

# **St James Preschool Child Care Programs West Portage**



YMCA - YWCA  
WINNIPEG

We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.

## **Parent Policy Manual**

Revised April 2011

**The YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg is a charitable organization whose purpose is to foster the growth and development of people and communities in spirit, mind and body.**

Thank you for choosing the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg's Preschool Child Care Program. We are the largest child care provider in Manitoba, and quality care is important to us. We believe sustaining a healthy partnership between your family and our child care providers is fundamental to your child's development. We understand parents need to have peace of mind, knowing their children are in a safe, nurturing environment that fosters healthy development.

### **Our Philosophy**

We believe children of all abilities learn most effectively through play. All children participate in regular activities and routines. Our goal is to provide the guidance and stimulation required by all children to make their choice of activities, and allow them to experience the world around them. We encourage language, problem-solving and decision-making with the emphasis on feelings, thoughts and ideas.

The two basic rules within our centres are people are to be respected and property is to be cared for.

In order for all children to learn, they must first feel good about themselves and feel confident in their abilities. We strive to provide a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences that are designed to encourage all children to have the confidence to successfully face new challenges.

Dedicated to quality service, our focus is on the family and the importance of providing a stimulating, nurturing and secure environment – a place for your child to learn and grow. To support families, consultation with early intervention professions is another avenue we may access.

The child care centre abides by a written code of conduct which is posted in all centres.

### **Our Values**

YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg Child Care Programs have a unique set of beliefs. We believe:

- Children have a right to a secure and enriching environment that fosters cognitive, social, emotional and physical development
- Parents have a right to pursue education, job opportunities and personal growth, knowing that their children are cared for in safe and dependable arrangements. Our child care centres are based on the YMCA-YWCA program core values of caring, equality, health, honesty, inclusiveness, respect and responsibility.

### **Inclusion Policy**

Our goal is to be inclusive for all children in providing appropriate group experiences in a child centred environment.

Children of all abilities are accepted into the program. The waiting list identifies children with additional support needs to ensure supports are in place upon enrolment.

Through observation we identify the abilities and needs of all children and, should concerns arise, we will consult with support agencies. Goals are implemented based on the individual child's needs and development and are carried out throughout the day. Experiences with peers and staff are provided for indoor and outdoor activities. Field trips are planned to accommodate all children. We limit the number of large group activities throughout the day to allow all children to actively participate in the experiences provided.

We arrange our learning environments so all children can reach and use materials independently and furnishings can be adapted as a child's needs dictate.

Staff communicate daily with parents to share information about the child's day. We respect and value input from parents and encourage them to be part of the decision making process for their child. Meetings are set up with family members based on the parents' schedule. Together with outside support agencies we learn and implement techniques.

### **Our Goals and Objectives**

To assist each child to develop a sense of dignity and self-worth by:

- providing a wide variety of social activities and learning experiences that encourage the development of self-confidence and the ability to get along with others
- building warm relationships of trust between staff and children.

To assist each child to improve his or her cognitive skills by providing:

- a variety of developmentally-appropriate educational and life experiences
- a stimulating space, equipment and resources
- creative activities that develop verbal skills, self-discipline, decision-making and problem solving.

To enhance family life by providing:

- opportunities for family involvement and input.

To assist each child to maintain good health and develop his or her physical skills by providing:

- an environment free from health and safety hazards
- health, nutrition and parenting information to families
- nutritious snacks
- daily periods of developmentally appropriate physical activity.

### **Staff**

Staff are trained in First Aid and CPR. Criminal Record and Child Abuse Registry searches are carried out. Training opportunities are offered to our staff annually to enhance their knowledge of child development and inclusion.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to be actively involved in supporting their child's centre. Opportunities for participation include assisting with special events or excursions, fundraising and Parent Advisory meetings. Parents/guardians can also provide support by helping collect materials or items for crafts or events. All efforts benefit the children and are greatly appreciated.

