

# KNOW, SEE, RESPOND

Commitment to Safety

At the YMCA of Central Ohio, we understand that a parent's worst fear is something happening to their child, and we know how much trust it takes to place your child into someone else's care.

That's why, as the largest provider of child care in Central Ohio, we do not take your confidence lightly. Every time we welcome a child into our care, it becomes our responsibility to provide a nurturing, safe, and protected environment where he or she can learn, grow and thrive.

**Because the YMCA of Central Ohio is committed to the safety of all children, we take steps every day to prevent child abuse.** These steps include reference and criminal background checks for all staff, requiring all staff to participate in child abuse prevention training, and staying vigilant for behaviors that may be out of the ordinary. We take allegations or suspicions of child abuse seriously by reporting to police and state agencies for investigation.

As a portion of our child protection efforts, we are also providing a copy of our employee code of conduct to you. We ask that you make yourself familiar with what to expect from our staff and volunteers at the YMCA. If at any time you witness behavior or actions that are not consistent with these expectations, please let a member of our YMCA management team know immediately.

## THE Y'S COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

**The safety and well-being of youth in our care is a top priority.** Creating safe environments where children and teens can learn, grow and thrive is essential to everything we do in support of our cause to strengthen the community.

We believe preventing child sexual abuse is the responsibility of everyone at the Y, and for that matter, everyone in our communities. Practicing the habits of **KNOW, SEE and RESPOND** is part of the Y's commitment to Child Abuse Prevention.



**KNOW**

**KNOW:** Learn how to recognize inappropriate behavior in adults, identify indications of abuse in children, and teach children how they can stay safe.



**SEE**

**SEE:** Pay close attention to your children and the people in their lives, staying vigilant for signs of abuse and knowing how to communicate with your child about their experiences.



**RESPOND**

**RESPOND:** If you see a child displaying behavior that matches common warning signs of abuse, notice suspicious actions from an adult, or you hear about something that sounds like abuse, report it immediately.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have any questions about our Child Abuse Prevention practices or Know, See and Respond, **please feel free to contact Elissa James at [ejames@ymcacolumbus.org](mailto:ejames@ymcacolumbus.org)**

# YMCA OF CENTRAL OHIO

## CODE OF CONDUCT

As an employee of the YMCA, you are expected to promote the core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility in your speech and behavior at the YMCA as well as, within the community, and in any public forum. The Code of Conduct exists to protect you, our members, participants, and volunteers from situations where allegations of inappropriate behavior could be made.

1. By Ohio law, you are a MANDATED REPORTER of any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the proper authorities i.e., Franklin / Delaware / Pickaway / Logan County Children's Services.

2. During YMCA programs, you should never be left alone with a single child, out of sight or unobserved by other YMCA staff.

3. During YMCA programs, you need to supervise children at all times to prevent sexual contact and aggression.

4. When counseling children or medically treating children, an observer (adult or child) should join you. If this is not possible, keep the counseling session (conversation) in the open where others can view you.

5. When working, or utilizing a YMCA facility or program, you should portray a positive role model by maintaining an attitude of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

A. You are to refrain from the use of language, physical conduct or behavior which is sexually suggestive, harassing, intimidating or offensive to members, fellow employees, volunteers or other participants in YMCA programs or activities. Examples include sexual innuendoes, put downs (i.e. "loser"), or phrases that could be construed as profane (i.e. "shut up," "that sucks").

B. You are to treat persons of all races, religions, and cultures with respect and consideration.

C. When working with children, the following, under appropriate conditions, may be permissible forms of non-verbal communication:

\* Children Over Age six:

- a. Hand to shoulder contact
- b. Side by side hugs
- c. Rustling of hair and pats on the head
- d. "High Fives"
- e. "Slap me Fives"
- f. Handshakes
- g. Eye Contact
- h. Smiles

\* Children Under Age six

- a. Same as children over age six

b. A child may be hugged or permitted to sit on an employee's lap only to meet the children's needs for comfort and security, necessary for healthy emotional growth.

6. You should take younger children to the restroom in groups. Children six or older may go to the restroom by themselves as long as an employee monitors their safe return.

7. You are prohibited from having contact with YMCA youth outside of regularly scheduled program activities. Outside contact includes, but is not limited to providing babysitting/care & custody, and engaging in social contact with YMCA youth.

8. At least two adults (18 or over) must supervise all youth activities that are off YMCA sites. Written parental permission is required when the YMCA is providing transportation. Any exceptions must have branch director approval.

9. Physical restraint (staff confining a child by holding the child appropriately) is only to be used in situations where a child puts himself/herself or others in danger and must be documented in writing.

10. You may not touch children on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a swimming suit except when diapering, changing clothes, or washing a child off as appropriate to your job function.

11. Personal visits by friends, relatives, and others is permitted in appropriate areas during breaks and lunch hours, but not during regular work hours as your full attention needs to be focused on your job responsibilities.

12. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours is prohibited.

13. You should use positive techniques of child guidance, including redirection, anticipation and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement, rather than competition, comparison or criticism.

14. You are discouraged from transporting children in unauthorized (non-YMCA) vehicles. In emergency situations, you can transport a child in your car if you have the branch director's permission.

15. YMCA facilities are to be used solely for YMCA-generated activities and programs; they are not for private gain or usage. You should not accept pay directly from members, participants or residents in exchange for services performed in the course of employment, or for services rendered on the grounds or in the buildings/program sites of the YMCA.

16. You should not accept gratuities from participants; if you are given a gift from a

member/participant/resident, you should notify your supervisor so that s/he can help you determine if it is of substantial value. Gifts that are considered to be of substantial value cannot be accepted.

17. In licensed childcare programs, two YMCA staff shall be present at all times. Any exceptions must have written approval from the Metropolitan Youth Development Team

18. Parental permission must be given to take photos of YMCA participants. The use of personal cell phones to photograph YMCA participants is prohibited. Staff may not use photographs taken at YMCA programs and/or of YMCA participants for purposes other than those directly related to the program or to the YMCA

19. If you choose to post a personal website, or to participate in web-groups, chat rooms or blogs, the following guidelines must be followed:

- The use of photos, logos or images of the YMCA or its programs is prohibited. If you use the YMCA's name (including names of camps or other programs) in any such communication, you should be especially careful to support and certainly not to harm or ridicule the YMCA's image or mission.
- Your personal website should be marked "private," so that only people that you have invited may access your page. You are prohibited from inviting YMCA youth (campers, program participants, members, etc. under the age of 18) to access your website.
- You are solely responsible for any legal liability arising from or relating to the content from your personal website and/or blog.
- You must uphold the YMCA's value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory statements about YMCA employees, members/participants, clients, partners, affiliates and others, including competitors.
- You must provide a disclaimer stating that the views expressed are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the YMCA.
- You should not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the YMCA, or to any third party that has disclosed information to the YMCA.
- Any personal website or blog should not contain commentary that violates the YMCA's policies on harassment or discrimination.
- Unless specifically authorized by the YMCA, time spent participating in the above mentioned computer activities cannot interfere with your job duties.

20. If you observe any inappropriate behavior, or violations of the Code of Conduct, you should report it to your supervisor immediately.