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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

TOWPATH TRAIL YMCA CHILDCARE PARENT HANDBOOK



TOWPATH TRAIL YMCA CHILD CARE PROGRAM

1226 Market Street NE

Navarre, OH 44662

(330) 879-0800

Dear Parents / Guardians:

We would like to welcome you and your child and/or children to the Towpath Trail YMCA's Child Care and School-Age program. This handbook contains information regarding our program and policies. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it handy as long as your child is enrolled in the program. It will answer many questions you may have about the YMCA Child Care program.

Our program is licensed through the Department of Jobs and Family Services. We have voluntarily opted to strive for a more qualified Child Care Program by incorporating additional standards to achieve Step-Up-To-Quality Star status. Step-Up-To-Quality is a three star rating program that is a guide to improving child care programs throughout the state. Centers usually apply for one star at a time. We have now achieved a Star 2 rating for our center. Our ratios have been lowered and teacher qualifications have increased to meet the Star 2 status.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

The YMCA has a mission to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all participants. Our goal, as an organization and as a quality child care, is to support and strengthen the family and to help children develop to their fullest potential. We strive to achieve this goal in an environment that is positive, safe, supportive, and nurturing and we are deeply committed to providing quality care for all children regardless of social-economic background.

At the YMCA, we understand that each child develops at his or her own rate, in his or her own unique way. We are committed to providing your child with a program that not only meets the developmental needs of his or her age group, but a program that meets the needs of your child as an individual. Each child's individuality is respected and children are encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings as they try new things, grow, and experience the world around them.

Our School-Age program strives to embody the YMCA mission by providing children with a well-rounded program. The program includes daily art projects, daily games and active play in the gym, homework time, and a great selection of games and toys. The staff is a team of quality caregivers who model Christian values, provide developmentally appropriate guidance and activities, and promote healthy, positive interactions.

ADMISSIONS

To enroll your child and/or children in the Pre-School or School-Age Child Care Program you must complete an enrollment packet. You may obtain an enrollment packet at either the front desk or from a child care staff member. The packet must be completed and returned along with a registration fee, BEFORE your child may attend the YMCA child care program. This packet includes a health and enrollment form prescribed by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The Towpath Trail YMCA provides pre-school child care daily from 6 AM- 6 PM throughout the school year. This program also runs throughout the summer months. It closes only on dates announced by the YMCA in advance and for holidays.

There are pre-school only classes for 3 and 4 year olds on Tuesday and Thursday and for 4 and 5 year olds on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The AM schedule runs from 8:45 – 11:15 and the PM schedule runs 12:15 – 2:45. This program runs through-out the school year only. The preschool follows the Fairless Local School District schedule. If Fairless Local Schools are closed the pre-school program is closed. This includes when the school district closes for inclement weather.

The Towpath Trail YMCA provides before and after school care Monday through Friday. Before school care begins at 6:00 AM and continues up until the time your child leaves for school. After school care begins from the time your child gets off the bus from school until 6:00 PM. In addition to before and after school care, we provide parents with all day child care, on days that the Fairless Local School District is closed. Child care for school-age children attending other schools will not be available if Fairless Local School District is NOT closed. If Fairless Local is closed, and your child's district is closed, children are able to attend our child care for the day. All paper work must be complete and up-to-date. The days available for extended care include snow days, some of Christmas Break, Spring Break, Teacher In-Service days and throughout the summer. On these days, YMCA child care begins at 6:00 AM and ends at 6:00 PM.

During the summer and other times when school is not in session, the children will follow a varied schedule that includes regular field trips, special activities and projects, in addition to arts and crafts, games and gym time. The program will include water play and / or swimming and walking to the park on a regular basis. The schedule will vary on a day to day basis, but parents will receive a weekly newsletter /schedule as a reminder and/or any changes or updates.

Children will be separated into groups according to ages and numbers of students. Each group will have a different schedule designed to meet the developmental needs of the group. Dedicated staff members will be assigned to the groups. Each group will have a designated area and will rotate the used of shared space during the course of the day.

The YMCA child care program does NOT provide services on the following days: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve. This includes child care, school-age and all pre-school programs.

PAYMENT POLICY

Payment is due one week in advance for the days your child is scheduled to attend. It is important that you notify us of your child's schedule in advance. You can notify us of your child's schedule for the upcoming week by filling out the form, over the phone, or in person. You may fax their schedule to the Child Care Director at 330 – 879 – 0400. An email may be sent to adoubledee@weststarky.org.

