

YWCA Child Care Center Parent Handbook



**Open Monday-Friday 7:30am-5:30pm
Phone: 607-733-5575
211 Lake Street
Elmira, NY 14901**

Updated 4/2022

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About the YWCA Child Care Center

The YWCA Child Care Center is a non-profit child care center located at 211 Lake Street, Elmira, New York. The Center provides developmentally appropriate activities and care for children three to five years old. The Center is open from 7:30am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday with the exception of holidays. A list of holidays is provided in this handbook.

YWCA Mission Statement

YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

YWCA Program Philosophy

The YWCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex or ethnic background. Our focus is on children's development. The program embodies the ideas of the YWCA — peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people and the elimination of racism. In keeping with the YWCA's mission, our goal is to serve families from diverse populations.

Our Children

The Center serves age groups:

- Preschool - 3 to 5 year olds
- Universal Pre- Kindergarten (UPK) students must be 4 years old on or before Dec. 1st and live in the Elmira City School District.
- Wraparound care is provided for UPK children before and after school hours and on school holidays and conference days.

Our Staff

Each room has:

- **1 Head Teacher**
- **1 Teacher Assistant**

Head Teachers have schooling in Early Childhood Education or a related field (Child Development Associate or Child Associate Certification, Bachelor's or Master's Degree) and offer a wealth of knowledge and experience in working with young children.

In keeping with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services regulations, there is one adult for every seven or eight preschoolers/pre-kindergarteners depending on the age of our students. All center staff have fingerprint and state central register clearance as well as a physical and tuberculin test.

Our Curriculum

The UPK program follows the Elmira City School District Pre-Kindergarten curriculum and Common Core Curriculum Standards for Pre-Kindergarten. Instruction is thematically based while developing age-appropriate skills for school readiness.

Each child at the Center is treated as an individual. Activities are planned and provided to help each child develop at her/his own rate. Daily observation and notes of progress aid the staff in planning activities to promote growth.

A variety of activities allow groups of children to interact, thus sharing ideas, taking turns and experiencing leadership. In this way, children are developing socialization skills that will help with their adjustment to school.

Language and communication skills are developed through finger plays, role-playing, songs, stories, puppets and dramatic play. A variety of puzzles, toys, blocks, climbing equipment, sensory play etc. are among the experiences used to foster cognitive development.

Each child is encouraged to explore and express herself/himself. Questions are answered honestly, and children are guided to find solutions where possible. Self-help skills are taught as an integral part of the program.

The staff strives to promote a positive self-image in each child. Feelings are discussed and expressed in a positive way and care is taken that no child be embarrassed or humiliated. The staff shows respect and consideration for each child and tries to help her/him learn to express feelings in a constructive way using words to communicate needs and wants.

Behavior Management

Children at the Center are not allowed to hurt themselves or others. Some young children don't yet understand that hitting hurts or that they should be "nice." They can understand that hitting, grabbing toys, throwing objects, intentionally destroying property, and biting are not allowed. By setting firm, consistent rules we instill values and help a child develop a conscience. The ultimate goal is self-discipline. To aid in the development of self-control, staff models appropriate behavior. To ensure the safety and well-being of all children harmful or destructive behavior is not tolerated.

We reinforce appropriate behaviors, redirect children by providing appropriate alternatives, encourage children to talk about their feelings and provide a model of interacting with others in a positive manner. Physical punishment of any kind by staff or parents/guardians is not permitted at the center. Methods of discipline which frighten, demean, or humiliate a child are considered punishment and are also prohibited.

If a child's behavior is likely to result in harm to the child, others, or property, or seriously disrupts group interaction, the child may be separated from the group for only as long as necessary for the child to regain control of himself/herself. NYS OCFS regulations prohibit physical restraint; however, physical intervention is permitted. Physical intervention will only be used to prevent harm to persons or property and for a short period of time. If a child does not regain control of his/her behavior within a reasonable period of time, the parent will be notified to come to the center and pick up the child.

