



Bloomsburg YMCA

Preschool Parent Handbook

School Year 2023-2024



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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The YMCA Mission

Our mission is to strengthen communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

Child Care Program Philosophy:

The Bloomsburg Area YMCA is a Keystone STARS program participant. We believe children learn best through a hands-on, interactive atmosphere. Through play, stories, songs, centers and a wide variety of educational materials, the children are learning by experience which encourages individual growth and independent decision making.

At the Bloomsburg Area YMCA, we believe all children are unique and value their individual, family, and cultural differences. Our staff are well-trained and caring childcare professionals. Our childcare facilities meet the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of the children in a safe, nurturing environment. The philosophy of our center is to provide a safe and loving environment in which children can learn and grow. Children will learn through exploring their environment and through play. Your child's play is his/her most important work! We emphasize care, safety and fun. We want to offer your child every opportunity to do that through his/her play. Children learn by doing, playing, sharing, observing, and talking. Our program is designed to maintain and deepen your child's natural curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, with observation, play and speech skills.

Our classroom is set up so children can have the freedom to make their own choices and direct their play. We use a new research-based curriculum program called Creative Curriculum. The program includes a diverse range of open-ended activities so that every child may feel the satisfaction of personal accomplishment and success. The curriculum is child centered and uses their interests to guide the activities and lessons. The staff makes developmental adaptations for children with different learning styles and abilities. We also value the diversity of our preschool and encourage our staff and parents to share their cultural backgrounds with us by bringing in family photographs, food, clothes for dramatic play, or anything else they would like to share. Our goal is for our staff, parents, and children to work together to make the center a special place for all.

Enrollment:

Enrollment is open for children ages 3, 4, and 5. Children entering preschool must be fully toilet trained. This means, knowing when they need to use the restroom, alerting staff when they need to go to the restroom or when they have had an accident, and wiping themselves after the bathroom. Children must be three on or before September 1st to be enrolled in the program. Enrollment is open to families in any community. Parents and guardians interested in enrolling their children should contact the director at 570-784-0188 for a tour. During the tour, questions and concerns will be discussed and answered and this will also be an opportunity to see the classroom and meet the teacher. We encourage parents to bring their children on the tour: we feel that it's a good way to see how your child may react to the setting. If we do not have any openings, we will place children on the waitlist. When a spot opens, we will call you. If you decide to enroll your child, we require that you fill out paperwork and send in a \$25 deposit.

Admission Policy:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER- The Bloomsburg Area YMCA is an equal opportunity provider. Applications for enrollment are accepted without regard to race, religion, sex, color, disability, sexual orientation, political beliefs, family status, or national origin. We celebrate diversity and know that children benefit through an enriched learning environment.

The preschool program provides for all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Staff are aware of the identified needs of each individual and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans, and provide any modifications necessary for an inclusive and enriching environment. The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

The preschool will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, and families of children with disabilities. This includes providing information and school reports in an understandable format and, including alternative formats on request, to the extent possible, in the families primary language.

Education Goals:

Our program is designed to help children have a pleasant experience through developmentally appropriate activities. These activities provide opportunities to develop the following goals:

- Positive self-image and independence
- Positive communication skills
- Social skills through large and small group activities
- Respect for individual and cultural differences
- Increase fine and gross motor skills
- Academic skills
- Kindergarten readiness

Education Component:

The Creative Curriculum Model is used to assist our teachers in planning a classroom and outdoor environment. A wide variety of learning materials with curriculum goals in mind are provided so that no matter where the children choose to play, they are learning. The materials are available to the students without teacher support so they are able to retrieve materials and put them away independently.

The environment is organized into a variety of areas of interest which may include, blocks, house, table toys, library, music/movement, outdoors. These areas support children's development.

A daily schedule is planned, and the teacher arranges the day to best meet the needs of that group of children. A large part of the child's day is spent in play. This is because preschool children learn best by exploring, experimenting, and creatively using their imagination. Through play, children also learn to make choices, learn to share, practice language, express emotions and develop muscles and coordination skills. Other parts of the day will include large and small group, table activities, music/movement, story time, outdoor time, lunch/snack and quiet time when applicable.

The Creative Curriculum is consistent with the Pennsylvania Learning Performance Standards. These standards provide guidelines for developmentally appropriate practices. The Creative Curriculum is one of the leading curriculum models of the state.

Arrival:

Preschool doors open at 8:30am. Arrival earlier than 8:25 will not be permitted. Upon arrival you will need to park and bring your child into the building and sign them in. Each parent/guardian **MUST** sign in their child on the attendance sheet with their signature and time they arrived. Please notify the staff if an adult other than yourself will be picking up the child that day.

