The Meriden YMCA reserves the right to cancel enrollment of a child with or without notice for the following reasons:

Non-payment or excessive late payments or fees

1. Not observing the polices of the Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs as outlined in the parent handbook.
2. Disruptive behavior by a parent in the classroom or on YMCA property.
3. Physical, emotional, and / or verbal abuse of the staff by a parent or a child.

The discharge policy is not limited to the above reasons. If the Meriden YMCA Preschool program cannot meet the needs of the parent or the child, the Program Director reserves the right to terminate a child from the program. We will try to help the parents find alternative child care for their child.

### **Refund Policy**

The Meriden YMCA is an agency that meets staffing ratios daily. Therefore, we do not offer any refunds. If you plan on removing your child, we ask for a 2 week written notice. In extreme cases you can discuss the matter with the program director.

### **Returned Checks**

Any check returned by the bank will result in a service charge of \$35.00 pending bank fees. This fee must be paid with the following week's tuition and all future payments must be paid in cash and / or a bank certified check

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### **Rate Increases**

The Meriden YMCA reserves the right to review childcare rates and to raise them periodically to accommodate increasing business costs. We will provide advance written notice to parents in the event of a rate increase.

### **Tuition Policy**

All tuition is due on the first day of each week and you must keep one week ahead. You can pay by the month, but it must be paid by the first of the month. Please do not place the YMCA in the position of reminding you of your payment obligations. This fee not only pays for your child's tuition but also reserves the child's spot. As a result, no refund or restitution will be given in the event that your child is absent for any reason as we are operating on a weekly income. The YMCA is willing to work with all; you need to work with us. Parents who are falling one month behind need to work out a payment plan or lose their child's spot in the program. After one month, this account will then be turned over to the Meriden YMCA's finance department for payment collection.

### **Sliding Fee Scale Policy (FOR FAMILIES ENROLLED AT Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Learning Center)**

The Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Learning Center program uses a sliding scale. The requirements for the sliding scale fees are as follows:

- Bring in 4 recent weekly pay stubs or 2 biweekly pay stubs.
- The Director or office Manager of the program will help calculate the formula for you.
- If you are on Care 4 Kids, you need to change providers and fill our Care 4 Kids paperwork.
- Sliding scale fees must be done once a year in September.
- Parents must bring in their pay stubs when asked and 1040 tax form.
- It is a policy that all families at a 50 SMI level and meet eligibility must fill out the Child Care Assistance Program.
- All fee calculations are reviewed and signed by the parent and director and parents are given a copy.
- We use the current funding sources sliding fee scale to calculate the parent fee.

### **Child Care Assistance Program (Care 4 Kids)**

The State of Connecticut has a program to help subsidize child-care payments. This program is called "Care 4 Kids" and any parent or legal guardian who feels that they may qualify for this program should obtain the Care 4 Kids forms and documentation, complete the application and meet with director for assistance. When enrolling your child, we ask that you pay the FULL weekly tuition rate until Care 4 Kids approves your application. Once Care 4 Kids begins paying we will then make the necessary credits to your account. Should you incur any changes in your work schedule and or salaries it is your responsibility as a parent to notify Care 4 Kids of the changes. Parents are responsible for the Care 4 Kids re-determination status and necessary paperwork. Parents will be responsible for any changes in fees whether they are in your favor or our favor.

### **The Meriden YMCA Child Care Guidelines for Hardship Policy**

The Meriden YMCA recognizes that some families may, from time to time, experience temporary financial hardship that impacts their ability to pay the determined family fee. All Meriden YMCA families may apply and are treated with sensitivity and circumstances kept confidential.

Families who need temporary assistance must complete a Hardship Application and bring in supporting documentation that may be helpful in ascertaining eligibility. We will try to provide information and resources in the community or government assistance programs that may be helpful. After reaching an agreement regarding a new payment schedule, it will be put in writing within 10 business days of the agreement. The YMCA will conduct a review every 6 months (this program is for a limited time). Program representatives will meet with the family and review all options and materials.

### **Parent Communication and Involvement**

The teachers welcome the opportunity to talk informally with parents for a few minutes each day. Parents and teachers are encouraged to discuss how family and staff handle different aspects of childrearing such as discipline, feeding, toileting and other important topics. Teachers may also give parents specific ideas for prompting children's healthy development at home. We encourage parents to involve themselves with events and the child care facility. Parents are always welcome at any of the Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs.

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### **Things for Parents to Remember**

- When you change any telephone numbers or addresses, please give us the new updated information. It is your parental responsibility.
- When your child takes a nap, they need the comfort of home. Please make sure they have a blanket and a pillow. They should be taken home every Friday to be washed.
- Your child grows throughout the year, please make sure that the clothes in the cubby fit and are weather appropriate.
- Please remember to call and let us know if your child will be out for the day.
- If you have any concerns, please address them with the staff and/or the director.
- Make sure that you sign your child in and out every day.
- Payments for the week are due by Friday of that week.
- If your child goes home sick, they **MUST** be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to the center without the administration of medication.
- In order for your child to start at the Meriden YMCA all registration forms and health forms need to be completely filled out and returned to the director.

### **Schedule Change or Withdrawal of a Child**

If you plan to terminate your child's enrollment for whatever reason, we must have two weeks written notice. This gives us time to register and fill your child's place. If you do not give the two week notice you will still be responsible to pay the fee. If you want to re-enroll your child at a later date a new registration fee will be required.

### **Attendance Policy**

We encourage parents to call when their child will not be attending the South Meriden Infant, Toddler and Kindergarten Program. On the second consecutive day a child is out a teacher or the director will call the home. After 15 days, a letter is sent home to the parents to let them know that their child has lost the slot in the program.

### **Signing Your Child In & Out Daily**

To ensure the safety of all of the children, all children **MUST** be escorted in to the building and signed in by a parent or guardian. Attendance is taken every morning. If you know that your child will not be attending on any certain day, please call the office and let us know.

- Meriden YMCA Little Rascals- 203-630-0039
- Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Learning Center- 203-379-0651

The sign out procedure is established for the safety of your child. Children **MUST** be signed out each day before leaving the building by any adult who is listed on the child's pick up form. Please have a picture ID available with you the first week of the program until the staff becomes familiar with you.

### **Arrival and Departure**

The Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs are open Monday – Friday from 7:00am to 6:00pm year round. The doors will be unlocked at precisely 7:00am. We expect all parents to be out of the building by 6:00pm. If you know that you are going to be late, please call an alternative pick up person so that your child/children will be picked up on time. Two staff members ages 18 or older are in the building until all of the children have been picked up. Upon arrival children **MUST** be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult, at least 18 years of age, into the building and into the child's classroom. Please be sure to sign your child in and out every day. We are required by child day care regulation (19a-79-3a) to maintain hours of attendance for a period of two years.

- You must enter and exit from the building through the main entrance
- All children must be brought to their classroom and sign in and out daily
- If someone other than yourself will be picking your child up they **MUST** be listed on the pickup list, they need to be at least 18 years old and they **MUST** have ID on them. If the person is not on the list your child will not be released to them.

**If your child has not been picked up by 6:30pm and we have been unsuccessful in reaching you and / or your alternate pick up person by 6:30pm, we will contact the Department of Children and Families CARELINE at 1-800-235-28158 and the Meriden Police Department.**

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### **Late Pick Up**

A late pick up fee of \$25.00 for the first 15 minutes and \$5.00 for every additional minute after that will be charged and due with the following week's tuition.

### **Child Custody and Pick Up Issues**

The Meriden YMCA Child Care Centers cannot refuse to release a child to the child's parent or legal guardian who has or shares legal custody. In most cases, both parents have equal custody rights; unless a court order states otherwise, even if parents have separated and one has moved out of the family home. In the event of divorce, separation, joint custody ruling, both parents will be treated equally. If there is a change in legal custody, we need a copy of the order as soon as possible. This will help us plan to keep you and your child safe.

### **Parking Lot Safety**

Remember to hold your child's hand while in the parking lot. It can be difficult to see a child from behind the wheel of a car. Also please drive slowly with extreme care and caution while you are in the parking lot.

We have an "anti-idling" policy addressing environmental health. Vehicles should not idle in the Meriden YMCA's child care facilities parking lots. This includes drop-off and pick-up. (CFOC Standard 6.5.2.1.)

### **Other Closings**

In the event the Meriden Child Care Programs loses power which cannot be restored and / or the Governor declares a state of emergency, the center will follow his / her directives. Parents will be notified of such a closing via telephone communication. The South Meriden Infant Toddler Program reserves the right to close if weather conditions present a safety risk. Announcements will be made via television or radio announcements. Parents can also contact 211 InfoLine.

### **Required Forms and Child Records for Enrollment**

The following forms must be completed before a child can begin attending the South Meriden Infant and Toddler Program:

- Registration Form (to be updated yearly)
- One-time \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee
- Health Record (completed by the child's physician and needed every year) with the most up to date immunization record
- CACFP Income Eligibility form for the food program
- Alternate Persons Pick-up Authorization Form
- Policies and Procedures Form
- Medications Authorization Form (if needed)
- Individualized Health Care Plan (if needed)

Required forms must be submitted at least one week prior to enrollment. Records are kept on file in accordance with state law. The contents of each child's file are confidential. No information contained in a child's file will be released to an unauthorized person without the knowledge and written consent of the parents/guardians. At the written request of the parents, records can be forwarded to other child care providers, school systems, physicians, etc. Parents have the right to review the contents of their child's record. However, the records are personal property of the YMCA Infant, Toddler and Preschool Center. Full copies can be made upon request. The person giving consent or making requests for records MUST do so in writing and be the child's parent or legal guardian.

