



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Parent Handbook



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YMCA Philosophy and Values

Goals & Philosophy

The Itasca County Family YMCA provides a welcoming place for the entire community to gather and participate in innovative, quality programs that strengthen families, aid in the healthy development of children, encourage positive individual behavior and contribute to a healthier, safer community for all. WeeFolks Childcare is built upon that foundation.

Character Development

At the YMCA, character development and values are a part of who we are. The YMCA is committed to embracing and demonstrating character through the modeling of our core values: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Our goal is to challenge the people we serve to believe in and act on these positive values.



Supporting Family Life

A major objective of the YMCA is to strengthen and support family life. Quality childcare programs are an ideal way to accomplish this purpose. However, all those involved in the child's care and development must work together in order for success. Guardians, caregivers, children, and other family members all play an important role in the growth and well-being of the child.

Adapting to Students' Needs

The YMCA offers a well-balanced program focused on the developmental needs of children six weeks to pre-kindergarten. We provide quality, individualized attention for each child. We make every effort to work with parents and children who have special needs. WeeFolks provides family centered care, involving guardians and other family members as partners in the childcare experience. We offer referrals for parents to needed resources and advocate for parents and children when needed.

Connecting with Families

The YMCA program is based on a concern for the developmental needs of each child. We are committed to nurturing individual differences and the growth of the whole child – physical, social, emotional and cognitive. We make every effort to keep families informed about what happens at the center concerning their child and appreciate receiving information about the child's activities and progress while at home. Strong communication between home and the center yields a better experience for both the child and the families.

Program Overview

Licensing

We provide childcare for children ages 6 weeks through preschool age. Our program is licensed through the State of Minnesota Department of Human Services, Child Care Licensing (651-431-6030). We provide full time enrollment.

We are licensed to serve up to 68 children at the YMCA site (6 am-6 pm) and up to 64 children at the IRC site (7 am-6 pm).



Educational Methods

A planned curriculum provides a sequence of learning experiences for children. All of our staff members work hard to create experiences for children to increase their language, cognitive, fine and gross motor and social-emotional skills. We provide plenty of opportunities for children to work toward the achievement of developmental milestones and try out new skills. We honor that kids develop in different areas at different rates and seek to help all kids learn and grow, wherever they are at.

The Staff

Quality, continuity, and longevity of staff is a priority in a quality childcare program. We work hard to be a great place to work as well as a great place for kids. We believe caring well for our staff is an important part of a quality program. We pick our staff based on experience, competence, and willingness to grow as a professional. We provide ongoing training for our staff so that they can be ready to work with your children each day when we open our doors.

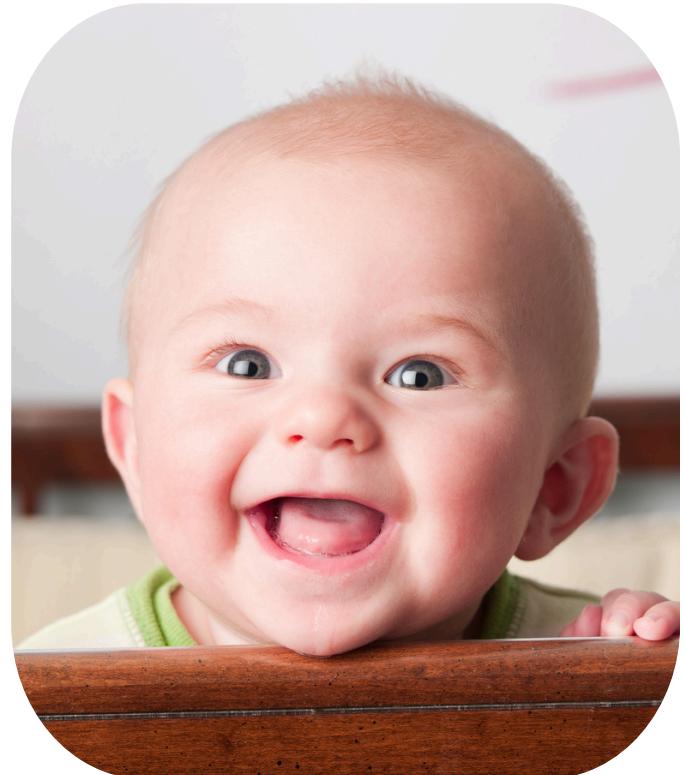
All staff are fingerprinted and background checked and are certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR, and trained in Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Prevention and Abusive Head Trauma Prevention, along with ongoing child development training.

Infant Program Plan Summary

During the early years, infants are learning to trust their world, actively explore their environment, and do things for themselves. Staff show respect for children and interact with them in caring ways. They plan individual activities and interactions with every infant each day, centering on daily routines, diapering, feeding, eating and napping. They also introduce infants to a variety of activities including art, outdoor time, playing with toys, looking at books, singing songs, sensory play, and more.

Diapers are changed on a two-hour schedule or sooner if needed.

Infants who are not yet mobile receive tummy time every day.



Breastfeeding Policy

The YMCA is committed to provide ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers, including providing an opportunity and location to breastfeed their child throughout the day and holding off giving a bottle, if possible, when mom is due to arrive. Formula and solid foods will not be provided unless the parent has requested. Babies will be held closely when feeding and bottles will never be propped. Breastfeeding mothers may store their expressed milk in the center refrigerator and freezer. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with the infant first and last name and date. The center will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control in ensuring that breast milk is properly treated to avoid waste.