### **Eligibility**

Infants must be between the ages of eighteen months and two years old. Preschool children must be between two and six years. Creative Play and South Child Care Centres provide care to preschool children only.

Priority is given to children who attend full time; Monday - Friday inclusive. Full time is defined by the Early Learning and Child Care office as four or more hours of care.

### **Registration**

Registration will be considered complete once the following criteria have been met:

- Parent/guardian has met with the centre director/designate and shared all relevant information regarding his/her child.
- All registration forms have been completed.
- All centres require a deposit upon enrolment. The deposit is based on the amount a family pays (minimum \$50.00 to a maximum of \$188.00 per child). Deposits will be refunded if a two-week withdrawal notice is provided in writing and all child care fees owing have been paid. Should a deposit be taken to hold a spot for a child and the spot is not taken the deposit will be forfeited.

### **Change of Information**

It is very important that the centre has accurate work and home telephone numbers and addresses for parents and emergency contacts.

All information on your child's registration form must be accurate so that we are able to contact you or your emergency contacts. If there is information that needs to be changed a "Change of Information" form needs to be completed and handed into the office directly. Please ask a member of the Child Care Staff for the "Change of Information" form. A "Change of Information" form is the only way that information will be accepted. Any other way will be invalid and changes will not be made. We require 3 business days to make the changes to your child's file. During this 3 day period your child's group does not have your updated information. You must, therefore, make the staff aware of this new information.

### **Child Care Fees**

Child care centre fees are set by the Province of Manitoba. We have numerous payment options available. Fees include all vacation, absent and statutory holidays.

Should a cheque or pre authorized payment be rejected by your financial institution, you will be notified. Your child care fees plus a service charge will be due immediately. Families with outstanding balances will not be able to register for any YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg programs until an approved payment plan is in place. Overdue accounts will be sent to a collection agency if there is no response to our final notice for payment, and the child will be withdrawn from the program effective immediately.

We require families pay for the following statutory holidays (or day in lieu of):  
New Year's Day, Louis Riel Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday (August), Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. Centres close at an earlier time on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Our centres are open on Easter Monday and another day will be taken in lieu at a later date in order to provide a professional development day for staff. Fees will apply on that day.

### **Financial Assistance**

Early Learning and Child Care subsidy is available to children in our licensed centres. Families wishing to apply for child care subsidy should contact: Early Learning and Child Care at 102-114 Garry Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 1G1, telephone (204) 945-2197 [www.gov.mb.ca/childcare](http://www.gov.mb.ca/childcare). Subsidy application forms are available in the centres. Subsidy is provided to families according to income. It is the family's responsibility to ensure subsidy has been approved. Families will be responsible for all costs not covered by Early Learning Child Care. The centre charges subsidized families an additional \$2.00 per full day / \$1.00 per half day, in addition to the family portion stated on the subsidy approval form. An additional fee will also be charged for extended care i.e. 10 hours or more.

Early Learning and Child Care allocates approximately three days per month for sick days and vacation days (i.e. 15% of the total period of subsidy approval). If the child exceeds the allowable absent days, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the full cost of child care fees.

Given Early Learning and Child Care grants subsidy for limited periods of time, re-application by subsidized families is necessary. Subsidized parents are responsible for renewing their subsidy prior to the expiry date. Parents/guardians are responsible for full child care fees if the request for subsidy is not approved.

### **Withdrawal**

A minimum of 2 weeks paid notice in writing is required to withdraw your child's care. The deposit will be withheld if notice is not given. Notice must be given to the Child Care Director.

### **Expulsion**

In certain circumstances, we will be forced to withdraw child care services. Depending on the severity of the circumstances, notice may be waived. The following circumstances may warrant expulsion:

- Destructive or violent behaviour by the child, that is harmful to the child, staff, property or other children
- Physical, verbal or other assault or threat of assault by family member
- Consistent lateness in picking up a child
- Non-payment of child care fees (unless arrangements have been made with the Child Care Director)
- Non-compliance with the policies and procedures as outlined in this manual
- If your child has been absent from the centre for five consecutive days and you have not contacted the Child Care Director

### **Arrivals & Departures**

Children will not be accepted into care before the designated time the centre opens. You will be asked to provide us with an expected time of arrival and departure upon registration. Please inform us if your schedule changes or if your child will be arriving or leaving later than usual. Children must be signed in and out by a parent, guardian or an individual who is over 16 years of age.