SCHEDULES

Schedules for pre-school and school-age children must be turned in to the YMCA one week in advance. If there is no schedule given, the YMCA will assume your child is coming and you will be charged for that day whether they are there or not.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

If you participate in the Child Care Assistance program offered through Jobs and Family Services, your weekly co-payment is due every Friday. If you do not qualify for this assistance and require a special payment arrangement or financial aid, please see the Child Care Director.

LATE FEES

Our Child Care program closes promptly at 6:00 PM each evening. If your child has not been picked up by that time, you will be charged a \$5.00 late fee. An additional \$5.00 charge will be added for every 15 minutes, or portion of, your child remains at the center past 6:00 PM.

CALLING YOUR CHILD OFF

If your child will not be attending the program on a day that he or she is scheduled to attend, you **MUST** call the YMCA at 330-879-0800 by 8:00 AM. You will still be charged for that day but not charged a call off fee. If your child does not come and you do not call him or her off, you will be charged for that day and \$5.00 extra.

WITHDRAWING YOUR CHILD

If, at any time, you wish to withdraw your child, on a temporary or permanent basis, you must notify the YMCA and complete a withdrawal form at least one week in advance. If you have not signed a withdrawal form, you will continue to be charged your current fee for your child's scheduled days. You will be charged a fee to withdraw at the time of the notice.

TAX ID

The YMCA's Tax ID number is available upon request.

SUPERVISION POLICY

Staff / Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size

The YMCA Child Care program will maintain the state required ratio and the ratio for the Step-Up-To Quality Star rating the center has achieved. In accordance with state requirements, the YMCA will maintain maximum group sizes for designated areas in the facilities. Maximum group size is defined by the number of children that can be cared for at any time in one room or area. Group size limitations do not apply during lunch time, snack time, outdoor play, or special activities and field trips. Staff members will increase each time the group reaches the maximum number of students for a staff member.

Supervision / Ratios

- 1 to 10 Three Year Olds
- 1 to 12 Four / Five Year Olds
- 1 to 16 School-Age
- 14 Limit Pre-school Room
- 24 Limit Daycare Room
- 24 Limit Playground

CHILD SUPERVISION POLICY

In order to ensure that children are supervised at all times, children are **NOT** permitted to be in any area of the room or building where they cannot be seen and heard by a child care staff member regardless of the child's age. The only exception to this rule is when children are in the bathroom. At all other times, children will be supervised by the child care staff.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICY

When dropping off or picking up your child, you are required to sign your child in or out upon entering the YMCA. A staff member will sign the child in when he / she enters the classroom. CHILDREN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER THE CHILD CARE CLASSROOM OR SCHOOL-AGE AREA IN THE MORNING WITHOUT AN ADULT. This policy is implemented to assure the safety of your child by the provided supervision. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children prior to signing them in for the morning, and after signing them out in the evening.

POLICY FOR DETERMINING THE WHEREABOUTS OF ABSENT CHILDREN

If your child will not be attending on a day he or she is scheduled to attend, you must call the YMCA at 330-879-0800 by 8:00 AM to call your child off for that day. If your child does not get off the bus on a day that he or she is scheduled to attend AFTER SCHOOL CARE and has not been called off, the child care staff will attempt to determine the whereabouts of your child. A child care staff member will try to reach a parent or guardian by phone, to confirm that the child is safe. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the child care staff will call the persons listed by the child's parent or guardian as authorized pickups and emergency contacts. The staff will also call the child's school and the bus garage as needed. The child care staff will leave detailed messages at all numbers and will continue to call until the child's whereabouts are determined. In the event that the staff is still unable to confirm the whereabouts of a child after calling all the child's contacts, his or her school, and the bus garage, AND a time period of twenty-five minutes or more has elapsed since the child failed to get off the bus, the police will be notified and the child will be reported missing. This policy is implemented for the safety of your child.

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

A child may be released only to those persons authorized by the child's parent or guardian in the child's enrollment packet. A child may be released to a person not listed as an authorized pick-up ONLY if the parent or guardian of the child provides the child care staff with a written statement, signed and dated, granting such a person permission to pick up the child on a specific date or dates in advance. A person not authorized in the enrollment packet may ONLY pick up the child on the dates specified in writing by the parent or guardian. Parents or guardians may authorize by fax ONLY if the fax is written, signed, and dated by the parent or guardian. If a parent wishes to permanently add or remove a person from his or her child's regular pick-up list, the child's enrollment packet may be amended or updated in person at any time.