Toddler Program Plan Summary

Our teachers plan a variety of fun learning activities to help toddlers solve, predict, plan, share, cooperate, empathize, and understand how to participate as a member of a group. We seek to maximize learning experiences in daily routines with art, outdoor time, stories, sensory plan, creative movements and dramatic play. We promote positive self-esteem, self-help skills, and encourage natural curiosity in exploring the world.

Preschool Program Plan Summary

Independence in self-help skills and problem solving will be developed through a variety of both child-directed and teacher-directed play and activities. Physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development will be incorporated throughout each day. Classrooms are established with a range of interest items and materials for children to explore. Teachers lesson plan across a range of developmental domains to ensure opportunities for learning and growth as whole child and readiness for future learning and life experiences.

A detailed program plan for each age group is available upon request.



Enrollment

Pre-Enrollment

As part of the enrollment process, we ask that you make an appointment with the director to discuss your child's needs and to become more familiar with our program. This will give you an opportunity to meet your site's director and tour the center. We will also provide you with the required paperwork that needs to be completed before your child can officially enroll in the program. Please know that all the information provided to us is kept confidential and is disclosed only to pertinent staff.

Time to Get to Know Each Other

We want to be able to serve your child and your family well. For this reason, the first 30 days of your child's enrollment will be considered a "trial-period." If we feel the center is not an appropriate fit for your child and another setting would better meet your child's needs, we will provide notice of this decision along with a two-week notice of discontinuation of enrollment.

Transitioning to a New Classroom

Infants transition to a toddler room at 16 months. For infants, there is a two-week transition period to allow the child to visit the other classroom at shorter intervals prior to a full move into the new room.

We typically plan for toddlers and preschoolers to transition to the next classroom at the onset of the new school year in September. There is not a staggered transition for these age groups; the children simply move into the next room. On occasion, due to enrollment or unique situations within our program, we may contact you regarding a transition at a different time during the school year for discussion regarding a possible classroom move.



Withdrawal from Program

Families choosing to withdraw from the program, must submit a two-week written notice as a minimum. You will be billed for two weeks following your notice regardless of whether or not your child attends.

Tuition and Fees

Enrollment Fee

A \$30 non-refundable enrollment fee will be charged at the time of registration in to the program. This fee will be charged as we set up your account in order to initiate the registration process. If you leave the program and decide to return, you will need to pay another enrollment fee.

Tuition

We require fees to be automatically withdrawn. Payment can be set up with a checking or savings account or credit/debit card. Please be aware that returned bank payments will result in a fee of \$40.83 applied to your account. It is up to you to change your billing methods if your card expires. We do not send out statements; it is your responsibility to log in to your account and maintain payments.

Tuition for the 2025-2026 school year, effective 9/1/25, is:

Infant: \$280/week

Toddler: \$250/week

Preschool: \$230/week

These are the charged rates regardless of center closings or your child's absences.

As your child grows and transitions from infant to toddler to preschool, you will see a rate change when your child has been moved into a classroom approved for the older rate.

We require accounts to be current. Accounts not paid by the week of attendance will result in temporary suspension of care. The child will not be eligible for attendance until the account is paid. If the account is still unpaid after two weeks, care will be terminated, and the collections process will begin.

Closures

WeeFolks will be closed New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Additional days surrounding holidays may be added for closure if deemed by WeeFolks to be the most reasonable schedule.

WeeFolks is also closed for one full week at the end of August/beginning of September for annual trainings and deep cleaning. Along with the full week, WeeFolks is closed for up to 5 selected days throughout the year for training and staff development. Dates will be noted on the annual calendar provided to families allowing for advance planning.

Closures (cont.)

The center does not automatically follow the public school districts closure dates due to weather. WeeFolks will remain open unless the leadership team determines the weather is exceptionally extreme or we are unable to have adequate staffing for maintaining licensing requirements. If such a decision is made, WeeFolks may be closed for an entire day, open late, or close early. Closures and/or changes of hours of operation due to weather will be communicated through Lillio.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Please pick up your child before closing time. We are only licensed to care for children during the center's hours of operations. Both the IRC and the YMCA sites close at 6 pm.

You will be charged \$10.00 for the first 5 minutes past closing time and then \$1.00 per minute thereafter. The late fee is calculated per child. Late fee charges will be added to a future tuition statement.

If a pick up has not occurred within 30 minutes of the closing of the center and if we are not able to reach the guardians or an emergency contact person, the police will be called to pick up the child. Please make sure your phone numbers and emergency contacts are kept up-to-date and notify us immediately if any phone numbers or addresses change. We ask that your emergency contacts to be local so they can arrive quickly if necessary. It's extremely important in the case of an emergency situation involving your child that we have a fast, reliable way of reaching you or your emergency contacts.

Payment Made by a Third Party

Upon enrollment in a YMCA program, it is to be understood that all child care fees, tuition, and expenses are the responsibility of the guardian(s) enrolling in the program. All families enrolled in the program are subject to the same policies, including policies related to the payment of fees (late payment penalties, and withdrawal from the program)

In the event that a third party (such as Social Services, Child Care Assistance program, non-custodial parent or extended family member) is responsible for all or part of the fees due, the agreement is between the guardian enrolling the child and the third party only. YMCA Child Care Services enters into the child care and payment agreement with the enrolling guardian(s) only.

