



PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

Rappahannock Area YMCA Mission Statement.....

Our Vision is to be recognized for fostering personal growth and development and serving community needs by providing quality fitness and recreation programs in an atmosphere of fellowship and caring.

Our values regarding Personal Growth and Development....

We help each individual strive for health and fitness in mind, body and spirit. Our programs are designed for fun, and recognize the varying needs and abilities of all participants to help them reach their full potential.

Regarding service to the Community....

We accept the responsibility to provide opportunities to all community members, including those with special needs. We seek to identify areas of need and respond with quality programs, recreational facilities and services in a safe positive environment.

Regarding Fellowship and Caring....

We celebrate the dignity and value of each person and provide an atmosphere that welcomes and accepts everyone in our diverse community. We strive to strengthen families of all kinds—from the “Family” at the “Y” to the important family in our homes. We encourage the participation of all age groups and abilities in our programs and services.

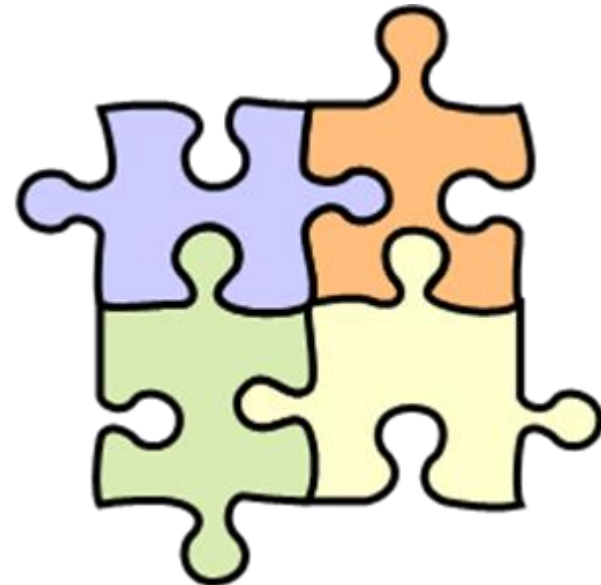
The YMCA Preschool Education Department seeks to help your child develop a healthy mind, body and spirit through the promotion of Christian values.

The Rappahannock Area YMCA is a not-for-profit organization committed to serving people of all ages, races, religions, abilities and income levels.

The Rappahannock Area YMCA will report suspected child abuse under the Virginia Code Section 63.1-248.3.

Organizational Authority

Executive Director - Youth Director - Preschool Teacher



Rappahannock Area YMCA
212 Butler Road
Fredericksburg, Va. 22405
540-371-9622

The YMCA must be notified within 24 hours if your child or any member of the household has been diagnosed with a communicable disease.

9. **Parent-teacher Communication** – conferences are scheduled twice a year, once in January and again in May. Additional conferences can be requested by the teacher or the parents at any time.

Monthly newsletters provide classroom and cooperative information. This format is used to promote a constant open communication with parents to insure a successful program for the students and the general understanding of the school activities for parents.

PAYMENT OF TUITION

PAYMENT OF TUITION—Tuition is due the first of each month, September-May. There will be a late fee of \$10.00 charged on the 2nd of each month if payment is not made. If tuition is not paid by the 1st of the month, your child will not be allowed to attend until the payment is made. We reserve the right to withdraw the child from the program and the space will then become available to a child from the waiting list. Please notify the Youth Director if special arrangements need to be made. The YMCA wants every child to be able to finish the program.

IMPORTANT:

If for any reason parents decide to withdraw their child from the program, the YMCA requires a one month written notice to fill the space and to refund any additional payments.



When Preschool is closed due to inclement weather there will be no make-up days, tuition refunds, or adjustments.

CLASS STRUCTURE

Each day is filled with fun, creative, age appropriate learning and discovery activities. Units of study are developed around seasonal themes. Skills are introduced and enhanced through a variety of activities and hands-on experiences. A basic schedule includes:

- **Morning Circle** – Welcome, Pledge, Calendar, Weather, Stories, Skills Activities, Songs and Poems
- **Centers** – This is the largest block of time and is a multi-dimensional activity time. The children are able to explore a variety of different activities independently; as well as, receive small group instruction.
- **Bathroom Break/Snack**
- **Large Motor** – Children are taken outside when weather permits or provided an opportunity to play in the gym. Children experience large motor development by using a variety of gym equipment. Games are also introduced to promote group play and teamwork.
- **Closing Circle** – Music, Review, Good-Bye and Stickers

Having the children follow a daily routine develops a sense of personal belonging and stresses the individual self-esteem by giving a positive approach to success. In all class activities, each child is helped at his or her developmental level to assure age appropriate completion of the task presented.