**It is the parent's responsibility to keep all enrollment information up to date, such as changes in telephone number for home, work and cell. These changes must be submitted to the center in writing within 24 hours of the change or on the first day the child is back in the center.**

### **Provisional Enrollment Period**

The Meriden YMCA Childcare Centers have a trial enrollment period of two months. At the end of the two months, enrollment shall be accepted as permanent. If a child is expelled from the program due to serious consistent behavior problems beyond the centers capabilities to handle the director will give the parents/guardians a 30 day notice, during this 30 day notice the director will also assist in finding an available suitable childcare center if needed. During the first 30 days of enrollment the program staff and director will observe each child in efforts to

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adequately plan lessons and activities for your child. During the assessment process the staff may also decide which classroom will best suit your child's needs.

### **Food Policy & Meals (CACFP)**

An important part of health & development is good nutrition. Parents and guardians are responsible to share any food allergies or special diet their child may have. Food allergies and / or restrictions are required to have medical documentation. Reasonable accommodations will be made for children with special dietary needs. The state food program requirements (CACFP) must be met, prior to any changes to the meal service menu. Children are fed following the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutritional guidelines. Depending on the time your child is in attendance, breakfast, lunch, and / or snack will be offered. All meals meet the standards of good nutrition, and menus are reviewed by a registered dietitian. Head Start requires all meals to be high in nutrients, and low in fat, sugar and salt. Drinking water is available at all times (tap water).

Mealtime is used as a learning time. Children help set the table and clean up. Meals are served family style. This means, children and adults sit and eat together. Children serve themselves. Adults eat the same foods the children eat. Adults model good eating habits and table manners. A relaxed atmosphere is encouraged through conversation. Children are encouraged to try new or disliked foods.

Enough food is prepared and offered to meet the nutritional guidelines according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which the program participates in. No more than two servings of any one food will be served to one child. Children will not be forced to eat. Food is never used as a reward or for punishment.

**NO FOOD OR DRINKS MAY BE BROUGHT IN TO THE BUILDING. Only foods offered through the program may be served. Efforts will be made to have healthy foods served at all program events. No candy, chips, or soda will be served to children at any program event. Foods containing nuts, peanuts, or peanut butter are not served.**

A monthly menu will be sent home. It is also posted in each classroom. Parents are offered nutritional information. Outside foods are not allowed. This includes hot/cold drinks, cake, cupcakes, and candy. All adults, when with the children, may only eat the food that the program is serving. For children who are under one-year-old they may opt out of the food program. If you choose to opt of you will have to provide all of their formula, cereal and baby food. The Meriden YMCA Child Care centers will provide Enfamil, baby cereal and baby food if you choose for your infant to participate in the food program.

### **Safe Food Handling Practices**

Hands must be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after handling food. Although human milk is a body fluid, it is necessary to wear gloves when feeding or handling human milk. Unless there is visible blood in the milk, the risk of exposure to infectious organisms either during feeding or from milk that infant regurgitates is not significant.

### **Breast Milk and Formula Heating and Storage**

- Breast milk and ready to feed formula may be stored in the refrigerator no longer than 48 hours, and breast milk in the freezer no longer than 6 months.
- The bottle or container of breast milk **MUST** be properly labeled with the infant's full name and the date and time the bottle was expressed. The bottle or container should be immediately stored in the refrigerator on arrival.
- Non-frozen human milk should be transported and stored in the containers to be used to feed the infant.
- Frozen human milk may be transported and stored in properly labeled single use plastic bags and placed in a freezer (not a compartment within the refrigerator but a freezer with a separate door).
- The caregiver/teacher should check for the infant's full name and the date on the bottle so that the oldest, milk is used first.
- Frozen breast milk may be thawed in the refrigerator or under cool running water.
- Thawed breast milk may be heated briefly in bottle warmers or under warm running water so that the temperature does not exceed 98.6 F.
- After warming, bottles should be mixed gently (not shaken) and the temperature of the milk tested before feeding.
- Once, thawed, breast milk should be used within 24 hours. Breast milk should not be re-frozen.

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- Breast milk may be left un-refrigerated for up to 1 hour.
- Bottles of breast milk or formula should be warmed in a pan or crock pot of water no warmer than 120 F for no more than 5 minutes. Bottles may not be heated in the microwave.
- Breast milk that is in an unsanitary bottle, is curdled, smells rotten, and/or has not been properly stored (according to storage guidelines of the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine) should be returned to the mother.
- Any breast milk or formula left over from a feeding should be discarded immediately and contents may not be poured back into original container.

### **Dry Food Storage**

- Food may only be stored in plastic bags and containers meant to be used for food. Due to the increased risk of food borne illnesses, all other plastic bags or garbage bags may not be used to store food. Plastic bags may not be re-used since they cannot be properly sanitized.

### **Heating Foods/Food Temperatures**

- Baby food shall not be heated in the microwave.
- Once baby food has been opened it must be refrigerated and discarded after 24 hours.
- Foods reheated in the microwave should be heated in microwave safe containers.
- Food and beverages are not heated in plastic containers or when covered with plastic wrap that touches the food. BPA-free plastic with #1, #2, #4, or #5 are acceptable containers. Plastic food containers, toys, feeding bottles, and spill-resistant drinking cups labeled without a recycle number or with the number 3, 6, or 7 are not used. Scratched plastic articles are discarded.
- Leftovers should be heated to at least 165 degrees F or until hot and steamy, and then left to stand for at least 2 minutes before serving to reduce the risk of burns upon eating.
- Ready-to-eat food stored in hermetically sealed containers must be heated to at least 140 degrees F.
- Perishable foods are checked with a thermometer if they do not seem cold or hot enough on arrival. Food that is not at a safe temperature when it arrives is discarded. Checking of food brought from home included a determination of food safety and storage requirements for the food when it arrives at the facility. Perishable foods are kept hot, at or above 135 degrees F, until served, they are allowed to cool to 110 degrees F so they will not cause burns. Fully cooked and ready-to-serve hot foods should be held for no longer than 30 minutes and used only once.
- Leftovers should be reheated and used only once.
- Leftovers should not be mixed with fresh food as this can increase the risk of food borne illness.
- Soup should be heated long enough to just break a boil.
- To avoid contamination, food should not be served from commercial containers or from containers brought from home, such as baby food jars. Food will be served in a clean bowl, cup or plate.
- After a meal or snack, any leftover food in the table serving containers should be discarded and not put back into the original container (this includes baby food, breast milk, formula, and food from family style serving dishes or from individual plates). The only food that staff members may return to the family is unopened commercially wrapped food that does not require refrigeration or holding at a hot temperature.

### **Safe Food Supply**

- All foods stored, prepared, or served should be safe for human consumption by observation and smell.
- Home-canned food, food from dented, rusted, bulging, or leaking cans, and food from cans without labels should not be used.
- Foods should be inspected daily for spoilage or signs of mold, and foods that are spoiled or moldy should be promptly discarded.
- All dairy products should be pasteurized and Grade A where applicable.
- Raw, unpasteurized milk or milk products, unpasteurized fruit juices, and raw or undercooked eggs should not be used.
- Meat, fish, poultry, milk, and egg products should be refrigerated immediately upon arrival at the Center.
- All fruits and vegetables provided by the center should be washed thoroughly with water prior to use.

### **Meal Times**

There are 3 meal times during the day.

- Breakfast will be served between 9:00 - 9:30
- Lunch will be served between 11:30 - 12:30
- Afternoon snack is served between 3:00 - 3:30

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The following foods ARE NOT served:

- ✓ Hot Dogs, whole or sliced into rounds
- ✓ whole grapes
- ✓ nuts
- ✓ popcorn
- ✓ raw peas
- ✓ hard pretzel's
- ✓ spoonful of peanut butter
- ✓ chunks of carrots
- ✓ no meat that can be swallowed whole

The staff cuts food into pieces no larger than 1/4 square inch for infants and 1/2 inch for toddlers and 2 year olds and according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability. All menus are reviewed by the programs nutrition consultant on a weekly basis for approvals and recommendations based upon CACFP regulations.

### **Feeding Procedures 5A14**

Infants must be removed from their cribs and held for all bottle feedings. They will be placed in chairs for all other feedings

- Unused portions of formula, breast milk or other liquids shall be discarded after each feeding.
- Baby food shall be served from a dish unless the whole contents of the jar will be served
- Each child's bottle MUST have their name on it.

Infants who are unable to sit are held for bottle feedings. At no time are bottle propped up. Infants and toddlers will not be put on cots or in cribs with a bottle or a sippy cup. Children do not carry cups or bottles with them while crawling or walking. Teaching staff and families will work together to decide when a child is developmentally ready to drink from a cup.

### **CACFP Policy & Procedure: Entry & Transition from Infant to Toddler**

**Application / Enrollment Time:** Staff will explain to Parents/Legal Guardians the CACFP (Child Adult Care Food Program) used by all children attending any Meriden YMCA's Child Care Program.

Parents will complete the CACFP state required forms. Parent will be informed of CACFP requirements and family choices allowed for infants, "opting out". All children in child care will be a part of the Meriden YMCA's CACFP program. Infants only will be given the choice of foods supplied by the program or parent/legal guardian. This choice expires with the child's first birthday, per state CACFP regulations and requirements.