Meeting Children's Individual Needs

If your child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP), or receives outside services, we will require a copy of the IEP/IFSP and will discuss ways our staff can best meet the needs of your child. Depending on your child's needs, our program may or may not be the best fit for your family. Communication is very important between families and staff so that care can be maintained and progress in the child's development continues.

After the child is enrolled, the following should be done on a regular basis:

1. Regular meetings with the classroom staff as needed.
2. Child Care staff should be included in all IEP/IFSP meetings.
3. Review of care plan developed for the child to assure that we are continuing to meet the child's needs as needed.

Sometimes, individual behavior plans are developed for a child to ensure communication between staff and parents and to provide consistent and measurable behavior guidance methods for children that have higher needs in this area. Similar to other care plans, in the case of a behavior plan, regular communication amongst staff and parents as well as regular review is necessary to maximize success.

"A person's a person, no matter how small."

-Dr. Seuss



At the YMCA, we strive to use age-appropriate behavior guidance techniques that allow children to learn what is appropriate and what is not acceptable behavior. Our behavior guidance approach teaches lifelong skills. It is about teaching children how to acknowledge their emotions and control their reactions, rather than punishing children for their behavior. We look for everyday “teachable moments” to practice these skills. We will take the following steps to support your child.

- **Create a positive environment:** We believe that many challenging behaviors can be prevented by setting up a proactive environment. At WeeFolks, teachers provide children with stimulating choices, treat children with respect, reinforce positive behavior, set reasonable limits, provide a consistent schedule, and approach situations with flexibility.
- **Understand the reasons for your child's behavior:** Many behaviors occur because a child has not yet developed a way to communicate their needs or feelings. For example, is your child tired, scared, curious, bored, shy, ill, over-stimulated, embarrassed, lonely, or in need of toileting? Once we know why a behavior is occurring, we can better help your child.
- **Provide natural and logical consequences:** For example, if a child is throwing blocks, the teacher will remind him/her that blocks are for building. If the action continues, the child will be done playing with blocks for a short period of time and participate in an alternate activity.
- **Teachers will help children to choose an alternate activity:** We will redirect your child to an appropriate activity where positive behaviors can occur.
- **Support your child by providing calming time:** If your child becomes upset we will assist him/her in calming down. This is done by sitting with the child, often with a book or activity. Your child may always rejoin the group as soon as he/she is ready. WeeFolks does not use “time out” but instead provides opportunity and space to regulate emotions and learn
- **Protect your child's confidentiality:** If a child in our program has a situation occur with another child, we will inform both families of the incident. However, we will not disclose a child's name or information to another family.
- **Work with you to create win-win solutions for your child:** If challenging behavior is ongoing, we will set up a time to talk with you about what can be done to best meet your child's needs and create a joint action plan for approaching specific behaviors. Sometimes a child may display a need that is beyond the scope of our expertise. In those instances, WeeFolks will make every effort to provide appropriate resources and referrals for support.

Weefolks Supports Building Positive Relationships

At the YMCA, we believe guidance should be positive and approached in a fair and caring manner consistent with the developmental needs of individual children. Clear behavior limits are set and modeled and reasons for the guidelines are explained. We encourage children to develop self-control and to handle conflicts in peaceful, effective and acceptable ways that protect the safety of both children and staff. We use positive redirection toward constructive activity directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior as the situation warrants.

The following actions are not permitted by or at the direction of the YMCA staff:

Corporal punishment | Emotional abuse | Punishment for lapses in toilet habits | Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as punishment for unacceptable behavior | Use of physical restraints other than to physically hold a child when containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm | Use of mechanical restraints

Behavior Guidance

We are aware that all children are curious about their surroundings, including the physical environment and people around them. If a situation arises that requires discipline, the teaching staff will redirect the child to another activity or offer appropriate choices. The child will also be reminded about acceptable behavior. In a situation where a child may become too disruptive to redirect, he/she may be asked to calm down with a staff member. If a child has difficulty calming down, he/she may need to be separated from the group. Any separations are documented and you will be notified.

Persistent Unacceptable Behavior

In the event that a child is having consistent disruptive behavior, a meeting will be requested to discuss the behavior, share tips, and brainstorm ideas to support the child in behavior changes. If the child continues the same level of unwanted behaviors after an appropriate interval of time given to implement and monitor the results of the strategies, the behavior plan will be amended. If after another appropriate interval of time to implement the recommended changes the child is still having consistent disruptive behavior, staff may make referrals to health professionals, family support programs, or a different setting for the child.

If families are willing to work with our staff and other professionals to help the child be successful, we will make every effort to make it possible for the child to remain at the center. However, in some cases, the needs of the child exceed the scope of care and/or expertise available at WeeFolks and a referral to other care would better serve your family.

Biting

Biting is unfortunately not uncommon behavior for very young children in a group setting. Biting can occur as a way to communicate when children do not yet have the language skills to express themselves and can also occur due to teething or as another sensory response. However, biting is clearly harmful to others and not acceptable behavior. Our goal is to help identify what may have caused the child to bite and to help the child resolve those issues in an appropriate and safe manner. Our biting policy includes that effort along with a defined boundary to help protect all children and staff in our center. When biting does occur, the following actions will be taken.