Staff will not release your child to any person other than those persons listed on the registration forms unless you have made advance arrangements in writing directly with the centre. Anyone permitted to pick up a child, including the parents/guardians must bring photo identification every time they pick up. There may be a staff member on duty that is unacquainted with the person designated for pick up; in that event, the staff member is obligated to verify identity. You are responsible for ensuring anyone designated to pick up or drop off is aware of our policies.

Children must not be left unattended in a room, hallway or bathroom area. While staff may be in the room they may not be on duty and are unavailable to accept your child into their direct care. Please check with the staff to ensure you can leave your child with him/her.

Parents, guardian or designate must sign the child both in and out on the group attendance sheet when they are picking up or dropping off the child and assume responsibility of the child when in our child care facility. When you are present in the centre your child is your responsibility however, should you need to speak with the Child Care Director, you will need to identify this to staff and they will continue to assume responsibility of your child.

The school takes responsibility (where applicable) of your child once they have been met by the teacher or put on the school bus. If the centre transports your child to and from school or to and from the school bus, we assume responsibility for signing your child in or out during these times. (School Services are not available at the South Child Care).

In the event any person picking up a child is intoxicated or indicates a potential threat to the child, staff will immediately contact an alternative emergency person listed in your child's file, and request that the person immediately pick up your child. If staff are unable to reach an emergency contact, Child and Family Services will be contacted.

### **Late Policy**

The child care centre should be cleared by its closing time. Any parent/guardian or authorized person who is not out of the centre by closing time will be considered late in picking up their child (ren) and will be charged a late fee.

Please check your centre hours. If your child has not been picked up by the time the centre is scheduled to close, and we have not been notified, the following steps will be taken:

1. We will call you at home or work.
2. If we are unsuccessful at contacting you, we will call your emergency contacts.
3. Thirty minutes after closing we will contact Child and Family Services.
4. Staff will wait with your child until a social worker arrives.

A late fee of \$10.00 per child for every fifteen minutes or part thereof will be added to your monthly child care fees. If lateness persists we may ask you to make other care arrangements. Time is determined by the centre's clock.

We do not permit staff members to transport a child home under any circumstances.

### **Centre Visitations**

The centre operates with an open door policy and parents/guardians of enrolled children are welcome to visit. Parents/guardian should notify the centre prior to their visit as activities may vary from day to day and children may not be in the centre at that time.

### **Health Policy**

Unexpected illness is a great hardship for parents of children in group care. Plan ahead and have back up care for emergencies. Upon request, the centre will provide you with written documentation indicating that your child was requested to be picked up from the centre.

Our staff can only administer and manage prescription medication which is accompanied by a letter from their Doctor with specific instructions. These prescription drugs will only be administered when in the original pharmacy container, labelled with the child's name, medication name and dosage instructions. We require you sign a medication release form, which will also document when the medication is given. Any children with asthma, diabetes or allergies must have their medication at the centre at all times. All medication must be given directly to staff. It will be kept in a locked area at the centre. All of our centres are required to follow the URIS (Unified Referral Intake Service) guidelines. If your child has any medical conditions or special needs please speak to your Child Care Director before your child starts attending the program to ensure supports are in place for the first day of participation.

If your child is not well enough to participate in all the centre activities - gym, swim and outdoors - then they are too ill to be at the centre. We do not have the facilities to care for sick children. If your child becomes ill at the centre, we will contact you to pick them up. If we cannot contact you, we will contact your designated emergency contacts. If your child has a communicable disease, we are required to follow Manitoba Public Health regulations regarding incubation or isolation. A doctor's note may be required prior to return to the centre. We will post any incidences of contagious disease as required by Early Learning and Child Care.

