



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# Parent and Policy Handbook

## **Silver Bay YMCA Ticonderoga Community Early Learning Center**

64 Amherst Avenue  
Ticonderoga, NY 12883  
(518) 585-7433

Revised 8/10/2024

**Dear Parents/Guardians:**

Welcome to the Ticonderoga Community Early Learning Center and School-Age Program!

This Handbook contains important information regarding our program and policies. As your child is enrolled, it is very important that you read the entire Handbook. Please keep it handy as a reference to answer many questions that you may have about the Program.

Finally, it is important to note that our program is licensed through the New York State Office of Children and Families.

Sincerely,

Jackie Palandrani,  
Education Director

## **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 childcare provider, 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. 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 and 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, games, active play and homework time. We have a large selection of toys and games for your children to enjoy. The staff is a team of quality caregivers who model our values, provide developmentally appropriate guidance and activities, and promote healthy and positive interactions.

## **REGISTRATION**

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 the enrollment packet at the front desk, from a childcare staff member, or by visiting [www.silverbay.org](http://www.silverbay.org).

The packet must be completed and returned along with the registration fee, *before* your child is able to attend the childcare program.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

### **The Early Learning Center:**

The Ticonderoga Community Early Learning Center provides childcare on Monday through Friday from 6:30 am – 6:00 pm throughout the school year. This program also runs throughout the summer months. The Center will announce, in advance, any closures for holidays or inclement weather so that you may make alternate childcare arrangements.

The Ticonderoga Community Early Learning Center provides care for children from the age of *6 weeks old* to *5 years old* in our early learning classrooms. Children will be grouped in classrooms based on age and developmental progress. Classrooms will be staffed with a combination of licensed teachers, certified assistant teachers and aides. Children will have a full day of developmental learning activities appropriate for their age.

### **The School Age Program: Coming Soon!**

The School Age Program operates during the regular school year and will follow the Ticonderoga Central School calendar. The Program will operate a before- and after-school program during regularly scheduled school days we In addition to the positive social engagement your children will enjoy, we will also provide healthy snacks. Additionally, we will operate a full-day program during school vacations, breaks (excluding summer break), and school closures. The Program will only close on dates announced in advance by the Center for holidays and/or inclement weather.

Days available for “extended care” at the Center will include snow days, part of the Winter/Christmas Break, Spring Break, in-service days for teachers, and the summer break. During these days, childcare will begin at 6:30 am and will end at 6:00 pm.

During times when school is not in session, children will follow a varied schedule that includes special activities, projects, arts and crafts, games, and field trips. Water play and outdoor activities will be scheduled, as appropriate.

The activity schedule will vary daily, and parents will receive a weekly newsletter as a reminder of changes or updates.

Children will be separated into small groups according to their age, and each group will have a different schedule designed to meet the developmental needs of the group. Dedicated staff members will be assigned to each group, and each group will have a designated space. Groups may rotate shared space during the day.

**Closures**

The pre-school, childcare and school-age programs will not provide services on the following days: New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year’s Eve.

**TUITION COSTS AND FEES**

The registration fee is \$25.00, per child. Rates are subject to change without notice. Please contact the Childcare Center at (518) 586-1010 to inquire about current costs and fees.

**Tuition Cost for the Day Care Program:**

<b><u>Group:</u></b>	<b><u>Five Days</u></b>	<b><u>Four Days</u></b>	<b><u>Three Days</u></b>	<b><u>Two Days</u></b>
Infants	\$365.00	\$315.00	\$265.00	\$215.00
Toddlers	\$345.00	\$295.00	\$245.00	\$195.00
Preschoolers	\$325.00	\$275.00	\$225.00	\$175.00

**Tuition Cost for the Before/After-School Care Program:**

Full-time	4 – 5 days, per week	\$60.00 per day
Part-time	1 – 3 days, per week	\$45.00 per day

If your child stays in the program for a full day due to school cancellation or closure, there will be an additional per day fee of \$25.00.

## **PAYMENT POLICY**

Payment is due one week in advance for the days your child is scheduled to attend. Childcare costs are *not* pro-rated for missed days. In the event of a medical emergency, a written note by the child's physician will be required to document the office visit. Unless there is *advance* notification of the need to miss a payment, you risk the loss of childcare. Payments which are more than two calendar weeks delinquent will result in an auto-termination from the program.