For the child that was bitten:

- **The child that was bitten will receive attention first.**
- **First aid is provided.**
- **The Accident/Injury Report form is filled out documenting the incident and notifying parents.**

For the child that bit:

- **The teacher will instruct the child on positive behavior. The teacher will discuss the feelings the child had when biting, if possible, and show other ways to meet that need.**
- **Staff will ask that child to check in with the child who was hurt, if possible and appropriate at that time.**
- **The Incident Report is filled out documenting the incident and notifying parents.**

Moving forward:

The child will be closely monitored to help prevent any further biting incidents. The child will be observed by the teachers to help determine what may be causing the child to bite (teething, communication barriers, frustration, etc.) The child will be given positive attention and approval for appropriate and safe behavior.

When biting continues:

1. **If a child inflicts 2 bites in a one-week period a conference will be held with the parents to work together to find solutions.**
2. **If the child again inflicts 2 bites in a one-week period, the child will be asked to take a one-week break from the school during which time parents and teachers will meet again to reassess possible solutions. Regular tuition will be charged for this week.**
3. **If the child again inflicts 2 bites in a one-week period, the parents will be asked to make other day care arrangements. In this case, WeeFolks will make every effort to assist in providing resources and referrals for other placement that may be a better fit for the child.**

If a child, who has been through step 1 and 2 and then goes 4 weeks without biting, we will go back to step one if the child bites another child or staff member again.

***For this policy, a documented bite is one that has left a notable mark, bruise, or broken skin.**

Parent/ Guardian Information

Center Communication Info

Quality childcare includes an open line of communication between families and our center. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the center director at any time with questions or concerns.

We use the Lillio app for most center communication. To set up the app, search for "Lillio" in the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play (Android). Download it and enter the email address or phone number connected to your child's profile.

Through Lillio, you can:

- Send and receive messages directly with your child's teacher or the site director**
- Receive notifications for your child's class or the entire center**
- View daily summaries of activities**
- See photos, observations, and assessment reports showing your child's progress**

Please note that staff are prohibited from using their own personal cell phones to communicate with families regarding children under the care of WeeFolks. The appropriate means of communication are face-to-face conversations, the classroom telephone, or the Lillio app.

Please do not ask staff for their personal phone numbers.

Parent Visits

We exercise an open door policy and welcome parents to visit their child's classroom at any time.

Daily Attendance

Please use the tablet at the entrance of the center to sign in and sign out your child each day. If your child is not attending care on any given day, please mark him/her absent for the day in Lillio.

Pick Up Authorizations

All pick up persons must be authorized. If someone other than yourself is picking up, please inform the classroom teachers and be aware that the individual may be asked for identification if not known by staff. If a parent is not allowed to pick up a child, we will need a court order stating this. Any person under the age of 18 cannot be an authorized pick up person. Please be aware that you are responsible for your child when you sign them out for the day. Please keep them close to you in the hallways and parking lots and help enforce that only adults at the center open doors.

Photo Release / Public Relations

Photos of your child will not be used publicly without your permission. You will also be asked for your permission before your child participates in any research projects or public relations activities. We will not release information about your child to any unauthorized person. We can only accept authorization from the legal guardian to release information.

Supplies Provided by Parents

To ensure we can meet your child's needs throughout the day, parents are responsible for providing:

- Diapers/Pull-Ups and Wipes:** It's best to have at least 3 days' worth of supplies on hand at the center. We encourage bringing a full pack of diapers and a full pack of wipes when replenishing.
- Extra Clothing:** Accidents and spills can and will happen amongst active, young children! Please keep at least one complete change of clothing (including socks and underwear) at the center for your child. Infants and children who are potty-training should have multiple changes of clothing available.

If your child is running low on diapers, wipes, or extra clothing, we will notify you to replenish supplies as soon as possible to ensure your child's comfort and care. We appreciate your prompt action in bringing in requested supplies!

Conferences

Parent-teacher meetings may be requested by the center staff or the guardians. Regular conferences will be offered two times per year, typically in November and May, in our toddler and preschool groups to review your child's progress. Regular conferences will be announced and scheduled through your child's classroom teacher. To request a conference outside of regularly scheduled conference times, please make arrangements with your child's teacher as well. Parents of infants will receive regular written documentation of the child's developmental progress.

Grievance Procedures for Guardians

WeeFolks strives to partner with parents in providing the best possible care for your child. Please contact our staff whenever you have a question, concern, or request pertaining to your child's time with us. We welcome input from parents and will make appropriate efforts to accommodate your wishes and/or explain our rationale behind a particular policy. We truly desire for your experience to be excellent.

If you have a grievance concerning something regarding our program, you should follow the following procedure. Persons served by WeeFolks, and their authorized representatives, have the right to bring a grievance to the highest level of authority in our program.

- 1. Lead Teacher if appropriate**
- 2. Site Director**
- 3. Education Director**
- 5. CEO of The Itasca YMCA**

If a parent/caregiver believes abuse took place at the center, they have the right to report directly to the State Child Care Licensing Department 651-539-8222.

Parent Code of Conduct

At WeeFolks, we believe that positive, respectful partnerships with families create the best environment for children to grow and thrive. To ensure a safe, welcoming, and professional setting for children, families, and staff at WeeFolks, we ask that all parents, guardians, and authorized pick-up persons adhere to this Parent Code of Conduct.