SPECIAL EVENTS

During the school year, each class has special events as a part of the curriculum. These often require parent (grandparent, guardian, or designated substitute) participation. The activities are designed to enhance a specific teaching unit; promote community among the classroom families, as well as, the Preschool as a whole; and provide parents the opportunity to participate in the preschool program.

- **Field Trips** – parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from scheduled field trips; however, arrangements can be made between parents to transport students. Please inform your teacher of the arrangements. Students are encouraged to wear their Preschool T-shirts on all field trips. This assists in identifying children in our group quickly and easily.

Permission slips are required for all events taking place away from the YMCA. Teachers are also required to carry a first aid kit and current emergency numbers for all students attending.

There is usually a small fee involved with these trips that will be due prior to the day of the event. No student should miss a special event due to financial issues; please talk to your teacher or the Lead teacher if you need assistance.

Celebrations – celebrations are special days in the classroom where birthdays and holidays are recognized. These special days provide an opportunity for parents to help and participate in the classroom with their child. It takes the cooperation of the teachers and the parents to make these special days a success. We would like alternative snacks instead of cupcakes and non-healthy foods to follow our HEPA standards of healthy eating. We welcome fruit type special snacks or having your child have a special activity planned that day.

ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT

Each child must meet the following age requirements on or before Sept. 30th for the four year old class of the year to be enrolled. Three year olds must be 3 ½, however exception may be made if 3 year old is more mature and able to follow directions.

- Four- Day Threes – 3 year olds (3 1/2 year old and early 4 year olds)
- Five- Day Fours- 4 year olds

In addition your child must be fully potty trained and able to use the bathroom independently.

Enrollment is on a first-come, first-serve basis. A waiting list will be maintained in the event of a cancellation.

PROGRAM

Classroom activities are designed to foster the following skills in developmentally appropriate stages:

- Social, emotional and language development
- Group dynamics and positive self-awareness
- Health and safety standards
- Reading, writing, and math readiness
- Imagination, creativity, and independence

A structured classroom environment provides an opportunity for the children to learn and practice these skills. Throughout the year, carefully planned field trips and special guests help to enrich the curriculum.

SCHEDULE

Classes begin in early September, after Labor Day, and run through the end of May (week before Memorial Day).

- 3 year old Class: 9:30am – 12:30pm Mondays- Thursday
- Five-Day Fours Class: 9:30am – 12:30pm Mondays-Fridays

We follow the Stafford County Public School’s Holiday schedule with the exception of early dismissal and exam days. Each family will receive a Preschool Calendar at Orientation or during the first week of school.

We also follow the Stafford County Public School’s inclement weather decisions (county announcements will be aired on local radio and television channels) as follows:

- Stafford County Public Schools 2 hr. delay = Preschool will be from 11:30-1:30
- Stafford County Public Schools closed = Preschool closed

Parent Acknowledgement of Handbook (Please sign and return)

This is to certify that I have received, read, and understood the Preschool Program parent information packet, Emergency Action Plan and Outdoor Play Policy dated for the 2018-2019 school year.

I agree to and will abide by all policies and procedures set forth in the parent packet and understand that this form will be made part of my child’s registration packet and placed in their file.

Child’s Name

Parent Signature

Date received



POLICIES and PROCEDURES

To assist parents on making the most of our daily program, we have included a list of policies and procedures to help develop an environment of mutual caring and acceptance essential for positive development in each child's social and academic endeavor.