**At 6 months, or older infant entry:** Families will be up-dated on the transition expectations for infants enrolled and the introduction of eating solid foods starting at home. This discussion will be documented in writing. Families will share in writing with program staff what single item solid food or foods (baby food) their infant child has had without a reaction at least 3 times. This single item food (baby food) will be added to the child's diet, as applicable in the child care setting. This will continue to occur with the addition of new foods as the infant is introduced to new foods. Textured foods will also be added as tolerated per parent's written documentation. Infants will be encouraged to feed themselves as developmentally appropriate for their age and ability.

**At 10 months, or older infant entry:** Families will be up-dated on the transition expectations for infants turning one year (Toddler) within the next 2 months. This discussion will be documented in writing. Textured foods will be added as tolerated per parent's written documentation. Infants will be encouraged to feed themselves as developmentally appropriate for their age and ability. Any child with a food concern, i.e. self-feeding, food allergy, solid texture; etc. will have the state CACFP "Medical Statement for Children With / Without Disabilities" shared and discussed with the responsible family/guardian. The state CACFP form will be given to the family to bring and discuss with their child's medical provider.

**Toddler to Pre-School:** All state CACFP forms will transition for any child with a noted concern. All CACFP requirements will be met for all children in Meriden YMCA's child care programs.

**CACFP Documentation:** Written documentation of menu modifications\* will be submitted to the program on the state's CACFP form at least one (1) week prior to the child's first birthday, upon entry if over age one(1) year, and on-going thereafter. Documentation will be forwarded to the dietary department for the purpose of reasonable accommodation. A written Individual Health Plan (IHP) will be developed for each child and signed by the parent/guardian and staff. Reasonable accommodations will be made for any child with a documented

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nutritional concern, after submitting the required CACFP's "Medical Statement for Children with / With Disabilities" form. CACFP forms must be updated as changes occur and at least annually.

\* Menu Modification: Fluid 1% milk may be substituted with fluid fat free lactaid per parent written request and does not require the state's CACFP form. This is inclusive for drinkable milk only (fluid milk). All other liquids or solid foods require the state CACFP form be completed.

### **Supervision of Children**

A staff ratio of 1 teacher per every 4 children will be maintained at all times, including during indoor activities and during naptime. All staff present in the classroom will always be able to see and hear infants and toddlers at all times. Classrooms and outdoor areas are arranged to ensure all children are able to be supervised by sight and sound at all times. Supervision of children and a staff ratio of 1 teacher per every 4 children will be maintained at all times, including and during indoor activities, outdoor activities and during naptime. At least 2 staff members 18 years of age or older will be present on site for all operating hours of the day. The group size shall not exceed 8 children. Children are carefully watched during outside play activities, stationing themselves in a position where they are able to view the entire play yard at a glance. Staff will rotate around the play yard to ensure children are using equipment appropriately and to facilitate activities. When a child goes inside to use the restroom from outdoors, a staff member will accompany any and all children. Children are never allowed to travel from the outdoor play area to inside without a teacher present. In the classroom, children are carefully watched while at play or during an activity within the building including bathroom use. Staff will rotate around the classroom to monitor children's play in the learning areas as well as to facilitate and / or provide learning opportunities, guide language development and more. All children will be accompanied to the bathroom facilities by a staff person and adequate ratios will be maintained at all times. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound at all times.

### **Under age 3 Outdoor Supervision Policy**

All classrooms have scheduled daily opportunities for outdoor play. Providing that the air quality remains safe for outdoors each day children are expected to come to school ready to participate in outdoor activities. Play areas are mulched with woodchips in order to create shock absorbing fall zones. While outdoors the under 3 age group will be supervised in group sizes that do not exceed 8, remaining with in the 1 to 4 ratio. Children will be monitored to ensure that they do not place woodchips in their mouths, noses, or ears. Staff will be sure that wood chips remain on the group, outdoors for the safety of all children at all times.

### **Communal Water Play**

Infectious disease must not be spread by contact with water in communal water play in classrooms. Precautions must be taken to reduce. Therefore, the following precautions should be taken.

- ✓ Children with sores on their hands may not engage in water play
- ✓ Fresh water must be used at all times
- ✓ Each group may engage in water play and will be changed between groups (classes)
- ✓ The water in each table must be emptied, the container disinfected with a 10% bleach solution at the conclusion of each activity period
- ✓ Staff will be certain that bottles, toys, funnels and other water play materials are also disinfected at the conclusion of each water play session.

### **Playground Rules and Supervision- Preschool**

Expect your child to play outside every day. Daily outdoor activities are part of the program. We follow that State of Connecticut child care regulations concerning playing outside. When the weather does not prevent playing outside, the teachers have an alternate indoor plan. If your child is well enough to attend school, they should be well enough to go outside and play. Due to safety issues we ask parents not to let their children wear open toe shoes.

### **Confidentiality (4E07)**

The Meriden YMCA Childcare staff takes their responsibility of working with you and your child to heart. We have dealt with many delicate issues and maintained a level of confidentiality. We ask that you also maintain a level of confidentiality with children and family matters you may hear. WE respect the right to people's personal lives and will do our best to only share the information with staff that deals with your child directly. The staff here does not

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simply only care about the children, we here care about the families as well. We take pride in what we do with each family. The staff here are people just like you and I, we are humans with feelings, and when a parent speaks to us regarding an issue pertaining to the child we will speak with you in a professional, courteous manner, please keep this in mind when speaking to us.

The following agencies require access to your child's developmental screenings and assessments and full health assessment when requested, State of Connecticut Department of Public Health Child Day Care Licensing at the Office of Early Childhood, The Department of Children and Families, The YMCA Nurse Consultant, the City of Meriden Health Department and NAEYC. With consent of the family information may be shared with the Meriden Board of Education and or Birth to Three agencies or any other agency specifies by the family or guardian

### **Ratios**

Ratios are the number of staffed required to supervise a certain number of children. Group Size is the maximum number of children in one group. Ratios and group sizes for licensure are shown below.

Age of the Child	Teacher: Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
0-12 Months	1:4	8
12-24 Months	1:4	8
2 Years Old	1:4	8
3 Years Old	1:10	20
4 Years Old	1:10	20
5 Years Old	1:10	20
School Age	1:10	20

### **Home-School Transition: Separations**

Because children are individuals, they tend to respond to different ways to the first days and weeks of school. Many children will quickly become acclimated to the infant and toddler program and will not be the least bit concerned with saying good-bye. Some children may be apprehensive and initially but rapidly adjust to the new environment. A few children will take longer to adjust. The staff at the YMCA Infant and Toddler Program will assist families in making this transition as smooth as possible.

**At the Meriden YMCA Infant & toddler Program, to accomplish a smooth transition we do the following things:**

1. Before enrollment, families are encouraged to come for visits with their child so that the child can investigate the environment with the security of a nearby parent.
2. Adjustment to school will be easier if the child is prepared for it. In addition to visiting the YMCA Infant and Toddler Program with your child, you should begin to talking with your child about going to school as soon as possible. Talk about things the child will be doing such as playing with blocks, painting, playing outside, etc. Also, talk about what you will be doing while you are apart. For example, you may show your child your office and tell them about your activities.
3. During the first few days, families are encouraged to spend time at the YMCA Infant and Toddler Program getting their child settled.
4. With the initial few separations, parents are encouraged to let their child know when they will be returning. Due to the developmental characteristics of children, it works best if parents use a concrete marker of time such as "I'll be back to pick you up after lunch"; instead of saying, "I'll be back here to get you at 1 o'clock."
5. Teachers will assist parents in establishing a consistent routine for the separation. This routine may include waving at the window, walking to the classroom door together or finding a teacher to play with.
6. In the case where the child is upset at the time of separation, teachers will comfort the child and encourage the parent to complete the separation routine and promptly leave.
7. Parents are encouraged to call later in the morning and/or afternoon to find out about their child's progress.

### **Toys from Home**

**TOYS ARE NOT TO BE BROUGHT FROM HOME** except on specified days. There are many similar types of toys. Children can become easily upset if their toy get lost, forgotten, or two children bring in a toy that looks like another toy in the classroom and it goes home to the wrong house. Even though your child may want to bring their toys to school, we are asking that toys are not brought into the classroom except on special days.

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### **Parent Concerns**

As a child care center we are a community of children, parents, and staff all interacting and sharing our lives together. In a community, people, work closely together and hopefully interactions are positive, kind, and understanding. Yet it is to be expected that from time to time people will experience some conflict, some concerns, and some difficulties. We recognize that parenting is one of the most difficult, intense and rewarding experiences in your life. We want you to share your thoughts, hopes, and dreams for your child. You want what is best for your child we know it is your job to advocate and protect your child.

When you have a concern, please remember....

- Teachers want the parents to feel very satisfied with the care their child is receiving.
- Talk to the teachers directly whenever possible. If you feel comfortable, ask your child's teacher first about any concern. Teachers prefer that you talk with them directly, but they do understand if you would prefer to talk with the director (Ms. Courtney).
- Realize that if you have a concern with a teacher, the assistant director or the director will need to investigate and talk with the teacher directly about your concern and deal with the issue in a
- Straight forward manner so that the teacher can improve her performance and/or correct any mistakes or misunderstandings.
- Be assured that teachers do not hold a grudge against your child or "take it out" on your child after you have expressed a concern. We would not hire anyone at our center that would react in such an inappropriate manner.
- Do not let concerns build up. As concerns occur, share them with the teachers so we can deal with any concerns that you may have when they have them.