Our health guidelines are as follows:

ILLNESS	PROCESS
Fever	If a fever reaches 38.5 C and he or she has other symptoms, the child must be picked up immediately
Diarrhea	Child will need to be picked up after the second incident in a day
Vomiting	Child will need to be picked up depending on severity
Strep Throat	Child may return after 24 hours on medication
Skin Rash	Must be diagnosed by a doctor and treatment applied before return. Doctor's note will be required to return.
Head Lice	You will be notified if there is a case of head lice. Treatment must be applied and nits must be removed before returning to centre.
Warts or open sores	May be prohibited from entering pool as per the Head Lifeguard
Conjunctivitis or Pink Eye	Child will need to be home for 24 hours and until discharge has ceased.
Chicken pox	Child is contagious prior to onset of rash. May attend if well enough to participate.

### **Accident Procedures**

We make every effort to reduce the possibility of accidents and injuries. We strive to keep children safe and their play positive; however, it is important to recognize young children are prone to scrapes and bruises. Young children function in the pre operational stage of development. Young children lack the ability or are socially unwilling to recognize the needs and rights of others. Lacking the ability to verbally express their thoughts and ideas, they use methods such as hitting or biting to communicate their feelings.

All staff are trained in First Aid and CPR. All injuries are recorded on a communication report. Parents will be informed of any injuries. If we feel the injury is severe, you will be notified immediately. If the injury is minor and requires only a Band-Aid or a hug, we will not call you but you will be notified when you pick your child up.

If an injury requires medical care, we will contact you immediately to ask that you pick up your child and take him or her to the hospital. If the injury is too severe, we will call an ambulance immediately. You will be responsible for any costs incurred. We report any injuries requiring medical care to the Early Learning and Child Care Program within 24 hours.

The Centre's Evacuation/Emergency Plan, outlining specific evacuation procedures in the event of a fire or other emergency is posted in the centre.

### **Guardian/Child Custody**

If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitations, please provide us with a copy. Unless your court order is on file with us, we must provide equal rights to both parents, this includes common law relationships.

### **Behaviour Management Policy**

Our centres recognize and respect the uniqueness of each child and we work with families to provide behaviour management strategies to create a safe, healthy and happy environment. We try to teach cooperation, responsibility and respect for self, others and our environment. We use a variety of developmentally appropriate proactive and preventative strategies to help children become self-directed and self-disciplined. Our staff members work as a team to provide consistent positive guidance to each child.

Children are given an opportunity to express themselves in a developmentally acceptable manner and they are encouraged to determine solutions to problems. Staff members assist by providing positive guidance and re-direction, and by establishing well-defined, fair and developmentally appropriate expectations.

Reasons for rules and limitations are clear and concise. When staff must intervene, they are expected to do so in a respectful manner. They are trained to clearly define the behaviour, why it was unacceptable and suggest alternate means of handling the situation. This is reinforced through consistent role-modelling and positive feedback.

Children are encouraged to recognize and verbally express their needs and emotions. If a child is unable to interact in a developmentally appropriate manner, he/she may be removed from the group for a short period of quiet time. The goal of “quiet time” is to assist the child in regaining control. Physical punishment, the denial of physical necessities and verbal/emotional abuse are not permitted under any circumstances.

We work with families as a team to promote social skill development. Please share your concerns and suggestions with us. When an incident occurs, staff will do their best to provide the family with a written report. These incident reports are signed by the parent/guardian and kept in the child’s file.

Our centres are committed to providing a safe and happy environment for all children in our care. If a child’s behaviour compromises the quality of care for children in the centre, staff members will deal with the situation in a child-sensitive manner. The goal is for the parent and the YMCA-YWCA child care staff to change the negative behaviour for the benefit of the child, other children and the staff. The Child Care Director will meet with the family to review the situation and develop a plan of action. The family may be asked to seek an assessment of their child by a Child Development Specialist, seek family counselling or other professional services or attend parenting classes. Further meetings will be scheduled to review progress as the family and staff work together to develop and implement a specific behavioural modification program. If after implementing the new strategy, there is still no change in the child’s behaviour, he/she will be withdrawn from the centre.

