

KIDS ZONE HANDBOOK

OZARKS REGIONAL YMCA

HEALTH

The Y is a well-child facility. Y staff does not administer medication. If your child has a medical condition that parents feel we need to be aware of such as asthma, allergies or hemophilia please inform our staff.

For the safety of all children that participates in the programs please exclude children from participating that are ill and/or show any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (F)
- Neck pain and stiffness
- Exhibiting confusion
- Unequal pupils
- Dehydration
- Undiagnosed non –clear eye discharge
- Excessive, persistent crying or coughing
- Severe or persistent pain
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Undiagnosed severe uncovered rash
- Rapid or labored breathing

Communicable Diseases:

Notify parents of potential exposure to any of the following Communicable Diseases using branded signs, posted for a minimum of 2 days (48 hours) before the end of the business day.

- Diphtheria, chickenpox, Impetigo or strep (Parent must provide proof of treatment for a minimum of 24 hours prior to readmission).
- TB, Food Borne Outbreak/poisoning, Salmonella, Shigella, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Polio, Hepatitis A or B, Haemophilus influenza type B, Meningococcal meningitis (Parent must provide proof of treatment for a minimum of 24 hours prior to readmission).
- Lice, Scabies, Pinworm, Ringworm, (Parent must provide proof of treatment and be free of nits prior to readmission)

All communicable diseases must be notified to the Executive Director.

Any communicable diseases that are not listed and you encounter, notify the Executive Director.

SAFETY

Toys/Cleaning

- Ensure that toys and equipment are clean, safe, and in good repair.
- Provide a regular schedule for removing and cleaning toys that are mouthed by babies and toddlers.
- If a child puts a toy in his/her mouth the toy must be taken away immediately and cleaned properly.
- Allow adequate drying time before the toys are given back to the children.

Child-Proof the child care space. Do not allow toys with small pieces in areas for infants and toddlers. Store out of children's reach all personal belongings (diaper bags, purses, etc.) as well as cleaning supplies and chemicals.

TOY SAFETY

Protecting children from unsafe toys is the responsibility of everyone. Careful toy selection and proper supervision of children at play is the best way to protect children from toy-related injury.

Check all toys periodically for breakage and potential hazards. A damaged or dangerous toy should be thrown away or repaired immediately.

Some features to consider:

- Sharp edges and points
- Small parts – esp. for children under 3. Look for eyes and noses on stuffed toys and removable squeakers on squeeze toys. If a toy or toy part will fit through a toilet paper roll it is too small for children under age 3
- Loud noises
- Cords and strings
- Propelled objects – consider what could happen if the toy is thrown
- All toys are not for all children

Basic Ages and Stages

- Infant (0-12 Months)
Infant play involves use of senses. They learn about the world through sight, smell, taste, touch and listening
- Toddler (1-2 Years)
Toddler children are very active. The use of toys helps them develop muscle coordination and provides experiences to test their skills. It is difficult for them to understand other than their needs.

- **Preschool (3-5 Years)**
They are ready for organized social play. They become more interested in actions and feelings of others.

Examples of Age Appropriate Toys

0 - 12 Months

Rattles and squeaky toys
Teethers
Discovery play mats
Musical and chime toys
Books with simple pictures of familiar things
Non-breakable mirrors

1 - 2 Years

Strings of big beads
Cause-and-effect toys such as pop-n-pals
Pounding and stacking toys
Toys to push and pull (no strings)
Nesting boxes or cups
Stacking toys and rings
Cloth or board books with rhymes and bright pictures
Simple toys to pretend, such as cooking tools
Blocks – foam, plastic, cloth, or cardboard

2 - 3 Years

Balls of various sizes
Blocks of different sizes and shapes
Child-size play furniture
Play appliances and cooking tools
Simple dolls
Simple puzzles
Cars and trains with no small parts
Simple building materials like Duplos
Books with short, simple stories

3 - 5 Years

Puppets and theaters
Playhouses
Housekeeping toys
Farm, village, and other play sets
Small trucks, cars, planes, boats, trains – with accessories
Construction sets, wooden blocks, bristle blocks
Art materials
Books with more complex story lines

6-9 Years

Fashion/Career Dolls

Action Figures

Science Kits

Construction Sets

Jump Ropes

Craft Kits

Cleaning

Before sanitizing a toy it is important to thoroughly clean the toy. Toys should be scrubbed and rinsed to remove any dirt or debris from the surface. This can be accomplished with warm water and mild detergent. By removing all debris from the surface of the toy the next step, sanitizing, will work more effectively and ensure the toy is actually sanitized.