### **Items From Home**

Children like to bring items from home to school. This practice often assists the child in the transition from home to school. While this practice is supported, it must be noted that the Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Center will not be responsible for lost, broken or stolen items. Your child is welcome to bring in a stuffed animal and/or a special blanket to rest on his/her at nap time. **ALL ITEMS MUST BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME**

### **Safe Attire & Jewelry**

Necklaces may not be worn by infants and toddlers at any time while at the child care center. Necklaces may be worn by preschoolers while in their classrooms. The necklaces **MUST** be removed while the child is on the playground and during naptime. It is recommended that preschoolers leave necklaces at home to avoid losing or breaking the jewelry in the process of removal.

Closed-toe, sturdy shoes, preferably sneakers, are required for outdoor playtime. Flip-flops and "Crocs" are not allowed to be worn on the playground due to the increased risk of splinters from the mulch and falls from the equipment. Sandals must be closed-toe with ankle strap.

**CLOTHES-** it is very helpful to us if the children have their names written on the inside tag of the child's extra clothes. An extra pair of clothes should remain in your child's cubby. As the season's change, please make sure to check your child's cubby to ensure that the extra clothing is appropriate for the season. Children **MUST** always have socks and shoes on upon arrival no matter what the season is.

**DIAPERS, POWDER, OINTMENT AND WIPES-** these items should also be labeled with the child's name, and reminders will be sent home when more of these supplies are needed. Please make sure to read the daily reports that are sent home each day, this report will notify you of anything that your child may need. Written parent authorization is required for the application of non-prescription topical medication such as diaper cream and sunscreen.

### **What My Child Will Need**

Below is a list of what your infant or toddler will need when they begin the program. The items that you send in with your child **MUST BE LABELED** with your child's name.

- Bag/Box of Diapers
- Box of Wipes
- Diaper ointment or baby powder if needed
- Bottles prepared for feeding (*Only for children under 1-year-old*)

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- Extra formula to leave at center (*Only for children under 1-year-old*)
- Extra bottles if needed (*Only for children under 1-year-old*)
- Light blanket / Sleep Sack
- Bibs
- Burp clothes
- 2 complete sets of clothes (to be changed when the seasons change)
- 2 pacifiers
- A picture of your family

All bottles, spoons, and bowls will be sent home daily (for children in the infant room who are not on the food program) to be washed every night. There is a refrigerator located in the infant room to refrigerate bottles and food. All bedding will be sent home at the end of every week to be washed and returned the following week.

**PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING.**

***Classrooms and Curriculum(10B14)***

Classrooms are divided up according to age, ability and size. Working with families the Meriden YMCA Childcare staff, director and teaching assistants will make a collective decision as to when a child will move from one classroom to another. Please be advised that space is limited to licensed capacity, ratio's must be maintained at all times and group sizes for infants and toddlers cannot exceed 8. The breakdowns of the classrooms are listed below.

- Infant Nursery Room- 6 weeks – Mobility
- Infant Play Room- Mobility to 14 months
- Toddler 1 Room- 14 months – 2 years
- Toddler 2 Room- 2 years – 2 ½ years
- Toddler 3 Room 2 ½ years – 3 years
- Preschool Room- 3 years – 5 years

Per state regulations during the months of September, October, November and December a child may be 2.9 years old and eligible for the preschool classroom. However, after December 31<sup>st</sup> children are only eligible for preschool on or after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Preschool space is limited; depending on the availability your child may or may not be held over until a lot opens up. Children turning 3 years old after May will be held over until the next school begins in September. Toddler children turning 3 years old after May will be held over until the next school year begins in September. Toddler children will transition into a toddler 2 classroom during the month of August. Infants will not transition into the Toddler 1 classroom until they have reached the age of 1 and or have begun walking.

Please remember that space is limited in all of our programs, should you be interested in changing the schedules days that your child attends you must see the program director for availability. Here at the Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs our curriculum reflects the interests and needs of the children. Lessons and pre planned curriculum activities may or may not change depending on the interests of the children. Our activities are themed based, play based and child centers. Our schedules are predictable yet flexible to the individual's needs.

**Assessment Policy (4A02) (4A03)**

Children are assessed formally 3 times a year. In the fall, winter and spring and also are assessed informally throughout play, interactions, through various activities and conversations. These informal observations are done on a weekly basis to ensure that we are meeting the needs of every child and adapting our teaching practices to meet the children's needs. Children are also assessed through product outcome based testing. This testing is used to identify the children's needs and interests for individual or small self-contained groups. Curriculum, teaching practices, and environment are conducive to individualized learning goals set by both of the parents of the individual child and teaching staff. The assessments are done in a natural classroom setting. The assessment is used to inform planning for children and curriculum development. Dental, Hearing, Vision, Developmental and Cognitive Screenings are available through collaboration with other agencies. These diagnostic assessments are used if necessary for referral process for the Meriden Board of Education. Our program offers all children access to all screenings. This is free for our children. Parents are notified through the handbook and will receive a permission slip prior to the screening. Screenings are important to catch concerns early to help children be healthy and successful in school. Children's files are kept in a file cabinet for staff use only. At formal and informal conferences children's files may be taken to discuss further action to help children achieve their goals. Families are asked to complete questionnaires at registration time to involve and identify their child's interests, needs and be

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part of planning. Formal parent conferences are held two times a year and informal conferences can be held at the request of the parent or teacher. Teachers communicate with parents on a daily basis positive thought and concerns. After completing an initial assessment teachers will facilitate developmental and learning process of each child. Surveys, staff meetings and children's assessments will guide our improvements for our children and program.

- Fall, winter and spring assessments
- Children are assessed through observation, documentation is taken from what us seen and heard
- Collection of children's work samples
- Assessment is done to support learning, identify special needs, individual needs and interests
- Assessment is done for program accountability, curriculum and program improvement
- Referral recommendations to meet individual needs

### **Appropriate School Clothes**

Your child will do a lot of learning, playing, and growing while they are here at the Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Center. Please be sure they are wearing clean, comfortable, and weather appropriate clothes.

Please keep in mind that your child will very likely get dirt, paint, food etc. on their clothing. The teachers and staff will make every effort to help your child keep clean.

Young children may have bathroom accidents or may be involved in messy play throughout the day. Children must have a clean change of clothing in their cubby at all times including shoes and socks. Clothing should be exchanged as the seasons change so that children are adequately dressed. When the change of clothing has been worn home, please immediately replace the clothing. The child's parents and / or guardians are responsible for providing the clothing.

### **Bathroom & Toileting**

Children use the bathroom alone. Using the bathroom alone builds independence. Please dress your child in clothing that can easily be pulled down and up without help. Your child's privacy is respected. At this age, bathroom accidents are normal. Be sure that your child has a change of clothing should an accident occur. Staff will wear gloves if a child needs help. An adult will help a child, in the presence of another adult. At no time will one adult be alone with one child.

### **Cubbies**

Each child is given space for their personal belongings, projects, and notices that need to be sent home. These areas have the child's name on the cubby. All cubbies must be cleared out at the end of every week. Please use the space provided for your child.

### **Rest Time / Nap Time**

All children need rest and relaxation time during the day. Rest time will occur shortly after lunchtime. A crib or cot will be provided for your child. These are washed and sanitized each week and when soiled on. All children are required to bring their own supplies for nap time. These items include and crib sheet and a blanket for toddlers and preschoolers. Infants cannot have a blanket with them in the crib they can have a sleep sack. **PLEASE BE SURE TO LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME. These items must be taken home and washed on a weekly basis (usually on Friday).**

### **Infant Sleep Position**

Infants under 12 months of age will be placed in a supine (back) position for sleeping. When infants can easily turn over from the supine to the prone position, they will be put down to sleep on their backs, but allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer for sleep. Soft surfaces such as pillows, extra blankets and stuffed toys, quilts or soft bumpers will be kept out of the infant's cribs. Should an infant fall asleep inside of the swing, carrier, stroller, or bouncer seat the child will be moved to their crib unless the child has written documentation from a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse specifying a medical reason for their use. Blankets are firmly tucked around the crib mattress and reach only as far as the infant's chest. The staff check children every five minutes for safety purposes and to ensure that the child's head remains uncovered during sleep.

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### **"Shoe-Free" Environment in the Infant Room**

With infants commonly on the floor, we want to provide a clean, safe and healthy environment in the Infant Room. We practice a "shoe-free" policy in the room. We ask that before entering the infant room you remove your shoes or wear shoe covers

### **Diapering Policies 5A08B**

Diapers will be checked every hour and will be changed when needed. Parents need to provide diapers, wipes, any other ointments or powders that may be needed. Parents will be notified when their child is running low on diapers so more can be brought back in.

- ✓ Infants and toddlers shall be diapered at an appropriate diapering area that is used only for the purpose of diapering.
- ✓ Staff will wear gloves while diapering or toileting any child.
- ✓ Diapering areas MUST be disinfected after each use.
- ✓ Staff will wash their hands before and after diapering or helping the child go to the bathroom.
- ✓ The child's hands will be washed before and after diapering and toileting.

For children who use cloth diapers the cloth diapers have to have an absorbent liner completely contained within the outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and lining are changed as one unit. Soiled clothing and cloth diapers are immediately placed into a plastic bag without rinsing to avoid handling and sent home for laundering that day.

**Children's diapers are only changed in the designated diapering and changing areas of the classroom.**

### **Daily Record Keeping & Communication**

Daily record keeping occurs at the Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs. Records are kept regarding attendance, food service, and incidents relating to a child's health. Reports will be made when a child has an injury, illness, or change not usual for the child. In return, we ask that you communicate with the classroom teachers any unusual behavior or incident that may have occurred while the child was at home, so we are well informed and can take care of your child in the best way possible. Teachers communicate daily with families in a variety of ways. These include when they drop off and pick up their child, through conversations, and notes sent home, or through telephone calls. If there has been an unusual or special circumstance during the day, information will be pass on to the parents verbally or though written communication. Serious incidents or ones which the staff feels may be upsetting to the parents will be communicated verbally to the parent and with a follow up incident report.