Any abusive, violent or aggressive behaviour that endangers the child, other children, staff, equipment, property or the facility will not be tolerated and care will be immediately withdrawn.

### **Transportation Policy (If applicable to your centre)**

The school takes responsibility of your child once they have been met by the teacher or put on the school bus. If the centre transports your child to and from school or to and from the school bus, we assume responsibility for signing your child in or out during these times.

### **Lunch and Snacks**

Please ensure your child's snack or lunch contains no nut products, or items that have been in contact with nuts.

Each centre provides morning and afternoon snacks and a beverage at lunch. Our centres are **NUT PRODUCT AWARE** – see “Centre's Additional Information” for additional allergy warnings. We do not knowingly serve nuts or nut products. We ask that you do not bring nuts or nuts products or items manufactured where nuts are used to the centre with your child.

Please ensure that you inform the centre of allergies.

Please do not send your child's lunch in a breakable container.

Lunches and snacks should be nutritionally appropriate and contain minimal 'junk food'. Early Learning and Child Care requires your child's packed lunch is to contain all four food groups. We are required to monitor your child's lunch. We will be pleased to provide you with suggestions for lunch. If a lunch or snack does contain nuts or the staff feel it is non-nutritious, it will be put away and sent back home with your child. We will provide an appropriate lunch for \$2.50, payable when the child is picked up.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

Access to a child's information record is given only to the legal guardians of the child and the staff of the centre and if applicable, the assigned Provincial Child Care Coordinator. In the case of an emergency or injury to a child, information may be released to the proper authorities, medical staff attending a child or, in the case of suspected abuse, the appropriate child protection agency.

Parents should be aware, in the case of non-payment of fees, pertinent information will be provided to an external collection agency and may be shared with other child care centres.

No other information, verbal or written, regarding a child or his/her family can be released to anyone other than the guardians of that child, without the written permission of the guardian.

Parents are responsible to update their children's files when there are changes of address, work/home phone numbers, or any new information.

In the event of research and education situations, you will be informed in advance as to the nature of the project and the extent of your child's involvement. If you wish to have your child participate in a specific study you will be required to sign a written consent.

Parents sign a general release in the registration forms giving permission for their child to be photographed by YMCA-YWCA photographers while attending the centre. Pictures may be used for promotion of the centre. If you do not want your child's picture used for promotion of the centre, please contact the Child Care Director.

### **Child Abuse**

In Manitoba it is everyone's legal obligation to protect children. The law requires that any suspicion of child abuse (neglect, emotional, physical, sexual) must be reported to Winnipeg Child and Family Services. This responsibility involves identifying and reporting a child who is/or might be in need of protection.

### **Personal Belongings**

Children must have a change of clothes in their lockers at all times. Please label all personal items with permanent marker. If something gets lost but has your child's name on it, you are apt to have it returned.

For your child's safety, fitted footwear with good grip is highly recommended for our very active program. During the summer we recommend a closed in shoe vs. sandals. Dress your child in comfortable, washable clothes. Children learn best through hands on experiences and many times those experiences are messy. Children should be dressed so they can be as self-sufficient as they are capable.

We are not responsible for lost or damaged personal items.

### **Items Needed At the Centre Daily**

- Complete change of clothing
- Seasonably appropriate clothing
- Diapers, wipes and pull-ups, where necessary (2 week supply)
- Lunch – we highly recommend an ice pack
- Shoes with a firm grip
- Swimsuit (Swimmers are required for all children who are not toilet learned)

It is not a staff's responsibility to inform you of the items your child needs to have present on a daily basis. You are responsible for checking diaper supplies and extra clothing. If your child does not have these very basics and are required on any given day, you or a contact will be called.