Departure

The preschool day is over at 3:30. If your child is not picked up by 3:30 they will be walked over to the YMCA for the Before and After School Care program, and additional charges may occur. The **ADULT** picking up the child is responsible for the child once he/she enters the center. Each adult/guardian is responsible for completing the attendance sheet with their signature and the time that they are picking up.

For safety purposes, children will not be permitted to leave with anyone except those designated on the emergency contact/parental consent form. For any exceptions, **PRIOR** written notification must be given to the Preschool director (Nichole Lawrence-Cole). Only proper identification (driver's license or state-issued identification card) will be accepted. Once the responsible person arrives at the Y to pick up the child, the child is the responsibility of the adult.

The Bloomsburg Area Ymca has the right to request identification of an adult picking up a child and reserves the right to request that the adult sign the attendance sheet before leaving the center.

The Bloomsburg Area YMCA **WILL NOT** release a child to any person (parent, guardian, relative, etc.) suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Under these circumstances, the staff is required to notify the other parent/guardian or emergency contact person whose responsibility will be to pick-up the child from the child care site. Bloomsburg Area YMCA has the right to contact the authorities in this situation.



Before and After School Care:

This program is for children who need care between the hours of 6:30–8:30am and/or 3:30–5:30pm. It is also for those who need care on a scheduled day that the preschool is not open. This program takes place at the main YMCA building and is separate from the preschool. All children enrolled in the program must be picked up by 5:30pm each day. There will be a late charge of \$5.00 for every 5 minutes after 5:30pm. If there is a two hour delay, there will **NOT** be care for the morning hours. However, if there is an early dismissal there will be care. On snow days, the YMCA will determine if it is safe to travel, if it is deemed safe the YMCA will have care. If it is not determined safe there will be no care offered.

Inclement Weather:

Bloomsburg YMCA Preschool will follow the Bloomsburg Area School District for any school/snow closing. Please follow our Facebook page for updates.

If there is a two hour delay the preschool doors will open at **10:30am**. Arrival earlier than 10:25 will not be permitted. If there is an early dismissal the preschool will dismiss at the elementary school dismissal time. Please make specific arrangements for your child to be picked up during early dismissals.

Attendance:

Consistent attendance is important for your child to gain the most from our program, to meet his/her educational goals and develop attendance habits that will carry on throughout his/her school years. Supporting a child's daily attendance allows parents to convey a message to their child that they value education and that school is an important priority.

In order to limit distractions please have your child arrive **before 9:30am**, as that is the start of morning circle. Please give the teacher/s prior notification if your child will be later than 9:30am.

If your child will be going on vacation, please notify the teacher/s so we are aware of the schedule change. If your child is out on vacation you **WILL NOT** get charged for the missing days. However, if the child is scheduled for three/two days and only comes one day that week, you will still get charged the 3-day/2-day rate.

Illness

Children need to be in good health to get the most out of their day at school. If a child becomes ill during the course of the day, **a parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up the child early.** You will be notified immediately if your child becomes ill or injured while at school. For the health and safety of all the children, it is important that you pick up your child at the time you are notified. If you cannot be reached at the time you are called, we will call an emergency contact person listed on your enrollment form. If you are unable to pick up the child at the time you are called, you must make arrangements for someone to pick up the child within one hour.

If a child seems tired or is not feeling well, he or she will be guided towards a quiet activity or rest area. A sick child will be isolated in the preschool and given a place to rest until parents arrive. If your child is out due to COVID they **MUST** have a negative test result before coming back.

Conditions which necessitate parents/guardians to pick up an ill child are as follows:

- High temperature (above 100 F)
- Rash, vomiting, diarrhea (more than once).
- Excessive coughing
- Any suspected communicable diseases, or any discomfort that cannot be resolved in one hour.

Please do not bring your child to the center if they have any of the following conditions (unless a medical professional has determined they do not need to be excluded):

- Signs of severe illness
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting – more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours
- Abdominal pain – for more than 2 hours
- Excessive coughing



Conditions under which a child may return to the program are as follows:

- When illness is no longer communicable and symptoms have resolved.
- When a doctor/medical professional has cleared them to return to school/normal activities
- When the child is free from symptoms for **24 hours**
- If the child is on antibiotics, they **MUST** be treated with them for at least **24 hours**.
- The child must be free of any medications that may mask sickness symptoms.
- If the child is out due to COVID they **MUST** have a negative test result before returning to school.