### **Accident Reports / Behavior Reports**

All injuries requiring any kind of attention will be documented and kept on file. The information will be shared with the parent. An Accident report will be filled out and will be signed by the staff making the report, the director and the parent. A copy of the report will be given to the parents within 24 hours of the incident. If your child has had an inappropriate behavior during the day a behavior report will be filled out explaining the behavior that has occurred. The report will be signed by the staff member making the report, the program director and the parents. A copy of the report will be given to the parents.

### **Daily Charts / Reports for Infant & Toddlers**

Each day the staff will prepare individual charts for each child which is sent home with your child at the end of each day. This chart includes information regarding what and when your child ate and drank, when they had diaper charges and naps, daily temperament and behaviors as well.

### **Discipline / Behavior Policy**

Children cannot become self-disciplined unless adults teach them right from wrong. At the Meriden YMCA, children will be taught the expectations for appropriate behavior and encourage to live accordingly. When children know that something is unacceptable and choose to do it anyhow consequences will follow in effort to communicate that their behavior is not acceptable and will not be tolerated within the classroom at school. At the YMCA discipline, not punishment will be used to guide children and direct them to appropriate behaviors. There is no one way to discipline all children. each child is an individual and must be treated as such.

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Child development includes learning self-discipline which is better learned through guidance rather than punishment. Any form of discipline that violates a child's personal rights shall not be permitted. The following forms of discipline and punishment will not be used.

- **No child will be humiliated, shamed, frightened, or subject to verbal or physical abuse by staff or volunteers.**
- **No child will ever be withheld food, or threatened that food will be withheld.**
- **Teachers will not speak about child's undesirable behavior in front of other classmates or staff members who are not directly working with the child.**
- **Teachers will not use the threat of being sent to another classroom as means of discipline (Example: "if you can't behave you'll go back to the baby room")**
- **Children will not be moved temporarily to another classroom without a member of management facilitating the move.**

All parent communications must be positive and focus on accomplishment NOT challenging behaviors. On a daily basis, teachers will observe the children in the classroom and gain perspective on the area of development. While observing, if a problem may arise among children, the teacher will first oversee if the children are able to resolve the issue on their own. We feel that it is important that children learn how to work out their own disputes, just as we learn as adults. If the children are unable to perform the task on their own, the teacher will intervene and provide guided support. Teachers will document their findings to be used in formulating a behavior plan if necessary

Our discipline procedures will consist of the following strategies:

1. Encourage children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child.
2. Facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes in an age-appropriate manner.
3. Redirecting negative behavior; modeling positive behavior
4. Separating a child from the group through the proper use of a "quiet area" allowing the child time to regroup.
5. Counseling children individually about their behaviors.
6. Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns through parent conferences and daily written reports

### **Techniques and Tips for Positive Guidance in the Classroom**

#### **Guidelines for redirecting behavior**

Children who hear "NO" or "DON'T" all of the time tend to tune those directives out. Instead of telling a child what not to do, offer a positive behavior to replace the misbehavior. Young children do not always have control of their bodies, minds, and behaviors, so it is the job of the teachers to help redirect children when inappropriate behaviors occur. Often it is not what the child is doing but rather how they are doing it. When this occurs, redirecting or teaching the child a different way to complete the same task can be effective.

- If a child is using books to build, remove the books and say, "Books are not for building with" offer a substitute and at the same time say "If you want to build use these blocks"
- If the child is climbing on a chair to make his structure taller, help him down, saying "that is too dangerous standing on the chair, lets lay your tower down on the floor to see how long you can make it."

Simply requesting that a young child find something else to do usually doesn't work well. It takes action and gentle words to accomplish the goal of redirecting a child to a more appropriate behavior. Redirecting is NOT a reward for undesirable behaviors. Using redirection is a proactive move on the teacher's behalf to take a negative situation and turn it into a positive one.

### **Disruptive Behaviors**

Disruptive behaviors distract from the full benefit of the program. Disruptive behaviors will result in consequences. The following behaviors are considered to be disruptive.

- Requires constant attention from the staff
- Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self
- Disrespects people and materials provided in the program
- Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom
- Verbally threatens other students and staff
- Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the group of children

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When a child is disruptive the teacher is responsible for taking the following steps:

- Document examples of undesired behaviors.
- Discuss the behaviors with the director or supervisor on site, provide notes and examples to provide a clear picture of what is happening in the classroom.
- Develop an individualized behavior plan with the director and management staff which takes into account the triggers of this particular child and the known factors that contribute to success.
- Be patient and calm when dealing with the child, remember that it is frustrating for them to always disappoint the adults in their life.

#### **What are the consequences of continued disruptive behavior?**

One of the biggest frustrations for teachers is children who are having difficulty meeting expectations of the classroom. Remember, each child is an individual and our plan for them will be tailored to meet their needs. The consequences will vary based upon an individual child and the behaviors.

Possible consequences include

- Removal from the learning situation
- Exclusion from rewards, special activities or events
- Five-minute cool down with a member of management staff
- Parent conference to discuss behavior strategies
- After every attempt has been made to modify the child's behavior, the management team may make the decision to suspend, or discontinue care if they cannot adapt to the program.

One of our main responsibilities is helping children learn how to get along in the world. Children should enjoy being around other children. A caring and positive approach will be taken regarding behavior management and discipline. All staff will focus on the positive behaviors of children and reinforce those behaviors as often as possible.

#### **Biting Policy**

Children biting other children are unavoidable occurrences of group child care, especially with toddlers. It is a common happening in any child care program. When it happens, and sometimes continues, it can be very scary, very frustrating, and very stressful for children, parents and staff. **Every child in the Infant and Toddler classrooms is a potential biter or will potentially be bit.** It is important to understand that because a child bites, it does not mean that the child is "mean" or "bad" or the parents of the child who bites are "bad" parents. Biting is purely a sign of the developmental age of the child. Biting is not something to blame in the child, parents, or caregivers. Biting is purely a sign of normal child development. Biting is not something to blame on the child, parents or caregivers. When a child bites confidentiality must be practiced within the YMCA. We cannot tell a parent who bit their child. There are many possible reasons as to why an infant or toddler may bite:

- Teething
- Impulsiveness and lack of control. Babies sometimes bite just because there is something there to bite. It is not intentional to hurt, but rather exploring their world.
- Making an impact. Sometimes children will bite to see what reactions happen.
- Excitement and over stimulation. Simply being very excited. Very young children do not have the same control over their emotions and behaviors as some preschoolers do.
- Frustration. Frustrations can be over a variety of reasons- wanting a toy that another child has, not having the skills need to do something, or wanting attention. Infants and toddlers are simply lacking the language and social skills necessary to express all of their needs, desires, and problems.

If a child bites more than twice in one day, the child's parents will be contacted and will be required to pick up their child for the remainder of that day. If biting incidents are continuous. The child will be shadowed (one to one) during group and center play times. If staffing does not permit shadowing the child will be isolated to solitary play.

**The Meriden YMCA reserves the right to dismiss a child due to ongoing biting issues and incidents if the situation cannot be resolved after all efforts to correct the issue have been enforced.**

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### **Allergies**

It is not unusual for children with allergies to food or other substances to be enrolled at the Center. With food allergies, the YMCA Child Care will remain a PEANUT FREE FACILITY. A list is posted in the classroom as well as kitchen which document children and their food allergies. Parents should provide this information on the enrollment forms. Adjustments are made as necessary to ensure individual children with other types of allergies can safely participate in the Center's activities.

### **Health and Safety Procedures**

**The Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs must be able to reach you in an emergency.**

- Be sure to share new telephone numbers when you get a new telephone number
- Be sure to add new contacts to your pick up list

All new information regarding your child should be shared with teachers and program directors immediately. It is very important that all files are kept up to date. The State of Connecticut requires up to date emergency contact information.

**Accidents & Incidents**- Simple, minor accidents/incidents are common at this age. The parent/guardian will be notified of any injury/accident. Basic first aid will be given by trained staff. If the injury is serious, emergency action plans will be followed. All accidents or incidents are written. A copy is given to the adult picking up the child that day. The pickup person will sign the report. The original is kept on file in the main office. Emergency medical Care- Each family signs a form to allow their child to be given first aid care. This form will be used if more advanced care/treatment is necessary. This form will only be used until the parent/guardian arrives. If a serious accident occurs emergency plans will be followed.

### **Health Forms**

Upon enrollment into the South Meriden Infant and Toddler Program we **MUST have a completed physical with most up to date immunization records signed by the child's licensed health care provider ( MD, DO, APRN, PA)**. A physical is required, and all health forms must be updated every year. This is required by the State of Connecticut. We must also have a complete immunization record to be kept on file with your child's physical.

### **Administration of Medications**

The Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs are not required to administer medications to children. Since most medication prescriptions can now be given at home, the Center prefers not to give medications. When other arrangements cannot be made, and it is in the best interest of the child to receive a medication (prescription or over the counter) during the school hours we follow all State and Federal regulations as outlined in Section 19a-79-9a of the State of Connecticut Statutes.