Sanitizing Hard-Shelled Toys

After all the scrubbed and rinsed toys are dry, the next step is to disinfect them to remove harmful bacteria that may still reside on the surface. To accomplish this, the cleaned toys need to be submerged in an appropriate sanitizing solution. The best sanitizing agent for hard-shelled toys (i.e., plastic toys) is a mixture of water and bleach. The proper ratio of water-to-bleach for a safe sanitizing solution is 1.5 teaspoons of bleach to 1 gallon of water. A water/bleach solution is ideal because it is approved by state licensing/certification, is inexpensive, is easy to use, works quickly and becomes harmless as it breaks down.

Sanitizing Soft or Plush Toys

Sanitizing soft or plush toys can prove to be difficult. These toys are slightly more difficult to sanitize because the materials tend to absorb liquids. Since stuffed animal are made from a variety of different materials you may need to vary your cleaning methods from one toy to the next. Always read the manufacturer's label before cleaning.

If a toy is washing machine safe then that is the best option to clean them. Toys that are too delicate to be placed in the washer or are made of material not recommended for washing machines, the best way to clean these types of toys is to clean them with a dish soap/water solution.

Use of Bleach

Bleach can be harmful if used incorrectly so it is important to use with caution. There should be a specified area in the center designed for the mixing of the water/bleach solution that is well ventilated and inaccessible to children. Make sure gloves and eye protection are provided for the individual who mixes the bleach solution. Avoid mixing bleach with any other chemicals or even mixing in containers that may have held other chemicals; bleach reacts violently with certain chemicals and can produce extremely hazardous gases.

Bleach, while effective and safe for cleaning toys when used properly, can be very dangerous by itself and needs to be stored safely. Bleach should be stored in a well-ventilated area as the fumes from bleach can be harmful. Bleach should also be stored out of direct sunlight since it can reduce the germ-killing abilities of the

bleach. Make sure to keep all bleach labeled so it is not accidentally used or mixed. The area where the bleach is stored needs to be completely secured, and children should never have access to it. Keep all bleach handling Personal Protective Equipment stored near the bleach and mixing area. It is also a good practice to keep the bleach Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) in order to appropriately respond to any spills or accidental exposures.

Cleaning schedules must be documented and kept on file. Cleaning Schedule Below is an example of a cleaning schedule that can be modified to fit your center.

Week of:	Initial Completed					
	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
Clean and sanitize after each use:						
Mouthed toys						
Clean and sanitize daily:						
Counters						
Infant and toddler toys						
Doorknobs and cabinet handles						
Clean and disinfect daily:						
Toilets						
Sinks						
Floors:						
Vacuum/sweep daily						
Clean and sanitize weekly:						
Cubbies						
Walls						
Older children's toys						
As needed:						
Scrub bathroom floor	Last Date:					
Dust furniture	Last Date:					
Clean carpets (at least 2x per year)	Last Date:					

Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)

- Ensure employees are familiar with center's EAPs on missing child procedures.
- Ensure employees are familiar with evacuation routes and policies in the event of fire, tornado, earthquake, or bomb threat.

Missing Child: Insert Center's EAP

Tornado Warning: Insert Center's EAP

Fire: Insert Center's EAP

Medical Situation: Insert Center's EAP

Supervision

- Ensure that children are in direct visual supervision of employees at all times.
- Camera phones that allow users to photograph other members, including children, are not allowed in Kids' Zone.

Showing Affection

- Grandma Standard – What if the child's grandmother entered the room. Would you be comfortable?
- Child Initiated – It's not appropriate to ask a child for a hug, etc.
- Age Appropriate
- Gentle Limits – For example, after a minute of hand holding, encourage the child to move on to play.
- Don't Be Alone
- Touching is in response to the need of the child and, when age appropriate, should be with the child's permission.