- **Address all staff, children, and other families with respect and politeness at all times.**
- **Raise concerns through appropriate channels; speak directly to the classroom staff or site director through in person conversations, phone calls, or Lillio.**
- **When concerns do arise, focus conversations on solutions that best meet the needs of the child.**
- **Encourage children to follow center rules and expectations.**
- **Respect the privacy of other families and staff in our program.**
- **Follow all center policies, procedures, and health guidelines as outlined in the Parent Handbook.**

Prohibited Conduct

- **The following behaviors will not be tolerated:**
 - **Threatening, intimidating, or harassing behavior toward staff, children, or other families.**
 - **Swearing, cursing, and name-calling.**
 - **Physical or verbal altercations while in any WeeFolks program space.**
 - **Bringing weapons or illegal substances onto the premises.**
 - **Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on site.**

Failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in:

- **A verbal or written warning.**
- **Suspension or termination of your child's enrollment if behavior compromises the safety or well-being of children, staff, or families.**



Make Saying Good-Bye Easier

Sometimes it's difficult to know what to do when your child cries or clings when it's time for you to leave. Such behavior is not unusual or unreasonable for young children. Even ones who have been to school before can fall apart at the last minute and it may continue for some time.

Here are a few suggestions.

Arrive at a consistent time each day as much as possible. and greet the teacher like an old friend. If you're among the first to arrive, the room will be quieter. Your child will have the chance to see you talking in a friendly way to the adult who will care for him/her. It's easier for a child to accept a new teacher as a caregiver (and human being!) if it's clear that you like that person too!

Bring along a comfort item to leave with your child.

It might be a picture of you, a special blanket or stuffed toy. A wise person once described such security items as being like a "portable parent." They do help. In much the same way, a parent who leaves a hat or other personal item with a toddler is also leaving a concrete message "A piece of me is with you. I'll be back."

Don't slip away while your child is busy playing. Doing so may cause her to mistrust you and will only lead to more determined clinging next time. Always let your child know that you're leaving.

You'll be helping her learn that separation can be faced and managed.

Tell your child when you'll return.

Although your child can't tell time yet, he/she can understand ideas like, "I'll be back when you're playing outside after naptime." Be sure to return when you said you would.

Say good-bye quickly.

Say it cheerfully and confidently. (Even if you don't quite feel that way the first few times.) Ever since he was a baby, your child has checked the expression on your face to find out how to react. When you look worried, he feels worried. Looking cheerful and confident says, "You can handle this!"

Call the school later if you're concerned.

Just as you might give a regretful sigh when seeing a loved one off at the airport, so might your child cry briefly when you say good-bye. Because your child is sad when you leave doesn't mean the sadness will last all day. You are always welcome to send a message to the teacher to check on your child. Knowing that your child is settled in can help you feel better.

It's okay to take a while to learn to say good-bye to someone you love. It helps to keep in mind that saying good-bye gets easier with time and experience. Eventually, your child will understand fully that you'll always return, and will be able to let you go with trust and confidence.

General Information



Clothing

Play clothes are best for days spent at WeeFolks. Comfortable, sturdy, washable clothing that will enable the children to participate freely in all activities without undue concern for spills, spots, and wear. Please mark all clothing and personal articles permanently with your child's name. Sturdy, well-fitting tennis shoes or non-skid shoes are essential for active play. Flip flops and cowboy boots are fun, but difficult to run and play in. We recommend that you send other shoes when children want to wear these. When skirts are worn, we ask that your child wear pants or shorts underneath. Please provide the following: at least one full change of clothing including socks and underwear to be left at the center (more clothes for infants and potty-trainers), a bathing suit to be left at the center (for preschoolers), snow pants, hat, mittens and boots for winter play and other appropriate outdoor clothing for other seasons.

Pets

The presence of any pet in the center will be communicated to families in writing in advance.

Social Media

For privacy purposes, we ask that you not post pictures of children from our programs on your Facebook page. These pictures may be taken innocently at school and program events. Note that the YMCA does not condone posting pictures of children without written permission from a parent.

Staff Babysitting Policy

As a client of the YMCA, you are notified that the YMCA supervises its employees and programs within the confines of the facilities under the policies of the YMCA and the programs approved and managed by the YMCA. If you know a WeeFolks employee outside of our childcare setting and would like them to babysit for you, please complete the affidavit form available in the childcare office. Parents should not request babysitting services from staff with whom there is no other relationship other than through WeeFolks. Please be advised that the employees of the YMCA are not supervised by the YMCA during their off-duty hours and are not acting within the scope of their WeeFolks employment.

Meals

WeeFolks provides nutritious breakfast, lunch and snacks according to USDA and CACFP guidelines.

For us to comply with USDA and CACFP guidelines, parent will be asked to fill out a Household Income Statement annually. This provides the entity with eligibility levels of all children in the program. Please make sure to fill out all children living in the household. as well as income. Additional information is included on the registration packet regarding Child and Adult Food Program.



In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, phone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 OR
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442 OR
program.intake@usda.gov
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.**



Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a planned part of each day, weather permitting. We play outdoors as much as possible as the fresh air and exercise is so important for all of us! We use the MN Child WeatherWatch Guide to determine when conditions are safe to play outside. Children are supervised at all times. For staffing reasons, all children must go outside if they are in attendance for the day. If your child is not well enough to participate in outdoor play, they are not well enough to be at school. Please bring appropriate outdoor clothing for your children and put their names on them.