Our guidance and discipline goals are carried out by:

- Setting a good example and searching for positives
- Creating a safe and comfortable environment
- Stating clear and consistent rules
- Acknowledging and respecting each child's feelings
- Using redirection to refocus a child
- Watching children carefully and intervening before a problem occurs
- Changing the environment to lessen chance of conflict or frustration
- Keeping routines and expectations predictable
- Developing ongoing communication between staff and parents

Problem Resolution

The following steps will be taken to help correct child care center problems and concerns including child behavior issues:

- Verbal communication of problem to parents by staff and/or Director. Discuss steps that parents and staff can take together to resolve the situation.
- Conference between parent(s) and center staff which will develop a written plan of action outlining steps to be taken to resolve the situation.
- If the above steps are unsuccessful, the Director will meet with the parents again to discuss alternative action to be taken.
- If a problem remains unresolved, the child will be unable to attend the child care center until a successful resolution can be reached.

- If a problem arises that presents a safety hazard to children and/or staff, immediate termination of services may be required.

Admission and Registration

The YWCA Child Care Center is licensed to admit children between the ages of 33 months and 5 years. Registration for preschool and wraparound care is ongoing. To ensure a place for your child, please register as soon as you anticipate a need for care. Registration packets can be found on our website or may be picked up at the YWCA. Registration is considered complete only when:

- Registration packet has been completed and returned to the Child Care Center.
- Your child has had a physical within 90 days prior to admission.
- The parent has met with the Director of the Child Care Center for orientation.

Medical Exams

Each enrolled child will have an age appropriate health appraisal on record in the center prior to enrollment. Each time the child is immunized this record must be updated. Updates must occur at least once within a 12 month period.

Hours

In order to meet the needs of the majority of working parents, the **YWCA Child Care Center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.** There is a **10 hour limit of child care per day.** It is important for us to know the hours your child is going to be with us because we set our staffing patterns up to accommodate the need.

Tuition

Please refer to the Current Fees and Enrollment Agreement Form.

Late Pick-up Procedure

UPK Late Pick-Up

If your child is enrolled in *UPK only*, he or she must be picked up by the scheduled pick up time. If you are not able to do so, please arrange for someone else on the pick-up permission list to come and pick up your child. If your child is still present in care 15 minutes after the scheduled pick up time, you will be charged \$25, which is the child care daily rate.

Minors

The child care center staff WILL NOT release a child to anyone who is under 18 years of age.

Intoxication & Drug Use

If the child care center staff suspects the adult picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the child will not be released. Child care center staff will contact the local police.

UPK & Child Care Late Pick-up

Our Wrap Around, Child Care/Preschool programs are open until 5:30 pm. If you are not able to pick up your child by this time, please arrange for someone else to do so. If a child is still present after 5:30 pm, the child care center staff will notify the Director. The local police department will be contacted. There is a late charge for any child remaining after 5:30 p.m. ***This fee is \$10.00 per child for each 15 minutes after 5:30 pm.*** Please make alternate arrangements with a neighbor, friend, or co-worker who may be able to pick your child up in the event of an emergency. ***Please remember we CANNOT RELEASE your child to anyone not so designated on your application form unless we have your permission.***

Payment

Payment is due every Friday by 5:30 pm. Payments are not to be left with staff at the child care center. Please **make payments to at the front desk or online.** Non-payment of one week will result in a \$25 late fee and possible removal of your child from the center. Payment is required every week to maintain your child's slot regardless of illness or work schedules.

Withdrawal

Written notice is required 2 weeks before the child's withdrawal. The parent will be billed for 2 additional weeks if the Director does not receive written notification 2 weeks prior to the child's departure.

Temporary Withdrawal Policy

During a temporary withdrawal of no more than 8 weeks, 1/2 weekly tuition holding fee must be paid in advance to secure an opening. A written request must also accompany payment. If a holding fee is not chosen, you will be put on a waiting list for the first available opening.

Subsidy

The Chemung County Child Care Council offers the Subsidy Program for eligible working parents. You must apply for eligibility with the Chemung County Child Care Council. They can be reached at 734-3944.

Calendar

The YWCA Child Care Center is open **Monday through Friday.** We are closed on the holidays and days listed below:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
President's Day
Memorial Day
July 4th
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Eve
State of Emergency

Snow Days & Inclement Weather Closings

The YWCA follows the Elmira City School District snow days. If the Elmira City School District calls a delay, the Preschool and Wraparound programs will not open until 9:30 am. If the district calls a closing, the YWCA will be closed and no child care will be available.

Please check local news broadcasts for delay and closing information.