Examples of unapproved behavior – Piggyback rides, back rubs, roughhousing, touching where swimsuits cover, applying sunscreen, buttoning pants, etc.

Examples of approved behavior – Pat on the shoulder, sideways hug, high fives, etc.

CARE REPORTS

Complete for minor issues, scrapes and inappropriate behavior.

- To convey to parents it's nothing serious but here is what we do know.
- One copy goes to parent and one copy stays in child's file.

First Aid/Reporting

- Provide adequate first aid supplies and ensure that they are readily available
 - Band-Aid, Ice Pack

Alcohol, Peroxide, Neosporin, Eye Wash, is NOT allowed to be given to children.

INCIDENT REPORTS

Complete for an injury or accident.

- Learn how to fill out Incident Reporting Form.
- Know where to place the form after an injury.
- Center communication plan to parent/guardian.

In case of a serious injury or illness:

Staff should not attempt to move the injured or ill person unless necessary for immediate safety. One staff person should attend to the injured person while the other staff continues to supervise other children in Kids Zone. The Front Desk should be notified immediately and call 911. Front Desk should locate parent/guardian within the Center.

In case of any accident or incident employees must fill out an Incident Reporting Form provided by West Bend Insurance.

FOOD AND SNACKS

- Due to safety reasons, the Y does not allow snacks in the Kids' Zone. Drinks and sippy cups with a secure lid are still welcome in Kids' Zone, as we are aware that sometimes a cup can also be a security comfort for a young child.
- Ensure that all employees meet the basic needs of the children and make sure the children are comfortable, safe, and positively engaged. Do not allow employees to withhold children from toileting or water for any reason.

DIAPERING

Kids' Zone does not allow diapering for any reason.

BATHROOM POLICY

Kids' Zone staff members must follow "Rule of Three" (one staff with a minimum of two children) for bathroom breaks or any area away from the program area. Staff should maintain auditory supervision of the children by standing in the bathroom doorway, while providing children with some level of privacy. Young children who need help with pulling up pants, zippers etc. require two staff present so that one can witness the other assisting the child with changing.

EMPLOYEES UTILIZATION POLICY

Kids' Zone staff members are permitted to have their children with them if their child can play independently, allowing the staff member to be available to other children. It is important that staff members interact with all children and do not spend excessive time or attention on their own children.

Their child(ren) need to be signed in and accounted for. It needs to be documented on the sign in and out sheet.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The YMCA believes in positive reinforcement. We focus on helping the children in our care to grow stronger in character in a fun, positive upbeat environment. However, we know that discipline problems can and will occur and that they must be dealt with appropriately. Our discipline plan consists of four steps:

- Redirection
- Sit and watch for no longer than the child's age (time-out)
- If both are ineffective then we document the incident
- Communicate with the parent.

If the child continues to have issues with the following but not limited to: hitting, foul language, disrespectful to employees or peers, or biting, the Y will communicate with parent immediately and the child will need to leave the center for the day. If the behavior continues they will be asked to not use the Kids' Zone for 3 consecutive days.

Behavior Management

- Keep instructions simple and easy to understand
- Focus on what to do, rather than what not to do. "Keep your feet on the floor." Instead of "Don't climb on the table." And "Use a quiet voice." Instead of "Stop shouting."
- Talk with children and not at them. Be at their eye level. Look them in the eyes. Give them a chance to respond.
- Set a good example. They see how you talk to other adults. They listen when you say "I'm sorry."
- Catch children being good. Try to catch each child in good behavior at least once each visit.

Time Outs

Sometimes a time-out helps to change a child's focus. Time-outs should be rare in Kids Zone, but if you need to use one, that option is available.

The first step in making time-outs work is choosing a suitable area. You can use a chair, a floor mat or any seat that works. If you prefer, designate a name for the time-out chair or space, such as the "thinking chair" or the "quiet zone." Just make sure the area is boring and away from the distractions of others.

A good rule of thumb is one minute per year of the child's age. So, a 2-year-old would get two minutes of time-out while a 4-year-old would get four minutes.