Please speak with the Center Director if you are experiencing difficulty in meeting the payment schedule. We may be able to provide a payment option to help keep your payments current.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

If you do not qualify for financial assistance and require a special payment arrangement or financial aid, please see the Childcare Director.

## **LATE FEES**

Our Childcare Program will close 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 thereof, that your child remains at the Center past 6:00 pm.

## **IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT...**

If your child will *not* be attending the program on a day they are scheduled to attend, you *must* notify the Center by calling the office at (518) 585-7433 no later than 8:00 am. While you will still be charged for the day, you will avoid a call-out fee of \$5.00 if you call your child "out."

If your child does not attend *and* you do not notify the Center, you will be charged an additional \$5.00 for the day.

## **WITHDRAWING FROM THE PROGRAM**

If you wish to withdraw your child from the Program on a temporary or permanent basis, you must notify the Center *and* complete a withdrawal form. Notification must occur at least *two* weeks in advance of the withdrawal date. If you have not signed a withdrawal form, you will continue to be charged for your child's scheduled days. You will be charged a fee of \$50 to withdraw at the time of the notice.

## **TAX ID**

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

## **SUPERVISION POLICIES**

### **Staff/Child Ratios and Group Size**

The Childcare Program will maintain the state required ratios for childcare. In accordance with state requirements, the Center will maintain maximum group sizes for designated areas in the facility. Maximum group size is defined by the number of children who can be cared for at any time in one room or area. Staff members will increase when the group reaches the maximum number of children for a staff member. Group size limitations do not apply during lunch/snack time, outdoor play, special activities, or field trips.

### **Staff/Child Ratios**

- 1:4 ratio for children 6 weeks to 18 mos. old: Max. group size is 8
- 1:5 ratio for children 18 mos. to 3 years old: Max. group size is 12
- 1:7 ratio for children 3 years old: Max. group size is 18
- 1:8 ratio for children 4 years old: Max. group size is 21
- 1:9 ratio for children 5 years old: Max. group size is 24
- 1:10 ratio for children 6 to 9 years old: Max. group size is 20

- 1:15 ratio for children 10 to 12 years old: Max. group size is 30

### **Room Capacity**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
Infant Room	8
Toddler Room	12
Mixed Pre-School Room	18
Daycare Room	24
Playground	24

### **CHILD SUPERVISION POLICY**

To ensure that children are always supervised, children will not be permitted to be in any room of the building where they cannot be seen and heard by a childcare 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 childcare staff.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICY**

When dropping off or picking up your child, you will be required to sign your child in or out upon entering the Center. A staff member will sign the child in when he/she enters the classroom. *Children will not be permitted to enter a childcare classroom or school-age area in the morning without an adult.* This policy is implemented to assure the safety of your child, as provided by Center 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.

### **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 Center no later than 8:00 am to report your child "out" for



the day. If your child does not get off the bus on the day that he or she is scheduled to attend the After-School Care program and has not been called out, the childcare staff will attempt to determine the whereabouts of the child. A childcare staff member will reach out to the parent or guardian by phone to confirm that the child is safe. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the childcare 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 bus garage, as needed.

The childcare staff will leave detailed messages at all numbers and will continue to call until the child's whereabouts are determined. If staff is still unable to confirm the whereabouts of a child after calling all the child's contacts, school, and bus garage, and twenty-five minutes or more have elapsed since the child failed to get off the bus, the police will be notified, and the child will be reported as 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, per 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 childcare 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. Parents or guardians may authorize by fax, 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 childcare 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 safely transport the child home. 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 childcare staff on duty must show a valid photo ID and authorization 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 Childcare Director immediately and provide appropriate court documentation. The Center 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 Center encourages parents not to include fried or processed foods in their child's lunch. As a childcare center, we are 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 Center will provide meals to all children in our early learning programs, including breakfast, lunch and snack. These meals will be compliant with

CACFP nutrition guidelines. Alternative meal options are available to those families who need accommodations (such as lactose free milk). Meal accommodation must be in writing and approved by the Center.

The Center does not provide lunch during the school year for school-age children, except during full days. We will provide breakfast for before-school participants, and snacks for after-school participants.

## **MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS**

The Center 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 Center 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 the 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 if 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 Center 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 childcare 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 only be stored in the child's backpack or purse if they are authorized to carry it. Medications will not be stored anywhere where other children may gain 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 with 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 without instructions from a physician.