When it is warm, we will take water with us outside and on walks. Parent permission is required before children may go on walks beyond the program property.

Additional Snacks

Sometimes parents choose to provide supplemental snacks for their children. This is not necessary but it is acceptable.

Additional snacks food items provided by parents will be offered alongside lunch or at snack time unless the child has a specific care plan outlining alternate times. Any supplemental snacks or beverages provided by parents should meet our nutritional guidelines as well as follow our nut aware policy. Nut-free granola bars, string cheese, and applesauce are good options.

Birthdays

We like to make each child feel special on his or her birthday! If your child would like to share a birthday item with his/her classmates, please send enough items for each child in the class. Non-food items such as individual bubbles, playdough, or stickers are a good choice that can be enjoyed by all children. If you choose to provide a food-item, please ensure it follows our nut-aware policy and that it is individually wrapped as it will be sent home with children, not eaten at school.

Doorways and Safety

We want to prevent children from getting their fingers pinched in the doors. We ask that you open and close the doors for your children in our center. Always look through windows before opening any door and look behind you before closing any doors. Please remind your child(ren) that "At our center, it's a grown up job to open doors."

Parking and Safety

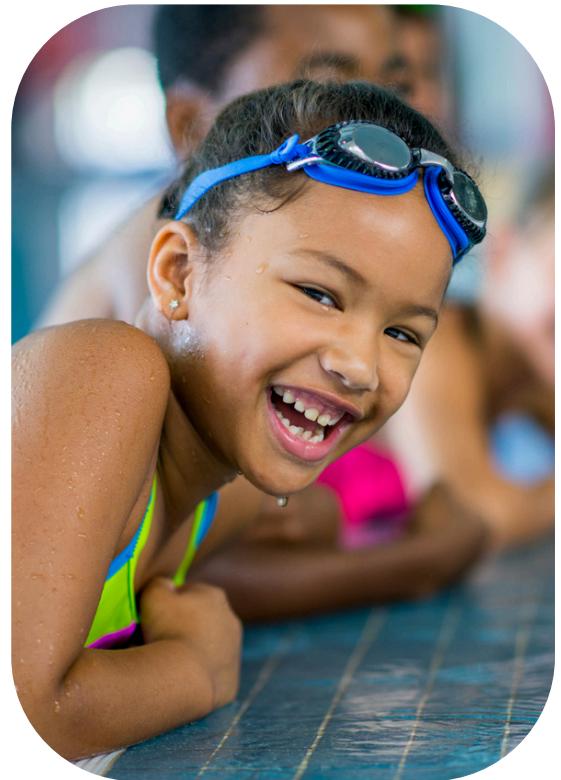
Please drive extremely carefully in our lots. Watch for children! Also, as you walk to and from your vehicle, please keep your children very close and teach them to watch for cars as well.

Swimming

We are excited to offer regular swimming time for our preschool class!

Important Details:

- **Location:** Swimming takes place at the YMCA pool, which is always staffed by trained lifeguards.
- **Safety:**
 - Preschool children swim with safety belts and/or pool noodles.
 - A teacher is in the water with the children at all times.
 - Children are always kept within sight, and we strictly maintain appropriate child-to-staff ratios during all water activities.
- **Swim Diapers:**
 - If your child wears diapers or pull-ups, please provide swim diapers.
 - Swim diapers are required for participation in swimming activities.
- **Behavior Expectations:**
 - For the well-being of all, children are expected to maintain safe behavior in the locker room and pool area.
 - If a child is unable to do so, reteaching of the expected behavior will be provided. Additionally, staff may determine that an alternate activity will be provided instead of swimming for the following one or more weeks.



Lock Down Procedures

When instructed by the authorities or when necessary, we will lock down the program until a dangerous or questionable situation has subsided in the neighborhood, school or community. In such conditions, we will do our best to keep parents informed of the situations to the greatest degree possible. However, the children's safety will be top priority and immediate communication may not be possible.

Medications

We can administer medication to your child under the direction of a health care provider. Medications must be in the original container, be current, and labeled with your child's full name. A medication release form must be filled out completely and signed by a guardian before a medication is given. Instructions on the form must match the instructions on the container. A note from a doctor outlining the purposes of the medication, dosage, and the length of time that it is to be given must accompany all medications, including over the counter medications. Medication will be placed out of the reach of children.

First Aid Procedures/ Accident Procedures

We make every effort and precaution to keep all children safe while they are at the center. However, in the course of a hard day of playing and having fun, children sometimes get injured. If this happens, staff will call you immediately if the injury seems to require medical attention. Otherwise, staff will complete an Accident Report that details what happened, where it happened, and how the injury was treated. All staff is certified in First Aid and CPR. We will provide basic first aid for your child in the event that it is necessary. We will not remove splinters, wood ticks, etc. We are not able to put any creams, gels, or any type of antibiotic ointments on the injury, due to possible skin allergies and adverse reactions. In an emergency situation staff will call 911 and notify caregivers immediately.

A form authorizing emergency medical care for your child is signed at the time of enrollment. In case of an emergency, you will be called. If our center staff is not able to reach you, we will attempt to notify the emergency contact(s) indicated on your child's authorized form. If, after a half-hour we feel the child needs medical attention and we are unable to reach the family or emergency contacts, we will take your child to receive such medical attention.