Encouragement

Praise focuses on what you think. "You are such a nice girl!" or "You are a good boy who cleans up!"

Encouragement is preferred because it points out facts. "You worked really hard on that puzzle!" and "Look at all the green you used in your coloring!"

Soothing a crying baby

- Do they have a wet diaper?
- Are they hungry?
- Is their clothing tight or pinching?
- Hold them against your chest.
- Gently pat their back.
- Rock them in a rocking chair or sway while you are standing.
- Try humming.
- If parents approve, try the pacifier.
- Ask parents how they calm the child.
- If nothing works, trade the baby with another worker.
- If still nothing works, get parents and ask what they would like to do.

SIGN IN/OUT

Kids' Zone children must be listed as a member on a Family Membership.

- Children may play in Kids' Zone for **two hours per day and a max of 10 hours per week (Sunday through Saturday)**
- If a parent exceeds their maximum time, they will receive notification from the Y employee and be asked to pick up their child. Misuse of the Kids' Zone areas or handbook will result in suspension of the privilege.
- Parents may NOT leave the Y center while their child(ren) are in the Kids' Zone unless in with a group exercise class.

For the safety of all participants, all children must be signed into Kids' Zone by a parent/legal guardian or an adult 18 or older. Only the adult who signed the child in will be allowed to pick up the child. Absolutely no one under the age of 18 will be permitted to sign children into Kids' Zone.

**Children will not be released to another adult unless prior arrangements have been made and approved by management.*

Employee Checklist:

- Ensure that a responsible adult signs children in and out on the sign in-out sheet. Utilize the standard a sign in/out sheet that lists the child's name, age, parent signature, area in the center where the parent can be reached, special instructions for care, any health issues the employees should be aware of, time in and time out.
- Any health issues listed must be visible by employees only. Other members cannot see this information.
- Train employees to greet parents and children and to ensure that children are checked in and out.
- For the safety of your child, all YMCA centers we will require a photo ID of the parent or guardian and Kids' Zone Child Record for each child signed into our care.
 - Release children only to the adult that signed the child in. Never release children to an individual, who did not sign the child in; unless the parent gives permission before leaving (permission must be in writing and approved through management). Ask the person picking up the child to show proper identification.
 - Implement a plan for parent/guardian recognition. Require photo ID, number system, sticker receipt, etc. A plan must be in place to insure children are released only to the adult that signed them in. Ensure employees are trained on this procedure.

Require adults to stay in the building so as they remain accessible in case of an emergency. If adults are participating in a Y running group and allowed to leave the building, require them to leave in writing a number where they can be reached, and an additional emergency contact number.

Kids' Zone Child Record

All children must have a Kids' Zone Child Record form completed and on file before they are permitted to stay in Kids' Zone. The child information form should include a **minimum** of the following:

- Childs first and last name
- Parent/guardian first and last name
- Childs age and birthdate
- Parents contact information

RATIOS

To determine ratios for each room, follow the youngest age in that room. Infants from mobile toddlers and preschoolers, must be separated to ensure their safety. Separate rooms are ideal, but a careful division with half-walls and furniture is acceptable. Always protect infants from mobile toddlers and other children.

<u>Childs Age</u>	<u>Employee: Child Ratio</u>
6wks-30 mos	1:5
2-4years	1:8

2.5-3years	1:9
2.5-5years	1:11
3-5years	1:13
4-5years	1:16
5-12years	1:20

ACTIVITIES

Provide a sufficient number of developmentally-appropriate activities for the age range and maximum number of children served.

- Provide opportunities for light, moderate, and vigorous physical activity for at least 15 minutes per hour while children are in Kids' Zone.
- Provide circle time including, songs, stories and learning activities.
- Provide art and craft activities.
- For infants, provide opportunities to move freely under adult supervision to explore their indoor environment.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

- Let the parent know, if a child cries for more than 15 minutes an employee will come and get them to care for their child.
- Smile and greet every parent, child and visitor that comes into the Kids' Zone.
- Treat people the way you want to be treated. Be respectful.
- Provide a quarterly newsletter or email of family things going on in the center and community.
- Communicate all ouches, good days, incidents and things we can work on together with parents.