### **Toys from Home**

Unless the centre designates a "show and tell" experience, toys from home are not allowed. We offer a wide variety of developmentally appropriate toys. Caring and sharing of child care toys is an integral component to the program.

### **Appropriate Use of Technology**

All children, parents, staff and others involved in our centre must use e-mail, electronic devices and the Internet in accordance with our Appropriate Use of Technology policy. (Please see Code of Conduct posted in your child care centre).

### **Emergency Procedures**

All licensed child care facilities act in accordance with provincially approved Child Care Enhanced Safety Plans which govern emergency procedures specific to each of our centres. Each licensed child care program is currently operating under the provincially mandated restricting visitor access policy. A copy of the procedures is available for review at any of our licensed centres. Please check with your Child Care Director to determine where the applicable document is located. Parents, guardians or other authorized individuals are required to participate in evacuation or shelter-in-place if present during a time of emergency, or practice drill.

### **Weather Conditions**

In the event of a storm, storm warning, or other weather conditions that may cause the closure of the centre, we will make every effort to have our closure announced on radio stations. Please give the centre a phone call directly first to see if a staff member is present. If the closure occurs during the course of the day, parents will be contacted to come and pick up children or make arrangements for their children to be picked up by an alternate as soon as possible.

### **Swimming**

Swimming is an important component of our weekly child care program. Children swim for approximately 30 minutes per session. Centre staff accompany the children, meeting group ratios, in addition to the lifeguard(s) on duty. The public is not permitted into the pool we are using during our scheduled swim times. Children also have access to swim aids. After swimming, children are offered the use of cleansing products during showers, and may have the opportunity to use moisturizers and hair products during the dressing process.

### **Nap**

Children will have the opportunity to nap after lunch if a parent requests it. Any child who remains awake after a half hour will be able to get up and participate in quiet activities. Please check with the Centre Director regarding requirements for provision of bedding.

### **Outdoor Attire and Play**

Our centres provide opportunities for outdoor play unless temperatures or wind chill factors drop below -25 C, or if the weather is similarly inclement. (eg. extreme heat, thunderstorm, etc.) We recommend children be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions of the day. The Centre provides SP30 or greater sunscreen as well as mosquito repellent for outdoor play. For your child's safety and comfort, we recommend a well fitted hat and closed shoes. Please label all personal items with your child's name or initials. The centre requires written permission to apply sunscreen/repellent, baby creams, petroleum gel etc.

### **Special Events and Field Trips**

Special events may be offered at our centres. Field trips are arranged to meet the developmental needs of all children attending. We believe that field trips are a fun and important way of exposing children to many aspects of our community. Upon registration, parent/guardians provide written permission for child care staff to take their child on outings within walking distance of the centre.

When buses may be rented or Winnipeg Public Transit is utilized, parents will be notified 24 hours in advance.

### **Communication**

**PLEASE READ** the information on the Parent Information Boards at the centre. It is important that you also read any information which may be found on the white dry erase board for your child's group and information that has been put in your child's mailbox. We believe parent/staff communication is vital in promoting a healthy child care environment. Any concerns should be expressed discreetly and quietly in the absence of the children.

### **Research, Photography, and Videotaping**

We will ask you to sign a permission form before any research project commences in the centre. You will be informed in advance as to the nature of the research and the extent of your child's involvement should you consent.

### **Privacy Statement**

The Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association of Winnipeg (the YMCA-YWCA) respects your privacy. We protect your personal information and adhere to all legislative requirements with respect to protecting privacy. We do not rent, sell or trade our mailing lists. The information you provide will be used to deliver services and to keep you informed and up to date on the activities of the YMCA-YWCA, including programs, services, special events, funding needs, opportunities to volunteer or to give, open houses and more through periodic contacts. If at any time you wish to be removed from any of these contacts simply contact us by phone at (204) 889-8052 or via e-mail at [privacy@ymcaywca.mb.ca](mailto:privacy@ymcaywca.mb.ca), and we will gladly accommodate your request.