Nut Aware Environments

At WeeFolks, we are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all children. We recognize that some children in our care may have severe and potentially life-threatening allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, or products containing them. We are a nut-aware center and take steps to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens.

- Please avoid sending foods that contain peanuts, tree nuts, or nut butters.
- No food sharing is allowed among children.
- Staff are trained in allergy awareness and emergency response.
- Individual child-care plans are required for children with any known allergy.
- Classrooms with a child who has a severe allergy may be designated nut-free. In those cases, parents will be provided with additional guidelines to follow for that classroom.

Illness Policy

Our center has a registered nurse that acts as our health consultant. They review policies on an annual and monthly basis. Please be aware that they also may need to review child records (including health records) from time to time.

For the health and well-being of all kids and staff, children who are ill or have a contagious condition will be unable to attend care based on the following guidelines. These guidelines are based on the regulations of the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services and our program's health consultant.

Illness Policy (cont.)

- **Temperature of 100 degrees F axillary (under arm) or greater: Children sent home with a fever may not return to care the following day and must be fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before readmittance.**
- **Vomiting: A child who vomits at school will be sent home and may not return to care the following day. A child must go 24 hours without vomiting before readmittance.**
- **Bacterial infections including strep throat: If a physician diagnoses a child with strep throat or any other type of bacterial infection, a child needs to be on an antibiotic for 24 hours before readmittance to the center is allowed.**
- **Diarrhea: A child who experiences three abnormally loose stools since that day's admission will be sent home. Children sent home for diarrhea may not return to care the following day, and the child must be free from diarrhea for 24 hours prior to readmittance.**
- **Eye Drainage: A child with pus drainage from the eye will be excluded from care until either a doctor confirms that condition is not contagious, until the drainage stops, or until 24 hours after antibiotics have begun.**
- **Chicken Pox: A child may not return until all blisters have dried.**
- **Ring Worm: Children with ringworm may return to the center 24 hours after beginning treatment.**
- **Head Lice: A child must remain at home until the first treatment is completed and no further active lice or nits are seen. A staff member will inspect the child upon readmittance while the parent waits at the center.**
- **Rash: A child with a rash of an unknown origin or is known to be contagious must be excluded from care until either the rash resolves or health care provider instructs that readmittance is allowable. This includes eczema; please provide written documentation from your health care provider if your child is diagnosed with eczema.**
- **Significant respiratory distress: A child with severe and copious coughing will be excluded until the symptoms have minimized.**
- **Exceeds reasonable level of care: A child who requires more care than the program staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in care will be excluded until the symptoms have improved and the child can resume the regular activities of the center.**
- **Unable to Participate: If a child is unwell and has symptoms that make it difficult or impossible to participate in the classroom activities with reasonable comfort, parents will be contacted to pick up. The child may return to care when the symptoms have improved and the child can resume the regular activities of the center.**

If your child becomes ill while at the center, we will call you immediately. If you cannot be reached or half hour has passed, we will call the emergency person indicated on your child's authorization form. We will try to keep your child as comfortable as possible until you arrive. We will notify you if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease such as chicken pox, pink eye, or strep throat. We will post this information in a pertinent area in the program. Please notify the program with 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) if your child contracts any of these illnesses so that we can notify other families in the program.

Immunization Policy

All children are required to be up-to-date with their immunizations and guardians are expected to provide their child's immunization record prior to the first day of care. The Health Care Summary is due within 30 days of enrollment. Child care programs cannot refuse to provide care to unimmunized children who are otherwise eligible if the parents or guardians present a valid exemption from immunization requirements. If a vaccine- preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs at the program, it is recommended for unimmunized children to be excluded for the duration of the possible exposure.

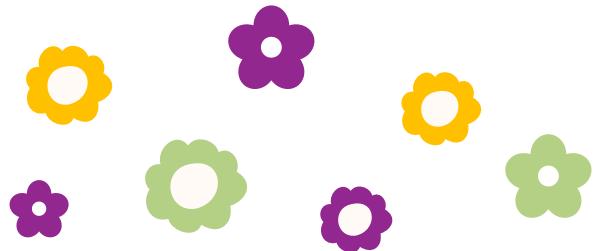
Infection Control & Disinfection

To help control the spread of germs we follow these standards. Hands are washed:

- Upon arrival to classroom
- Before and after meals
- Before food preparation (including bottles)
- After toileting
- After sneezing, coughing, or wiping runny noses
- After diapering
- Coming in from outside

Child Abuse Law

State Law considers us mandated reporters. If we note signs of abuse or neglect, we are required to report it to the proper authorities.



Toilet Learning (Potty Training)

The staff will discuss toilet training with families as their child approaches readiness for learning. It is important that the child is ready! We will agree as a team how we will proceed. It is best to have consistency between the child's home and the center to allow the child to be successful. We view toilet learning as a developmental process and take its success and failures in stride.

A child may begin toilet learning when:

- The child shows interest in the toileting process.
- The child is able to retain bowel movements and urination for periods of time.
- The child is willing and able to sit on the toilet.
- The child is able to pull his/her pants up and down.
- The child understands what is expected of him/her.

Toilet learning procedure:

- Place child on the toilet at routine times (cues taken from the child and/or center's schedule).
- Place child on the toilet at the child's request. No toys in the bathroom while the child is on the toilet.
- Give immediate rewards such as hugs, cheers, or praise.