***Medications to treat asthma, allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, and ongoing special health care needs such as a seizure disorder or gastroesophageal reflux will be administered with the proper parent and prescriber authorizations. Families are responsible for administering the first dose of the day except in the case of emergency medication or as needed asthma or allergy medication.***

The types of medications that will be administered will be limited to oral, topical, inhalant and injectable (the injectable must be a regulated system, EpiPen). Prescriptions and over the counter medications to be administered at the Center, **MUST be accompanied by a fully completed "Authorization for the Administration of Medication" form** approved and meets the DPH regulations by the State of Connecticut, which is to be signed by a physician and/or dentist and by the child's legal guardian. On the authorization form, the physician, dentist, podiatrist, APRN or PA must note the reason for the medication and any side effects that may occur. We must have certified staff on site that is specially trained to administer medications.

Medications must be in the pharmacy prepared containers, labeled with the child's name, name of the medication, strength, dosage, method of administration, and frequency of dosage, name of physician and date of original prescription. On the authorization form, the physician and/or dentist must note the reason for the medication and any side effects that may occur. Children may not medicate themselves.

All medication will be administered in accordance with the written directions of the physician. Individual written medication administration records for each child will be maintained according to State regulations. Personnel will keep all medications in a locked container in a cabinet and/or refrigerator except emergency medication such as asthma medication and EpiPen. All unused medications will be returned to the parent or destroyed if it is not pick up within one week following the termination of the

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order, or expiration of the medication, whichever comes first. Medication administration errors, such as missed or late dosage, will be reported to the parent. All staff has First Aid, CPR and Medication Training Certificates.

**Licensed childcare centers administering medications to children shall comply with all requirements regarding the administration as described in the Connecticut State Statutes and Regulations. These forms are required to be on file here at the Meriden YMCA should you be interested in allowing the staff to administer any medications ranging from non-prescription, over the counter medications such as, Advil, Tylenol for teething purposes, topical medications including built not limited to diaper creams, medicated powders, or lip medications.**

**Page 3 is required only when a child needs to have prescription medication administered, such as antibiotics, inhaler, and or any prescriptions that are prescribed by the child's primary care physician that will need to be administered either when sick or on a regular basis. If you have any questions, please see Courtney.**

### **Medication Administration Rules**

Under the licensing rules and regulations (listed above), the Meriden YMCA can only administer prescription or over the counter medications when accompanied by the permission to administer medication form. Prescriptions must be clearly labeled as follows:

- Be in the original container bearing the original pharmacy label
- Prescription name and number
- Patient's Name
- Name of Medication
- Expiration Date
- Physician's Name
- Directions for Dosage
- Date the prescription was brought to provider

If the child refuses to take medication, the parent will be notified and must come to administer the medication. Non-prescription medications must be accompanied by the permission to administer medication form filled out by the person with prescriptive authority and the child's physician. All non-prescription medication MUST be in the original container bearing the original label, child's name and age, expiration date and directions for dosages.

### **The YMCA Exclusion Policy**

In order to maintain a healthy environment for all children, the Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs, we follow the National Health and Safety Performance Standards for Out-Of-Home Child Care. A copy of these standards is available for all parents and families. If a child becomes ill at the child care center, the parent or guardian will be notified by telephone and will be expected to pick up their child as soon as possible. The child will be allowed to rest in a comfortable, supervised area while awaiting the parent's arrival.

### **Children should remain home when they have:**

- An axillary body temperature over 100 degrees F and experiencing behavior changes or signs or symptoms of illness, or a temperature of 101 degrees F or greater
- Signs of drowsiness, irritability or persistent crying, loss of appetite, and unwilling to participate in usual activities
- An illness resulting in greater need for care than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- Uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, or wheezing
- Two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours
- Two or more episodes of diarrhea (watery stools) in the previous 24 hours
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Rash with fever or behavior changes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) with white or yellow discharge (until treatment has been initiated)
- Head Lice (until treatment has been initiated)
- Scabies (until treatment has been initiated)
- Impetigo (until treatment has been initiated)
- Strep Throat (until 24 hours after the initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever)
- Ringworm (until treatment has been initiated)

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- Chickenpox, measles, mumps, rubella and pertussis (until the appropriate treatment has reduced the risk of transmission and no longer infectious to others)
- Tuberculosis (until receiving the appropriate therapy)

**Children may return back to the child care center when they are:**

- Able to participate comfortably in program activities, tolerating a regular diet and do not require continuous one-on-one care
- **24 hours' fever-free and 24 hours without fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin**
- No longer experiencing diarrhea or when continuous loose stools are deemed not to be infectious by a health care provider
- 24 hours free of vomiting and have tolerated at least one regular meal
- Receiving treatment for conjunctivitis, head lice, scabies and ringworm
- On antibiotics for 24 hours or longer for impetigo and strep throat

**COLDS, COUGHS, UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS, EAR INFECTIONS, OR THICK DISCHARGES FROM THE NOSE:**

The conditions usually do not go away overnight. They can linger, and sometimes develop into something more serious. You may want to give your child's doctor a call to see what he/she advises. If your child is not responding to the medication(s) that you are giving him/her, may want to get him/her examined by the doctor. **Children who do have one or more of the above conditions and appear to be getting worse will be sent home and we ask you keep them home until the symptoms subside.**

**NON PRESCRIPTION TOPICAL MEDICATIONS (includes diaper changing ointments that are free of antibiotic or steroid components, medicated powders, insect repellents, teething medications, and sunscreen protect ants that are free of amino benzoic acid-PABA or its derivatives:**

A parent/legal guardian must sign the Non Prescriptive Topical Medication form before the staff can administer the above medications. A physician needs not sign this form. When purchasing a sunscreen for your child/children, we recommend purchasing a "No Tears" formula sunscreen because it has been our experience that children rub their eyes a great deal in warm weather and the sunscreen gets into their eyes. This can be very irritating and painful. If your child needs a prescription medicine to be administered during daycare hours, the doctor must sign an Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form and medicine should be in the vial that comes from the pharmacy

**A child must be symptom free for 24 hours** without the use of acetaminophen, ibuprofen, cough medication, cold medication, or any other medications that might be masking a more serious condition. This does not include antibiotics, eye medications, asthmatic medication, yeast infection medication, or any other medication that a Physician/Physician's Assistant (P.A.)/Nurse Practitioner (NP) prescribes to make the child feel better and his/her condition "non-contagious." Please remember that this is for the health of our staff as well as other children.

\*\*\*Sometimes the best medication for a child's ailment is TLC. It's keeping your child home where he/she can rest, get plenty of fluids, the proper food and care that he/she cannot get at day care. A little "TLC" goes a long way.

If your child develops any on the above symptoms while at day care, your child will be isolated from other children in the program and brought into the director's office. The child will be supervised during this time by the director and you will be called to come get your child. We expect you to do this within a reasonable period of time **(NO MORE THAN ONE HOUR) WE DON'T EXPECT TO SEE YOUR CHILD IN DAY CARE THE NEXT DAY AFTER BEING SENT HOME.** It is for this reason a backup day care is recommended. If your child is acting "differently" (i.e. not like he/she usually acts or behaves), but is not presenting any of the above symptoms, we will give you a phone call to let you know that your child is coming down with an illness. This is for the health and safety of all attending children and YMCA Staff as well. Remember we must maintain proper ratio at all times.

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU TELL A STAFF MEMBER IF YOU GAVE YOUR CHILD ANY ANTIBIOTICS PRIOR COMING TO DAY CARE IN CASE HE/SHE HAS A REACTION. THIS IS SO IF YOUR CHILD HAS A REACTION WE MAY REACT APPROPRIATELY:**

- What is the name of the antibiotics? What time did you give the antibiotics

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- What is the reason for giving the antibiotics?

**If the culture is positive, your child must be on medication for 24 hours before he/she can return to day care and must not have a fever for 24 hours.** If your child is diagnosed with conjunctivitis (pink eye), he/she may return to day care once treatment has been initiated. Any other communicable diseases must be reported to the staff so that we can take proper precautions and relay any information to other parents if necessary. Reporting that you child is on medication is also important so that we can monitor your child for any possible allergic reactions or changes in your child's behavior.

**VACCINATIONS:** Children can have reactions to vaccinations. It is important to speak with your child's doctor/physician assistant/nurse practitioner about reactions and how to treat them. Our concern is that your child may develop a fever and/or become irritable and uncomfortable after a vaccination. If this should happen, it is better to keep your child home for that particular day. Asking your doctor about your child acetaminophen or ibuprofen might help your child feel a little more comfortable. Due to beliefs or medical condition, if your child is not vaccinated and this facility becomes aware of a vaccine-preventable disease i.e., measles, etc. - your child will be isolated and you will be asked to pick up your child in a reasonable amount of time. Your child will not be allowed to return to the center until the contagious period has passed.

**A notarized exemption form MUST be completed and on file in the case of religious exemption from immunizations.**

### **Reporting Other Contagious Illnesses**

It is very important to inform the staff if your child has, or has had any communicable disease or illness (Chickenpox, Strep Throat, Fifth Disease, Scarlet Fever, Coxsackie virus, Meningitis, Roseola, Conjunctivitis, etc.) We do everything we can to properly disinfect the entire program and sleeping areas. The staff will follow proper hygiene regulations and the cribs, cots, toys, and equipment are also properly maintained. Remember that some diseases may need to be reported to the state and parents to be notified. If your child becomes sick while at the Kids Campus and parents cannot be reached in time, we will have an ambulance transport the child to Mid-State Hospital in Meriden. If we are on a field trip, out of town, we will get the child to the nearest hospital

### **Hardships of Missing Time From Work**

We realize that missing work or being called out of work can be a hardship, both at the work site and financially. We do not mean to be responsible for problems at work, but we must think about what is best for your child, the other children, and the staff. We cannot give "one-on-one care here. We encourage you to have a backup day care to help out in these situations.