SAFE TRANSPORTATION

For the safety of your child, the child care staff will NOT release a child to any person or persons who appear to be intoxicated or otherwise impaired. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home safely. In the case of parents or guardians police will be notified if necessary.

PHOTO ID

Anyone picking up a child must be prepared to show a photo ID, including the child's parents or guardians. Any person unknown to the child care staff on duty MUST show a valid photo ID, and authorized to pick up the child. Any person unable to produce a photo ID will NOT be permitted to leave with a child until their identity has been confirmed.

CUSTODY AGREEMENTS

If there are any custody agreements/issues that staff should be aware of, please notify the child care director immediately and provide appropriate court documentation. The YMCA is not permitted to deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.

HEALTH / SAFETY PRACTICES

MEALS AND SNACKS

Children may bring breakfast if they arrive before 7:30 AM. Breakfast is a very important meal for your child. Please make sure that you include three out of the four food groups in your child's breakfast. We want to encourage you to give your child the full nutritional value to start their day.

When parents or guardians pack their child's lunch it must contain foods from the four food groups. The four food groups are meat/meat alternative, bread/grains, fruit/vegetable, and milk. If juice is sent in your child's lunch, it must be 100% fruit juice. The YMCA encourages parents to not include fried or processed foods in their child's lunch. As a child care center, the YMCA is required to have foods from these four groups available in case lunch is not brought or does not meet the mandated nutritional requirements. If we have to offer your child a missing item from their lunch, you will be charged.

The YMCA does not provide lunches during the school year. If the food program for summer camp is utilized it is in the summer only. During the first and last weeks of summer camp children must bring a packed lunch. Parents are not charged for the summer camp lunches, but must send a packed lunch if your child will not eat the scheduled lunch for that day. When sending a packed lunch in the summer, it is best not to send warm-ups since children often eat outside.

Day Care children will be provided breakfast between the hours of 8:00 and 9:00 AM and a snack in the afternoon. Parents may be asked to provide items to insure a healthy snack.

Snacks for the pre-school program are at the discretion of the teacher.

School-Age children will be given a snack after arriving from the bus. Parents may be asked to provide items to insure a healthy snack.

MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESSES

The YMCA provides children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we realize that children become ill from time to time. Please do not send your child to the YMCA if he or she is ill. If a child is

suspected of having a communicable disease, a staff member will immediately notify a parent/guardian or emergency contact of the child's condition. A child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated from the other children and discharged to the parent/guardian or emergency contact:

- Temperature of 100 degrees F in combination with any other signs of illness
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period)
- Severe coughing (causing child to become red in the face or make a whooping sound)
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
- Untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine or gray or white stools
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
- Vomiting more than once or when accompanied by any other sign of illness
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms and the parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in center activities, the parent will be called to pick up the child. Anytime a child is isolated, he or she will be kept within sight and hearing of a childcare staff member. The cot and any linens or blankets used will be washed and disinfected before being used again. A child discharged for illness may return to the center after 24 hours of being symptom free. If the child is not symptom free, a doctor's note will be requested stating that the child is not contagious.

PARENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED IF THEIR CHILD HAS BEEN EXPOSED TO A COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS.

MEDICATIONS

The YMCA will administer medications to a child only after the parent/guardian has completed a Request for Medication form. All proper sections of the form must be completed and the parent must hand the medication to a child care staff member. Medications will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children, and taken on field trips in the first aid kit when needed. Medications may NOT be stored in the child's backpack, purse, or anywhere else where other children may have access to it.

PRESCRIPTION medications must be in their original containers and administered in accordance with the instructions on the label. Over the counter medications must also be administered in accordance to label instructions. If a parent requests any different dosages or uses, a physician must provide written instructions on the Request for Medication form. Over the counter medication will not be administered for more than three days without instructions from a physician.

The only exception to this requirement is school-age children that require the immediate use of an inhaler for a medical condition. School-age children will be permitted to maintain control of their inhalers, if a parent/guardian signs a release form stating that they are permitting their child to have access to the inhaler at all times. The child must keep the inhaler on his or her person at all times. The inhaler may NOT be stored in the child's backpack, purse, or anywhere else where other children may have access to it.

FOOD SUPPLEMENTS OR MODIFIED DIETS

If your child requires a food supplement or modified diet, you must secure written information from your physician regarding this matter. Please speak with the Child Care Director for more information in regards to food supplements or modified diets.

ACCIDENTS / EMERGENCIES

The YMCA has emergency procedures and policies in place and all new staff members are trained in these emergency procedures before starting work at the YMCA. Should an emergency occur while your child is in child care, staff will follow the procedures outlined below.