Nap and Rest Policies

Napping and Rest Time:

- Infants nap based on their internal schedule, never forced
- Toddlers and Preschoolers have a quiet rest time after lunch and can sleep

Sleep Area Setup

- Rest areas must be quiet and physically separated from active play areas
- Cribs and cots must be placed directly on the floor and require clear aisles and unimpeded access on at least one side

Bedding Requirements

- Each child has separate bedding.
- Bedding and blankets must be washed weekly, and immediately if soiled or wet.

Crib Standard

- Cribs must meet federal safety standards (CFR Title 16, Parts 1219 & 1220)
- See Minnesota Statutes I245A.146 for inspection and compliance details

Safe Sleep Practices (SUIDs Prevention)

- Infants must sleep on their backs unless a physician's directive is on file.
- Infants who roll over independently may stay on their stomachs if:
 - They are at least 6 months old, or
 - A parent-signed statement confirms regular rolling at home.

Crib Use and Pacifier Rules

- Firm Mattress with a tight-fitting sheet only.
- Only the infant's pacifier may be in the crib (nothing attached)
- Pacifiers must be individually labeled securely.

Clothing Restrictions

- Infants under 1 year must not sleep wearing:
 - Weighted clothing, hoods, or bibs.

Swaddling:

- Not recommended and prohibited if the infant can roll over.
- Allowed only with written parental consent on an approved form.
- Must be done with a one-piece sleeper fastened only across the torso.

Helmet use

- If a medical helmet is required during sleep, a form signed by a medical professional is required.

Cradleboard Use

- For cultural accommodations, a variance must be requested. If approved, cradleboards must be inspected monthly for safety.

Infant falls asleep before being placed in crib

- Move to crib as soon as practicable.
- Must remain in sight until moved.
- Ensure airway is clear, nothing covers face, and supervision of children is maintained

In our toddler and preschool rooms, naptime blankets and "stuffies" are welcome. If your child would like to use naptime stuffie, please do not send one that lights up and/or makes noises and ensure all nap items are taken home and washed weekly.

Maltreatment of Minors and Mandated Reporting Policy

What to Report

- **Maltreatment includes egregious harm, neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, substantial child endangerment, threatened injury, and mental injury. For definitions refer to Minnesota Statues, section 260E.03. Maltreatment must be reported if you have witnessed or have reason to believe that a child is being or has been maltreated within the last three years.**

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

- **Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect**
- **If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of report to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency. WeeFolks staff are mandated reporters.**
- **In addition. people who are not mandated reporters may voluntarily report maltreatment.**

Where to Report

- **If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.**
- **Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of children, or other violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules, in facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families, should be made to the DCYF Central Intake Line at 651-539-8222.**
- **Incidents of suspected maltreatment of children occurring within a family, in a community, at a family child care program, in a child foster residence setting, or in a child foster care home, should be reported to the local county social services agency at 218-327-2941 or local law enforcement at 218-326-3464.**
- **Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of a child related to a Children's Residential Facility (CRF), Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), or a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment facility should be made to the Minnesota Department of Human Services.**
- **Reports concerning suspected maltreatment of a child in a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) should be made to the Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Health Facility Complaints at health.ohfc-complaints@state.mn.us.**

When to Report

- **Mandated reporters must make a report to one of the agencies listed above immediately (as soon as possible but no longer than 24 hours).**

Information to Report

- **A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the maltreatment (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected maltreatment occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.**

Failure to Report

- A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been maltreated and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from a position allowing direct contact with, or access to, persons receiving services from programs, organizations, and/or agencies that are required to have individuals complete a background study by the Department of Human Services as listed in Minnesota Statutes, section 245C.03.

Retaliation prohibited

- An employer of any mandated reporter is prohibited from retaliating against (getting back at):
- an employee for making a report in good faith; or
 - a child who is the subject of the report.
- If an employer retaliates against an employee, the employer may be liable for damages and/or penalties.

Staff training

- The license holder must train all mandated reporters on their reporting responsibilities, according to the training requirements in the statutes and rules governing the licensed program. The license holder must document the provision of this training in individual personnel records, monitor implementation by staff, and ensure that the policy is readily accessible to staff, as specified under Minnesota Statutes, section 142B.10, subdivision 21.

Provide policy to parents

- For licensed child care centers, the mandated reporting policy must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment and must be available upon request. The definitions section (p. 3-6) is optional to provide to parents.

The following sections do not apply to family child foster care per Minnesota Statutes, section 142B.54, subd. 1.

Internal review

- When the facility has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made, the facility must complete an internal review within 30 calendar days and take corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care.
- The internal review must include an evaluation of whether:
 1. related policies and procedures were followed;
 2. the policies and procedures were adequate;
 3. there is a need for additional staff training;
 4. the reported event is similar to past events with the children or the services involved; and
 5. there is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of children in care.

Primary and secondary person or position to ensure reviews completed

- The internal review will be completed by Education Director. If this individual is involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment, Executive Director will be responsible for completing the internal review.

Documentation of internal review

- **The facility must document completion of the internal review and make internal reviews accessible to the commissioner immediately upon the commissioner's request.**

Corrective Action Plan

- **Based on the results of the internal review, the license holder must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent lapses in performance by individuals or the license holder, if any.**