The only exception to this requirement is for school-age children who require the immediate use of an inhaler or epi-pen for a medical condition. School-age children will be permitted to maintain control of their inhaler or epi-pen, if a parent/guardian signs a release form stating that they are permitting their child to always have access to it. The child must always keep the device on their person. The device may *not* be stored in the child's backpack, purse,

or anywhere else where other children may access it.

## **FOOD SUPPLEMENTS OR MODIFIED DIETS**

If your child requires a food supplement or modified diet, you must provide written information from your physician regarding this matter. Please speak with the Childcare Director for more information about food supplements or modified diets.

## **ACCIDENTS/EMERGENCIES**

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

## **IN CASE OF SERIOUS INCIDENT, INJURY, OR ILLNESS**

All staff members are trained in CPR/First Aid/AED. 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. If a child in the care of the Center 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.

## **EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION**

The Center will not transport children in emergency situations, including injury or illness. In an emergency, the emergency squad and the parent will be contacted. Transportation will be provided by EMS or the child's parent or guardian. If EMS transports your child, a childcare 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.

**Note:** Center 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 childcare staff and given to the person picking up the child on the day of the incident or injury, if any of the following has occurred:

- The child has an illness, accident, or injury that requires first aid.
- If the child receives a bump/blow on the head, parents will be called.
- The child must be transported by EMS.
- An unusual/unexpected event occurs, jeopardizing the child's safety.

If the child requires emergency transportation, a report shall be available within twenty-four hours of the incident's occurrence. The Center will also contact licensing personnel from the appropriate New York State Office of Children and Family Services 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.

## **SUNSCREEN**

For your child to apply sunscreen during childcare, a parent or guardian must complete a *Request for Medication form*. Sunscreen will be provided by the Center unless your child has special needs; it will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children. Sunscreen 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. Childcare staff members will help any child who needs assistance to apply 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 Center will provide opportunities for outdoor play daily as the weather allows. Outdoor play will *not* be provided when the temperature drops below 32 degrees or goes above 90 degrees. Consideration will also be taken concerning humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, and pollen count. If weather conditions are deemed unsafe, children will not have outdoor play. Children will also remain inside if it is raining, hailing, or if the ground is icy. The safety of children is our utmost concern. On days when outdoor play cannot be provided, children will be provided with opportunities for large motor play in the all-purpose room.

*Note:* Please send your child with proper outdoor clothing, as needed, including sweaters, coats/jackets, hats, gloves, mittens, and snow boots.

## **GUIDANCE POLICY**

At the Center, 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 Center. The childcare 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.

If 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 childcare 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 children is always our primary concern. If a situation arises where a child is consistently endangering self, 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 unenroll the child from the program.

### **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. Childcare 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 designated meeting place (Ticonderoga High School or Ticonderoga Armory). One staff member will follow the last child out of the room or area. Staff members will check that no children are in bathrooms, and the last staff member out of the room will turn off the lights and shut windows and doors. When the children are out of the building and moved to a safe spot, childcare staff will 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 first-floor main hallway. Children will be instructed to kneel, face 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 the 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**

Center classrooms are outfitted with cellular phones. If the Center loses power, heat, or water, staff will evaluate whether power, heat or water will be working again shortly, confirm whether the phones are working, and assess any possible danger to the children. If the power is out, 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 quietly to ensure that they do not sustain injury while moving or playing in 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. Childcare 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 OTHER THREATS 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 Ticonderoga High School and/or the Ticonderoga Armory. Childcare staff members will ensure that children are all accounted for and evacuated in an orderly fashion. Staff will wait there for emergency personnel to arrive and to indicate if evacuation is needed. Parents and family members may pick up their children. Childcare staff members will bring attendance records.

## **IN THE CASE OF OTHER THREATS TO THE SAFETY OF 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 Vice President of Programs, the Education Director, and "on-duty staff" will be notified of any threat to the safety of the children. Parents and guardians will be notified to pick up their child, if warranted by the nature of the threat. In the event a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the child's emergency contact(s) will be notified.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION/PARENT CONCERNS**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate whenever possible. Please feel free to approach any childcare staff member, or the Child Care Director, with all comments, questions, or concerns regarding your child and his or her childcare experience at the Center. The childcare staff is available to discuss any concerns you may have. Due to staff responsibilities, we ask parents to make appointments when it is necessary to engage in any lengthy conversation. You may make an appointment by speaking directly to the on-duty staff, the director, or make an appointment over the phone.

## **BABYSITTING POLICY**

It is against Center policy for staff to babysit children who are in our programs or members of our families.

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