IN THE CASE OF A SERIOUS INCIDENT, INJURY, OR ILLNESS AFFECTING A CHILD

All staff members are trained in First Aid, Communicable Disease and are CPR certified. In the case of a minor accident/injury the childcare staff will administer basic first aid. The child's parent or guardian will be notified if indicated by the severity of the injury. In the event that a child in the care of the YMCA requires emergency medical treatment, professional consultation, or transportation for emergency medical treatment, 911 will be called and the child's parent/guardian will be immediately notified.

STAFF MAY NOT TRANSPORT CHILDREN IN THEIR VEHICLES IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.

Transportation will be provided by EMS or by the child's parent or guardian. If EMS transports your child, a child care staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records and will stay with the child until the child's parent or guardian arrives.

EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

The YMCA will not be transporting children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation due to injury, illness, or any other emergency, the emergency squad and the parent will be contacted.

PLEASE NOTE: YMCA staff members are not permitted to transport your child in personal vehicles for any reason. Parents / Guardians must attend any field trips or activities involving pre-school age children.

An incident/injury report will be completed by the child care staff and given to the person picking up the child on the day of the incident or injury, if any of the following occur:

- The child has an illness, accident, or injury that requires first aid
- The child receives a bump or blow on the head (Parents are called)

- The child has to be transported by EMS
- An unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child

If the child requires emergency transportation, the report shall be available within twenty-four hours of the incident's occurrence. The YMCA will also contact licensing personnel from the appropriate Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services office within twenty-four hours when there is a "general emergency" or "serious incident, injury or illness." The report will be provided to licensing staff within three days of the incident's occurrence.

SUMMER CAMP FIELD TRIPS

Transportation for field trips will normally be provided by a bus rental with a bus driver, who has a CDL, from the contracted school or company. Campers will also regularly be walking to nearby parks or other locations. Parents and guardians will be informed prior to any field trip how children are being transported. Under no circumstances will children leave the YMCA without written parental consent. To ensure that children are accounted for at all times during field trips, each staff member will have specific children that he or she is responsible for supervising during the trip. Each staff member will carry both a group roster and a field trip check list for that group. On the field trip check list, additional counts will be taken of all the children prior to leaving the center, on the bus both ways, upon arrival at the field trip destination, at intervals during the field trip, upon leaving the destination, and upon arriving back at the center.

SWIMMING INFORMATION

School-Age children will have the opportunity to swim one day a week after school and on school days off and snow days.. During swim time there will be AT LEAST one life guard on duty for every 35 children in the pool area. There will also be AT LEAST one child care staff member on duty for every 15 children in the pool area. The child care staff will actively supervise the children in the pool. There is a written swim permission form included in the enrollment packet for summer camp and before and after school program. Before your child may participate in swimming activities, he or she must have written permission from a parent or guardian on file. Also, please remember to send your child with a bathing suit and towel.

SUNSCREEN

In order for your child to apply sunscreen during child care, a parent or guardian must complete a Request for Medication form. Sunscreen will be provided by the YMCA unless your child has special needs and will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children. It will be taken on walks and field trips as needed. Sunscreen may NOT be stored in a child's backpack or purse. Children may apply their own sunscreen with adult supervision. Child care staff members will help any child that needs assistance applying his or her sunscreen appropriately.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Research has shown that children stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play. Based on this information and state requirements, the YMCA will provide opportunity for outdoor play on a daily basis as the weather allows. Outdoor play will NOT be provided when the temperature drops below 32 degrees or above 90 degrees. Consideration will also be taken in regard to humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, and pollen count. The children will not be provided with outdoor play if the weather conditions are deemed unsafe. The children will also remain inside if it is raining, hailing, or if the ground is icy. The safety of the children is our utmost concern. On days when outdoor play cannot be provided, the children will be provided with opportunities for large motor play in the gym or the all-purpose room.

PLEASE SEND YOUR CHILD WITH PROPER OUTDOOR CLOTHING AS NEEDED, INCLUDING SWEATERS, COATS/JACKETS, HATS, GLOVES/MITTENS, AND SNOW BOOTS.

GUIDANCE POLICY

At the YMCA, your child will always be treated with respect. We believe that treating children with respect teaches them to respect others. We also believe that helping children learn self-control is important. Children will have clear, age-appropriate, expectations for their behavior while at the YMCA. The child care staff will use positive reinforcement and positive re-direction to encourage and help children meet these expectations whenever possible. When necessary, children may be asked to sit out from an activity, for an age appropriate period of time. Staff will be consistent, caring, and fair when giving consequences.