Emergency Preparation

Evacuation

In the event of an emergency which requires evacuation from the child care center and YWCA building, students will be led out of the building via the closest and safest exit, then to an assembly location in the back parking lot. If it appears we will not be able to return to the center within a reasonable amount of time, we will move to one of the following relocation sites.

New Life Assembly of God
325 Lake Street
Elmira, NY
607-735-0461

Steele Memorial Library
101 E. Church Street
Elmira, NY
607-733-9173

Parents will be notified via phone by YWCA staff if relocation is necessary.

Shelter in Place

If a situation arises in which it is unsafe for children to leave the YWCA building we will shelter in place. Depending upon the situation, children may be able to stay in the classrooms and conduct normal activities. If a weather emergency arises, we will move to a safer interior location on the first floor of the building. Children will be kept safe and their needs will be met until the emergency subsides and parents are able to pick up children from the center. Parents should check local news broadcasts for information as the center may not be able to answer phones.

Evacuation drills will be conducted once monthly and shelter in place drills will be conducted twice yearly.

College Students and Volunteers

The YWCA Child Care Center may have a student from Elmira College, Corning Community College, or another institution doing her/his field study, practicum, or observation work at the center. We encourage this participation and feel it is beneficial to all involved. Volunteers may be used as needed. All persons working in the center must first be cleared through the New York State Register for Child Abuse and Maltreatment.

Pets in the Child Care Center

Classrooms in the child care center may include small pets, like hamsters, fish, guinea pigs, rabbits, etc. The Chemung County SPCA visits annually and also brings dogs or cats on each visit. If your child has an allergy or fear of animals, please be sure to tell the center staff. NYS does not allow child care centers to house reptiles or amphibians. Due to state regulations regarding licensing and vaccinations, pets of families and students are not permitted in the child care center.

Testing/Screening

The Center annually invites CIDS (Comprehensive Interdisciplinary Developmental Services, Inc.) to come into the center to test the children's hearing, speech and developmental growth. These test results are confidential and are sent to you. If a concern arises, you are notified and suggestions on where and how to seek professional help will be provided. Your permission is needed for this testing, permission slips are part of the enrollment packet.

Breakfast & Lunch

If your child is registered through the Elmira City School District they may qualify for free or reduced breakfast and lunch. Costs for these meals should be verified with the school district.

Breakfast will be served each day between 8:15 am and 8:30 am. If your child arrives after 8:30, be sure to feed him/her breakfast before attending the program.

Lunches are ordered for Universal PreK students from the school district at **9:00am**. If your child will be coming in after that time, but present for lunch, please call to order a lunch or pack one for your child. If your child is not eligible for lunch through the school district or not utilizing that service, please pack a lunch. Packed lunch bags must be labelled with the child's first and last name.

The YWA Child Care Center also provides morning and afternoon snack to all children.

Nutrition

We order breakfasts and lunches from the Elmira City School District. All meals meet the guidelines for school breakfast and lunch. An afternoon snack is provided for children enrolled in preschool or wraparound at no additional charge. The only beverages we may serve are 1% or fat-free milk, 100% juice, and water.

Holidays and Birthdays

We do acknowledge holidays and birthdays at the center. Families may bring a special snack to share for a birthday. Families may be asked to contribute items for holiday parties. Please let the Director know if you do not celebrate commonly recognized holidays.

Rest Time

There will be a scheduled rest time at the center each day. Children are given the opportunity to rest for an appropriate amount of time. Children are supervised by center staff during this time. If a child does not fall asleep, he/she will then be given a choice of other activities. Mats are provided for all children to rest on the floor of the classroom(s). New York State requires that each child have "individual clean bed coverings." It is the parent's responsibility to provide these for their child. Please send a washable sheet, blanket and pillow that your child can use at rest time. You may also send one stuffed toy. Rest time items will be sent home each Friday to be laundered and should be returned each Monday. If you have questions or feel your child needs special rest arrangements, please speak to the Director.

Outdoor Play

NYS licensing requires that we provide periods of supervised outdoor play for all children daily except during inclement weather. We go outside except when it is raining, or extremely cold or hot. Please dress your child appropriately for 30 minutes of outdoor play each day. We have access to the gymnasium for inclement weather.

Clothing

Childhood can be a messy business. Please dress your child for all types of play and activities. Throughout their day, your child may paint, play outside, experiment with water, or spill juice. Comfortable clothing and shoes with non-slip soles are best so that we do not have to restrict their play and explorations. Please do not send your child to the center in flip flops.