### **Doctors Note**

The program director reserves the right to request a doctors written note should the staff observe that your child exhibits any signs or symptoms of common contagious childhood illnesses. Should your child be sent home with any signs and symptoms of any contagious illness the program also reserves the right to request a written doctor's note with a written diagnosis and instructions for when the child may return. Please remember that this is for the safety of all enrolled children in efforts to reduce the spread of childhood illnesses and germs.

### **Accidents**

All staff at YMCA Child Care Center receives training in CPR and First Aid. First aid supplies are kept in each classroom and are checked regularly by the Health Consultant. In the event your child has an accident while at YMCA Child Care Center, an accident report form will be filled out by the attending staff member. This form is to be signed by the parent at the time of pick-up and turned in to the check bin. The form will be put in your child's file by staff. If the injury requires doctor's treatment, but is not an emergency (e.g. superficial wound requiring stitches), parents will be called to pick up the child. While waiting for the parent's arrival, staff will administer temporary first aid and complete an accident report as specified above.

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## **Emergency Plans**

### **Medical Emergency**

In the event of a true medical emergency, a qualified staff person will attend to first aid/CPR as needed, while another staff person calls 911. YMCA Child Care Center staff, after contacting emergency services, will immediately attempt to contact the parent and the child's physician. If the child's physician is not available, the program's health consultants will be contacted. That staff member will stay with the children and make him/her as comfortable as possible. The emergency medical permission form will accompany the child and staff member on the ambulance. Additional staff will be called in if necessary to maintain required ratios. If the parent has been successfully contacted, he/she will be informed of the nature of the emergency and will be instructed as to what procedures will be followed. Depending upon the seriousness of the emergency, the parent will be instructed to either come to the Center or meet the child at the medical facility (i.e. medical clinic, hospital etc.) If the parent cannot be contacted, or if time does not permit, due to the immediate nature of the emergency, the Meriden Ambulance will take the child to the nearest medical facility or hospital. Parents are financially responsible for all expenses incurred in relation to emergency transportation and treatment of the child. Parent will be notified as soon as contact can be made.

### **Fire**

In the event of a fire, evacuation from the building will be through the closest fire exit. Staff will be responsible for supervising the children under their care and leading them to the fire exit. The attendance and emergency contact information books will be taken on the way. The group will walk to Hanover Elementary, across the street from the school, and line up for attendance. Staff will immediately take attendance. The Director and/or person in charge will be responsible for taking the sign-in/out sheets, portable first aid kit, cell phone and emergency files with them. Should it not be possible to return to the school building, all staff and children will remain at Hanover School until all children are picked-up. Child/teacher ratios will be maintained at all times and two staff will remain on site until all children are picked up.

### **Weather**

On snow days or during other hazardous weather emergencies, we will post our closings and/or delays via radio and television announcements. In the event of an early dismissal, parents will be contacted by phone to tell them when to pick up their child. Child/teacher ratios will be maintained at all times and two staff will remain on site until all children are picked up. In the event of other serious weather emergencies, such as tornadoes or hurricanes, staff and children will remain indoors away from windows and doors. First aid staff will be on hand to administer first aid needed until emergency personnel can arrive. Parents will be notified after the immediate danger has passed.

### **Evacuation**

In the event that the YMCA Child Care Center programs must be evacuated. Advanced contact has been made with the Civil Preparedness Unit, adding the YMCA Child Care Center program to their list for emergencies. Notes will be posted to alert parents of the location of the children. Parents will be notified by phone of where to pick up their children. Staff/child ratios will be maintained at all times and two staff will remain with children until all children are picked up. Parents can also call 211 Infoline.

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

YMCA Child Care Center is designed with guidelines to prevent emergencies, however, as natural disasters and fires do occur, we take the necessary safety precautions as follows:

- Each room has a fire/disaster evacuation plan posted, with primary and secondary evacuation routes.
- Fire drills are conducted monthly and are documented. These drills are to help children understand how to get out of the building while trying to keep them calm.
- In the event the building becomes unsafe for the children and staff, each parent/guardian is notified and asked to pick up their child. The rectory across the street from the school is the programs alternate location.
- The Center is well equipped with fire extinguishers and all staff is specifically instructed in their appropriate use.
- In the event of a power outage, parents will be notified to pick up their children.
- A cellular phone is available for use in case of an emergency. NO SMOKING is allowed in the Center by staff, parents and/or visitors and NO SMOKING signs are posted.
- A fire alarm is on the premises in case of an emergency.

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**The Fire Marshall tours the Center and performs safety inspections once every year.**

### **Domestic / Family Dispute**

If parents had or have been having marital difficulties, certain problems can arise. A parent or guardian may not want the other to take the child out of daycare. What can happen here may be strictly legitimate or it might involve a plan to take the child and move to an undisclosed location. Either way, the daycare center is put in an awkward situation. In a case such as this, the staff is well informed and has delegated responsibilities that protect the child and other children in question and within the entire building. The plan calls for a staff member to call the police while the director speaks with the parent who has arrived to remove their child. Another staff member is given instructions on what to do with the child in question for safety purposes. The director will then contact the other guardian and request that they come to the center where both parents/guardians can discuss the matter and come to an amicable conclusion that is satisfactory to both parties. The police remain until the situation is resolved.

### **Hostage Situation / Break In Robbery**

The staff is constantly kept informed of situations occurring everyday around the world and locally. We discuss these situations and what to do if such an occurrence were to happen here at the daycare. Our ultimate goal is to keep the children safe at all times. The front door to the Meriden YMCA Infant & Toddler Center is locked 24 hours a day. All families who have children in the facility have the code to get into the door. The keypad to unlock the front door is only activated during the hours of operation. When children are playing outside the staff members will always have a cell phone with them to inform the staff inside of the building if there is something out of the ordinary outside. After informing the director all of the children will be brought inside. Once all of the children and staff are in the building the director may go out to question the individual. If the situation appears suspicious, a staff member will call 9-1-1. Staff members are assigned specific duties in these cases. Certain staff will talk while others may be preparing the children to continue on with their day in their designated areas.

### **Homeland Security**

The Meriden YMCA activity vehicles will transport the children to other public shelters in the area should an attack or natural disaster management situation arise where the children and staff would need to vacate the building and relocate to a shelter. Parents will be notified as to where their children are located should a disaster even occur. At the of the relocation the children's backpacks and extra clothing, pillow cases, nap supplies, and emergency files of the children's personal information will be brought along. Cell phone numbers will be given to parents along with emergency numbers.

### **Discipline Policy (5A04)**

Becoming self-disciplined is a long term process. One of the major tasks in an early childhood classroom is assisting children with this process. At Meriden YMCA Childcare Programs, we are committed to supporting each child's progress toward becoming independent and self-disciplined. In practice we provide an environment which encourages children to make choices and decisions following some simple rules as general guidelines. We promote freedom within our environment as long as children do not disrupt the classroom and/or disregard the few rules set for children's safety and awareness. We do not allow children to hurt themselves, others or to damage property. We help children by guiding them in the right direction and reminding them of classroom rules. We strive to utilize the "Time Out" and or "re-Direction" methods. Time out is when we remove the child from an activity due to some form of unacceptable behaviors. The child is usually given several warnings before the time out is imposed. The child will be given the instructions of sitting in an area away from the activity to gather their thoughts about the inappropriate behavior that they have exhibited. The staff member who placed the child in time out will talk to the child at the end of the time out period to discuss the behaviors and why they are considered to be inappropriate. "Re-Direction is a method where the child is lead into another activity to get their mind off of the activity that is causing difficulties. It is trying to redirect a child into another kind of play or activity. This method is used a great deal with the younger children who cannot verbalize their needs. However, it is a good method to use on all of the children within the childcare setting.

The goal of guidance/discipline is to help children develop inner controls so that he/she may move toward appropriate social behavior. Methods for resolving conflicts are:

- Positive guidance
- Setting clear limits for children

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- Redirection of children to other more appropriate activities.

When disputes arise among children or between a child and a teacher, the teacher will encourage a talking out process among those involved. The goal of this talking out process will be to acknowledge everyone's feelings and find solutions using children's ideas whenever possible. In the event a child's behavior becomes a danger to themselves, the staff and/or children in the environment, the child will be moved to area where he/she can calm down and work on regaining self-control. Teachers will work on redirecting the child's behavior, encouraging communication so the child learns to share his/her feelings and work towards a resolution. We prohibit all forms of abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating, or frightening punishment, and physical restraint, unless such restraint is necessary

to protect the health and safety of the child or others in the program. Staff will continuously supervise children during disciplinary/guidance actions.

Teachers may have to set up behavior modification plans to encourage your child to stop and think about his/her behavior before doing something. In the event the behavior continues, a conference will be set up between the parents, director, and classroom staff. We will work with you to help find a plan that works both in our program and in your home. It is important and required that parents and staff work together in a positive manner to help your child work on their behavior issue while providing consistency for the child. Regarding excessive behavioral conditions, the following steps will be taken:

1. An assessment program will be required to determine the child's needs so a plan can be developed, implemented and monitored.
2. In excessive conditions, children will be asked to leave the Center until a meeting can be held and a plan put in place with the staff and parents.
3. Should serious persistent behaviors
4. If all efforts are exhausted and the inappropriate behavior continues to threaten the safety of the child, the staff and/or other children in the classroom, the Center will give the family 30 days' notice and help them find alternative child care arrangements.