In the event that a child is having difficulty meeting expectations on a regular basis, has been fighting, or has used derogatory or disrespectful words, the child's parent or guardian will be notified in writing. If needed, a meeting may be set up with the child, his or her parent / guardian, and the child care staff to discuss possible solutions. If indicated, an individual behavior plan will be implemented. Every attempt will be made to work together with the parents and the child to correct the behavior. However the safety of the children is always our primary concern. If a situation arises where a child is consistently endangering him or herself, peers, or staff, or is behaving inappropriately in any way (including derogatory remarks) that causes harm to another individual, it may be necessary to suspend or disenroll the child from the program.

All the specifications in Rule 5101:2-12-22 of the Ohio Administrative Code applies to all persons in the center at all times.

IN THE CASE OF A FIRE

In the event of a fire, children will be instructed to drop what they are doing and get in line quickly and quietly. Child care staff members will take their attendance sheets with them. One staff member will lead the children out of the building in an orderly fashion via the appropriate fire escape route and take them to the park. One staff member will follow the last child out of the room or area. Staff members will check that no children are in the bathrooms and the last staff member out of the room will turn off

the lights and shut the windows and doors. When the children are out of the building and removed to a safe spot, the child care staff will do a head count and take attendance to confirm that no child has been left in the building. Children will participate in monthly fire drills and will be aware of the procedures followed in the event of a fire.

IN THE CASE OF A TORNADO

In the event of a tornado, children will be taken to the ladies locker room. Children will be instructed to kneel down facing the wall, put their heads down, and cover the backs of their necks with their hands, as practiced in tornado drills. Staff members will take their attendance sheets with them and confirm that all children are present. Children will participate in tornado drills at intervals throughout the year and will be aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a tornado.

IN THE CASE OF LOSS OF POWER, HEAT, OR WATER

In the event that the YMCA loses power, heat, or water, staff will evaluate whether or not power, heat or water will be working again shortly, confirm whether or not the phones are working, and assess any possible danger to the children. If the power is out, the emergency lights will come on and there is a flashlight in the first aid bag located in each room and/or area. In a power outage, staff will remain calm and instruct all children to sit down quietly to ensure that children do not sustain injury while moving or playing in the dim light. Bathrooms will be checked and all children will be accounted for. If it is determined that power, heat, or water will not be restored soon, parents, guardians, or emergency numbers will be contacted and asked to pick up their children and the program will close for the remainder of the day. Child care staff will remain at the site until all children are picked up by a parent, guardian, or other authorized person.

IN THE CASE OF A BOMB THREAT OR ANY OTHER THREAT REQUIRING EVACUATION

If the safety of the children is threatened by a bomb threat, or any other threat that requires the evacuation of the building, the children will be taken to the southwest corner of the building. The child care staff members will ensure that children are all accounted for and evacuated in an orderly fashion. The staff will wait there for emergency personnel to arrive and tell us if evacuation is needed. If it is needed, the children will be transported by Sarta busses to the Navarre Civic Center at 99 W. Canal. Parents and family members may pick up the children there. Child care staff members will bring the attendance records.

ANY OTHER THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN

If the safety of the children is threatened in any way, the childcare staff will follow the procedures outlined in the emergency plans and procedures. Staff members will use common sense, stay calm, ensure that all children in the care of the center are accounted for, adequately supervised, and removed from or protected against any threat to their safety. The Executive Director, Associate Executive Director, or Staff Director on duty will be notified. Emergency contacts will be made if indicated by the

threat to 911 and parents or guardians. In the event a parent or guardian cannot be reached the child's emergency contacts will be notified.

PARENT PARTICIPATION / PARENT CONCERNS

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate whenever possible and have access to all areas of the building used for child care during hours of operation. Please feel free to approach any child care staff member, or the Child Care Director, with any and all comments, questions, or concerns regarding your child and his or her child care experience at the YMCA. The child care staff is available to discuss any concerns you may have, but due to staff responsibilities, we ask parents to make appointments when it is necessary to engage in any lengthy conversations. You may make an appointment by speaking directly to the on-duty staff, the director, or make an appointment over the phone.

BABYSITTING POLICY

We do not encourage staff to baby-sit in the homes of our families. If you would still like to have a staff member baby-sit for you, you will need to sign a HOLD HARMLESS CONSENT form before the staff can baby-sit in your home.

Handbook Revised August 2014