1. **Attendance** – children are expected to arrive on time and be prepared to participate in all activities. Daily attendance is important for adjusting to and developing a positive outlook toward school. Parents are asked to notify the school if a student is going to be absent.
2. **Arrival** – it is extremely important that you **sign your child in every day**. There are no bathrooms in the classrooms; so, it is very helpful and saves instruction time if you take your child to the bathroom **at the YMCA before** bringing them to class each day. If arriving late, please remember to take your child to the bathroom and sign him/her in before entering the classroom. Come in quickly and one of the teachers will direct your child on what to do.
3. **Departure** – please be prompt, yet patient. It is important to pick your child up on time; however, understand that sometimes the teachers get caught up in their day and run slightly over. Gather your child's belongings and wait quietly in the hall. Children will be dismissed one at a time to an authorized (only people you listed on your registration – these people should be prepared to show a picture ID if asked by the teacher) pick-up person only. If you are going to be late picking up your child, please notify the YMCA as soon as possible. The teacher or aide in your child's classroom will stay until you arrive. Please remember to sign your child out before leaving. **There will be a \$20 charge per child for the first fifteen minutes and \$1 per minute thereafter. Late pick-up fees are to be paid at time of pick-up.**
4. **Visitors** – the YMCA Preschool has an open door policy and parents are welcome to visit anytime. We simply ask that you notify the teacher of your visit; unexpected visitors may interrupt or distract children, causing everyone to feel uncomfortable.
5. **Snacks** – Each student is responsible for providing his/her own snack each day. We ask that parents provide a small, healthy snack and low sugar drink. **WE FOLLOW A HEPA (HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY) POLICY which requires children to bring in HEALTHY SNACKS. This policy also REQUIRES AT LEAST 30 minutes of vigorous physical activity.** Please respect the fact that the YMCA Preschool is a PEANUT FREE ZONE, so please do not send products containing any type of peanuts, peanut oil, or peanut butter. Should you have any questions please see your teacher. Students are required to wash their hands before and after eating snack.
6. **Clothing/Shoes** – students should be dressed appropriately for the active schedule of preschool; including art activities and outdoor play. Closed-toed shoes are highly recommended – no flip-flops (they pose a tripping hazard for young children). Sneakers are required on the days your child has gym class. All students are asked to provide a change of clothes, to be kept at school, in the event there is an accident or messy project.

Students are taken outside all year – weather permitting; so, be sure they always come to school with the appropriate clothing for outdoor play. Classroom temperatures can vary from day to day, so layers are recommended. All removable clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name for easy identification.

7. **Discipline** – this is the positive direction of behavior toward established standards of conduct. It is necessary to promote a positive and orderly environment. If self-control fails, disciplinary action must be taken to protect and preserve the rights of everyone in the class. The general discipline policy of the YMCA Preschool follows the standards set forth by the Virginia Code (Standard 7.22-7.32).

The following steps or situations have been incorporated to develop a positive approach to helping children learn and exhibit appropriate classroom behavior:

- Children are expected to adhere to the classroom guidelines including sharing, listening, following directions, and helping to clean up.
- Proper manners are encouraged including sitting at the table in a group, leaving others' personal belongings alone, bathroom privacy, and acceptable eating habits.
- For most classroom disruptions, children are given warnings. If the inappropriate behavior continues the child will be given a "time out" to think about the situation. Following a reasonable time, the child is asked to explain his/her actions and the reason for the "time out". The teacher and the student will discuss how the student should act differently before the child returns to the group.
- For physical abuse to fellow classmates or teachers, children are talked to separately and/or in the group. An apology is expected before returning to class activities.
- If improper behavior persists to interrupt the class, parents will be notified. The teaching staff has the right to call parents to discuss a child's behavior. If the improper behavior persists after parents are notified, the YMCA reserves the right to dismiss the child immediately.

Parents can help their preschoolers by emphasizing the importance of being good, kind, neat, polite, and safe.

8. **Illness** – children who show signs of illness should be encouraged to stay at home. They will not be able to perform well and may cause discomfort for the other students. Some guidelines for keeping your child home include:

- Fever greater than 100 degrees anytime during the past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea anytime within the past 24 hours
- Conjunctivitis: eye drainage that is yellow/green – cannot return until child has received 24 hours of antibiotics (bring dated doctors note)
- Impetigo: skin lesions with yellow discharge – must have doctors note stating child is not contagious
- Chicken Pox – cannot return until lesions have dried and scabbed over (usually takes 7-20 days from onset).
- Strep Throat – cannot return until child has received 24 hours of antibiotics (bring dated doctors note)
- Cough – must have doctors note stating child is not contagious

If a child becomes ill at school, parents will be notified as quickly as possible to come and get their child. Parents are asked to give the names of two people for emergency contacts in case they cannot be reached (please notify the preschool if any of the telephone numbers or names change during the school year).