Please keep an extra set of clothing for your child at the center at all times. Even if he/she is fully potty trained, clothes may become wet or soiled while playing or completing art projects. These can be kept in his/her hall cubby.

Health Policies/Covid -19 Policies

The YWCA Child Care Center staff, in cooperation with the New York State Department of Social Services and the National Center for Disease Control, is committed to keeping your child safe and healthy. In the event of illness or a medical emergency, the following guidelines apply:

Each child admitted to the YWCA of Elmira, NY Child Care Center must have a complete physical examination by a physician 90 days prior to entry into the program. This must include all immunizations on an annual basis. Immunizations must remain up to date and a written note stating the date and type of immunization must be provided for a child's enrollment to continue.

The center is not permitted to administer medications to children. With your written permission, we are allowed to apply sunscreen and insect repellent. Parents must provide these products in their original containers if they would like them to be used for their child.

Please do not send your child if she/he has a productive cough, diarrhea, rash, or is feeling too ill to participate in the center's activities. **Children with a fever cannot attend the center until the temperature stays normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medications.** Please notify the center when your child needs to stay at home.

We will notify parents if any sign of illness develops during the day, so that the child can be taken home (within the hour if possible) before staff and other children are exposed to possible infection. The child will be offered their mat to rest.

To maintain the health of all children and staff in the YWCA Child Care Center, parents will be called if the child exhibits the following symptoms or other illnesses:

- **Has a temperature of 100.4 or higher**
- **Has vomited or has diarrhea with other symptoms**
- **Has a suspicious rash**
- **Has a sore throat**
- **Has pink eye**
- **Has head lice (We are a nit free center. Children will be sent home if there is evidence of any nits/eggs.)**

If your child has a communicable disease, the Center must be notified as soon as possible so that we may inform the other families.

Written permission from a health care provider indicating that the child is free from communicable disease may be required in order for the child to return to care.

A. Isolation

Isolation is for individuals who have been infected with COVID-19, even if they don't have symptoms. Isolation is also for people who are suspected of having COVID-19 because of the symptoms they exhibit. You isolate in order to prevent spreading the virus to others. Below answers how long to isolate depending on your circumstances:

<p><u>If the person is:</u> A child of any age or adult who has symptoms of COVID-19 and is waiting for a test, regardless of vaccination status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 must stay out of the child care program for 5 days OR until they receive a negative COVID-19 test (whichever is first).• If test is negative and symptoms are improving they can come back to the child care program.• If test is positive, follow isolation rules for a COVID positive (next section).
<p><u>If the person is:</u> A child of any age or adult who tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anyone with a positive COVID test must stay out of the child care program for at least 5 days.• Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19, and who is not experiencing symptoms must isolate for 5 days. After 5 days, they may return to program if they are age 2 or older and can consistently wear a well-fitting mask at program. Day 1 of isolation for someone not experiencing symptoms is the first full day following a positive test. Day zero, is the day you test positive.• Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and who is experiencing symptoms must isolate for <i>at least</i> 5 days. Day 1 of isolation for someone who is experiencing symptoms is the first full day following the day symptoms first began and day zero is the first day symptoms began. They may return to the child program after 5 full days AND must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication AND must have improving symptoms before returning to program.• Anyone under age 2 or anyone over age 2 but who cannot reliably wear a well-fitted mask for any reason, who has tested positive for COVID-19, must stay out of program for a full 10 days.• Anyone hospitalized with COVID-19 or immunocompromised must isolate for at least 10 days and consult a doctor before returning to the child care program.

For home-based programs, if any person (provider, staff, household member) is isolating in the home, they must be completely separated from the child care program while it is operating. If complete separation is not possible, the program may not have any unrelated children in care.