In our child-centered environment children are actively involved and challenged and consequently classroom problems are minimized. Within the framework of trusting relationships with teachers, each child is individually assisted in increasing his/her levels of self-discipline and independence. Teachers will remind children of classroom rules and redirect children when necessary, encouraging children to understand when they need a break or a minute to regroup and get focused on another interesting task.

If a parent / guardian should become abusive (physically, verbally, or in writing) which includes being belligerent, threatening, intimidating, condescending or showing any negative signs of demeanor toward any staff member of this is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. The child will be disenrolled or the abusive parent will not be allowed on site.

The Meriden YMCA Childcare Program Staff has discussed the statement on guidance with me and I am aware of the policy. Should I have any additional questions or concerns I will address them with a staff member as well as the program director.

### **Parent Involvement**

We welcome all parental feedback for program improvement.

- Parents are welcome to encouraged to visit at any time. They may accompany field trips, reading volunteer, and help in the classrooms.
- Parents are asked to serve on the advisory board. The advisory board meets every other month for a half hour. The advisory board is a committee that works with staff to actively involve parents in decision, aiding, family activities and program development. Parents are recruited through newsletters, personal invites and teacher's suggestions. The advisory board changes with the new school year. Teachers, administrators and parents all bring up topics to the advisory meeting.
- Parents may request a conference with your child's teacher, assistant director, or director at any time. Teachers may also ask for a teacher/parent conference at any time.
- Family activities are planned several times a year.
- Donations are welcome (craft materials, toys, furniture, etc.)
- Parents are encouraged to help with fund-raising events.

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- It is the parent's responsibility to keep staff update with information (phone numbers, work information and emergency numbers). This is very important especially during an emergency situation.
- We strongly believe in a partnership between home and school. Some of the things we do to promote this is a family need survey, monthly newsletters, verbal communication and conferences.
- We appreciate parents understanding the importance of education for children and seeking opportunities to further their own education.

### **Things For Parents to Remember**

- When you change any phone numbers or addresses, please give us new any new information. This is the parent's responsibility.
- When your child takes a nap, they need the comfort of home. Make sure they have a blanket and pillow. They should be taken home every Friday and cleaned.
- Your child grows throughout the year, please make sure that the clothes in their cubby fit them and are weather appropriate.
- Please remember to call us when your child is not going to be at school.
- If you have any concerns, please address them with the staff or the director.
- Every month, for your information there will be a newsletter about what will be going on for the month.
- Make sure you sign up for parent - teacher conferences when it is time.
- Please make sure that you sign your child in and out every day.
- Payments are due at the beginning of each week.
- If your child was sent home sick, they must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to any of the Meriden YMCA Child Care Programs without the administration of medication.
- In order for your child to start any of the Meriden YMCA Child Care Centers all registration paper must be fully completed.
- To start any of the child care programs your child needs to have an updated physical and immunization records on file.
- It is a parent's responsibility to make sure that their children do not bring in things that the child care center does not allow. All of the Meriden YMCA Child Care Centers do not allow children to bring in matches, lighters, medications, or any types of weapons.
- Please keep your child's toys at home.
- All of the staff at all of the Meriden YMCA Child Care Centers are mandated reporters. In our professional capacity, we are required by law to report any suspicion or belief that any under age child might have been abused or neglected.
- We do celebrate all holidays.
- Your child needs to be in school by 9:00am every day.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy**

State law in Connecticut (public policy 17a-101, 17a-101a, 17a-101b, 17a-101c and 17a-101d) requires that anyone who suspects child abuse and/or neglect must report that suspicion to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), and child day care licensing within 12 hours of first suspicion. All child care workers are considered mandated reporters. DCF hotline 1-800-842-2288 open 24 hours per day, or Department of Public Health 1-800-282-6063, 1-800-439-0437 or 860-509-8045. If any employee or parent witness another employee and/or parent using physical discipline, we ask that you report it immediately using the Incident Report to the director. This report must be filled out and filed within 12 hours. Failure for staff to comply with this strict policy is grounds for disciplinary action and may lead to termination.

The YMCA staffs have the responsibility to protect and prevent all of the children under their care from abuse and neglect. If any staff member has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child attending the child care program has been abused and or neglected, they **MUST** report it. **CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS ARE MANDATED REPORTERS BY LAW.** Abuse is defined as a child who has a non-accidental physical injury inflicted upon him/her; or is the result of maltreatment. Child neglect is defined as a child who has been abandoned, is being denied proper care and attention physically, emotionally or morally or is permitted to live in conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his/her well-being (public policy 46b-120). By law it is DCF's responsibility to determine whether or not to investigate based on their findings. We encourage you to discuss any accidents which may have occurred at home with your child's teacher and/or the Director. By law it is DCF's responsibility to determine whether or not to investigate based on their findings. We encourage you to discuss any accidents which have occurs at home

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There are four general types of abuse and neglect. These are:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Neglect Abuse
3. Emotional Abuse
4. Sexual Abuse

**Description / Examples: Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is any physical injury inflicted on other than by accidental means, any injury at variance with the history given of them, or a child's condition which is the result of maltreatment such as malnutrition, deprivation of necessities or cruel punishment. Examples of injuries which may result from physical abuse include:

- Head injuries
- Bruises cuts or lacerations
- Internal injuries
- Burns, scalds with substances, cigarettes, matches, electricity, scalding water, friction, etc.
- Injuries to bone, muscles, cartilage, and ligament fractures, dislocations, sprains, strains, displacements, hematomas, etc.,
- Death

**Description / Examples: Sexual Abuse and Exploitation**

Sexual abuse is any incident of sexual contact involving a child that is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by the person responsible for the child's care. Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Rape
- Intercourse
- Sodomy
- Fondling
- Oral Sex
- Incest
- Sexual penetration: digital, penile, or foreign objects
- Sexual exploitation of a child includes permitting, allowing, coercing, or forcing a child to participate in pornography or engage in sexual behavior

Emotional abuse or maltreatment is the result of cruel or unconscionable acts / or statements made, or allowed to be made or threatened to be made, or allowed to be made by the person responsible for the child's care.

Emotional abuse of maltreatment may result from:

- Repeated negative acts or statements directed at the child
- Exposure to repeated violent, brutal, or intimidating acts or statements among members of the household
- Cruel or unusual actions used in the attempt to gain submission, enforce maximum control, or to modify the child's behavior
- Rejection of the child

**Neglect**

Neglect is the failure, whether intentional or not, of the person responsible for the child's care to provide and maintain adequate food, clothing, medical care, supervision and/or education. A child may be found neglected who:

- Has been abandoned
- Is being denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally
- Is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances, or associations, injurious to their well being
- Is being abused

**Types of Neglect**

- **Medical Neglect** is the refusal or failure on the part of the person responsible for the child's care to seek, obtain, and or maintain those services for necessary medical, dental, or mental health care. Withholding medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions.
- **Educational Neglect** occurs when, by reason of the actions or inaction on the part of the person responsible for the child's care, a child age 7 years through 15 year old either is not registered for school or is not allowed to attend school.
- **Emotional and Moral Neglect** is the denial of proper care and attention to the child, emotionally and or morally, by the person responsible for the child's care that may result in the child's maladaptive functioning. Harmful behaviors by the person responsible include but not limited to the following:

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- Encourage the child to steal or engage in other illegal activities
- Encourage the child to use drugs and or alcohol
- Recognizing the child's need but failing to provide the child with emotional nurturance
- Having inappropriate expectations of the child given the child's developmental level

**Circumstances Injurious**

**Descriptions / Examples: In Danger of Abuse**

In danger of abuse includes:

- Actions or statements conveying threats of physical or mental injury
- A real threat to the child's well-being as perceived by the child
- The person responsible for the child's care exposing the child to dangerous and / or violent situations

Description / Examples: High Risk Newborns

Newborn children will be considered at risk because of a combination of both their own special needs and their mother's condition or behavior.

**Indicators of special needs newborns include:**

- Positive urine or meconium toxicology for drugs
- A positive test for HIV virus
- A serious medical problem

**Indicators in the mother's condition or behavior include:**

- Substance abuse
- Intellectual limitations which may impair the mother's ability to nurture or physically care for the child
- Major psychiatric illness
- Young age, causing inability to care for self or the newborn

**Reasonable Cause**

If staff or parents witness abuse or neglect by another staff member or parent, they must notify the director immediately. A written report specifying exactly what was observed must be submitted to the director. We have a zero tolerance policy for this type of behavior or treatment toward anyone under the age of 18. If staff is involved in an act of abuse and neglect, the staff members will be subject to the following:

- The discipline in the center's Personnel Policy
- The question of suspending a staff member during the investigation will be decided by the program director, and executive director.
- The decision as to whether the staff member should be allowed to stay working or suspended from work will be based on the allegations and safety of the children.

The administration has the responsibility to protect (including notification of the parent and/or guardian) once there is an allegation of abuse and/or neglect of a child enrolled in the program. Steps will be taken to provide the victims of abuse and/or neglect with medical services as needed. Staff are protected by law (refer to Connecticut General Statutes, Section 171-101e) from discrimination or retaliation for reporting abuse and/or neglect. Each staff member is trained in reporting suspected child abuse and neglect on a yearly basis. Administrative actions (we support zero tolerance for abuse and neglect) will be implemented should there be an allegation that a staff member abused and/or neglected a child. All records will be maintained and kept in the incident/accident report folder as well as in the child or staff number.

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