B. QUARANTINE

Quarantine is for someone who has had **close contact** with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 but **who does not have any symptoms** of COVID-19 and has not tested positive COVID-19. A close contact is someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Below answers who has to quarantine following close contact with COVID-19 and for how long:

<p><u>If the person:</u> Has received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters (if eligible) OR Had confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days (tested positive using a viral test) OR A staff member or school aged child who has been approved to attend school under a test-to-stay protocol in their school district (regardless of vaccination status)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No quarantine is required before they may return to program. • They do not need to stay out of the program unless they develop symptoms. • <i>If a person under quarantine develops symptoms, they must follow the isolation guidance that starts on page 1 before returning to program.</i> • They should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 10 days. • If they haven't had confirmed COVID-19 in the last 90 days, testing is encouraged on day 5 when possible.
<p><u>If the person:</u> Has not received all recommended doses of the vaccine, including boosters (if eligible) OR is unvaccinated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults and children over the age of 2 years may return to the child care program after <u>5 days</u> if they are able to wear a well-fitting face mask AND if they are not experiencing symptoms • Children under the age of 2 years, as well as any child who cannot reliably wear a well-fitting mask for any reason, must remain out of the child care program for a <u>full 10 days</u>. They may return to program after 10 days provided they are not experiencing symptoms. • <i>If a person under quarantine develops symptoms, they must follow the isolation guidance that starts on page 1 before returning to program.</i> • If a person under quarantine has not had confirmed COVID-19 in the last 90 days, testing is encouraged on day 5 when possible.

For home-based programs, if any person (provider, staff, household member) is quarantining in the home, they must be completely separated from the child care program while it is operating. If complete separation is not possible, the program must temporarily close.

Child Abuse Reporting

In accordance with provisions of Section 432 of New York State Social Services law, all day care center staff are mandated reporters to the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register.

If you suspect child abuse, you may call the NYS OCFS hotline number at 1-800-342-3720. Please see the flyer attached to this handbook for more information.

Safety

The YWCA Child Care Center's equipment is checked monthly to make sure health and safety standards are met. Fire drills are held monthly to teach the children how to exit the building safely, quickly, and calmly. Professional speakers are brought in to speak on fire safety, poison control and other topics. These subjects are incorporated into the curriculum as well.

The YWCA building is also equipped with security cameras. All doors remain locked except the front door. Someone is stationed at the front desk whenever the child care center is open. We continue to evaluate and improve our security procedures. If you have specific questions, please see the Director.

If a child sustains an injury during the care, the parent will be notified. If the injury is serious, the parent will be called immediately. If the injury is minor, verbal and/or written notification will occur at pick up time.

Field Trips

Field trips are a wonderful way to teach our children about their community. With the car safety seat laws and other safety issues it becomes necessary for us to limit these trips to places we can actually walk with supervision or with the help of parent volunteers. Guests to our program are another way to increase community awareness.

Communication between families and the childcare center is most important. Parent teacher conferences are held at least twice a year. These meetings are scheduled to exchange information about home and school activities. It's a time to set goals to support your child's development. Daily contact with your child's teacher is vital. Please get to know your child's room, look around and see all their work, meet their friends and come to know the staff who interact with your child daily. Written notes can also be used as a means of daily communication.

A monthly calendar and a newsletter will be made available to keep families informed of special happenings and friendly reminders. Information pertaining to early childhood, families, and community events are posted on the Parent Board.

Please remember to sign your child in and out daily using your full name. The YWCA Child Care Center's goal is to provide a nurturing and safe environment for families, children, and staff where individuality is respected and diversity is embraced, leading to a sense of community and commitment to lifelong learning.



**YWCA Child Care Center
Parent Handbook Receipt**

Child Care Waiver of Liability

I/We hereby assume all risks incidental to such participation in the YWCA of Elmira & Twin Tiers Child Care Center UPK & Preschool activities. I/We give our permission to the YWCA staff to call a doctor or paramedics for medical care for my child should an emergency arise. It is understood that a reasonable effort will be made to locate the child's parent or guardian before further action is sought. However, if the YWCA staff determines, in its discretion, that my child requires further medical attention, I hereby consent to the same. The YWCA will not be held responsible for any costs associated with such treatment, including but not limited to, transportation, hospital stays, doctors' bills etc.

I understand that by signing this Childcare Waiver of Liability, I hereby release, indemnify, and hold harmless the YWCA of Elmira & Twin Tiers Child Care Center, and its administration, directors, advisors, employees, instructors, volunteers, childcare workers, and all other persons or entities acting for them from any and all claims, demands, suits, cost and charges, in connection with or arising out of childcare service provided, including but not limited to, personal injury, bodily harm, injury, or property damage occurring while the above child/children is/are in their care at YWCA of Elmira & Twin Tiers Child Care Center.

I have received the YWCA Child Care Center Handbook. I have read it, and understand the information given.

Parent/Guardian

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date