Medication Policies and Procedures

Medication:

Medication is any substance, chemical or treatment that affects health. Some examples of medication are aspirin, ibuprofen, cough drops, medicated Chap Stick, etc. Please do not send your child to preschool with medicines in their possession as he/she will not be permitted to give such medication to himself/herself. We reserve the right to take such medication from the child.

The director will be glad to administer medication to your child as long as the parent has completed a **Medication Log** provided by the director. Parents also have the option to come in at any time during the day to administer medication to their child without following the Center's guidelines:

Over-the-Counter Medicine:

Staff may administer over-the-counter medications **ONLY** if they are accompanied by a doctor's written instructions. These instructions must state the type of medication, dosage amount, frequency of the dosage, and the timeframe for which the medication is to be given.

Prescription Medicine:

Staff may administer prescription medications that are in the original container with a current prescription label and dosage instructions attached. A separate doctor's note is not necessary.

Medication administration:

Medication is most easily given (including asthma treatments) after lunch and at snack time. However, if your child has an asthma attack and is in need of a breathing treatment we will administer one as needed.

Toys from Home

While we prefer that children keep their other toys at home, **ONE** small soft toy, doll, or stuffed animal to snuggle with at naptime is welcome. However, if the child is playing with the toy during the allotted nap time it will be placed back in their cubbies. Please keep in mind that if your child does bring a toy from home, it must be small enough to fit in his/her cubby. The toy should not promote violence. We cannot be held responsible for loss or damage of toys.

Clothing

Washable and durable clothes are the most appropriate clothes for preschool. Comfortable clothing allows the child to explore and participate and get the most out of indoor and outdoor activities. Remember to choose clothing that allows for **SPEEDY** use of the bathroom. Shoes that are durable and provide comfort **MUST** always be worn. **Flip-flops and open-toed shoes are not permitted**; sneakers or closed toed sandals are best for participation in all activities. Every child **MUST** have at least one complete change of clothing in their cubbies at all times. This includes underwear, socks, pants/shorts, shirt and a pair of shoes if possible. All clothes should be labeled with your child's name. Please be sure to change out your child's extra change of clothes with the change of the seasons, all clothing must be seasonally appropriate. If your child borrows some of our center's extra clothing, please wash and return it as soon as possible.



Rest Time

Rest time takes place every day between the hours of 12:30–2:30pm. We ask that you send your child to school with a small blanket and a pillow. All nap items **MUST** fit in the bottom area of their cubby. We will send these items home weekly, they **MUST** be washed and returned.

Acceptable nap time materials are:

A nap mat that has a blanket and pillow attached, that is able to roll up into one unit. See image below for reference.



A small pillow and blanket that can also be rolled up together and fit in the bottom portion of their cubby. See image below for reference.



Birthdays and Celebrations

Cake or a special snack for your child to share with the class for their birthday is always welcome! We do ask that you let the teacher/s know in advance if you will be bringing something in. Please remember that we are a peanut free facility!

Snacks and Lunches

The center will provide a morning snack and an afternoon snack. Please let us know if there are any dietary restrictions. We will post a note to inform our staff of any dietary restrictions we are made aware of. Please send your child's food in a labeled lunch box with an ice pack inside to keep its contents cold. Lunch should follow the USDA Standards as required by the Department of Early Education. The BAY Preschool is a peanut free zone. No peanuts or items containing peanuts are to be brought into the classroom by anyone.

Outdoor Play:

Outdoor play is encouraged and provided as often as possible. Health care professionals advise that when properly dressed, fresh air and outdoor play can promote physical and mental health. If the temperature is above 32 degrees, we will plan on going outside on the playground or on a walk. Please dress your child in clothing that is appropriate for the season (including but not limited to, a winter jacket, boots, gloves, and hat) so that they may fully participate in all outdoor activities.

Parent Involvement

The Bloomsburg Area YMCA strives to provide what is best for your child's growth and development. No one is more important to the success of our program than you! There are many ways for you to be involved so we encourage your involvement in any capacity in which you feel comfortable.

YOUR RIGHTS:

- Assurance that your beliefs, concerns, and values are respected.
- To gain information about all aspects of the program.
- To be informed about all your child's experiences in the program.
- The freedom to visit or observe.
- The freedom to ask staff questions (at times when staff are able to respond without interrupting the program).
- Complete confidentiality in all matters involving the welfare of your child and family.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Knowledge of this handbook and acceptance of its policies and procedures.
- Volunteering current important information (addresses, medical exams, IEP's, etc.) and responding to staff's requests for this information.
- Exchange of essential information about the care of your child with staff.
- Respect for the staff as professionals who work with you to provide quality preschool and child care.

Bite injury, action and prevention

- The safety and comfort of the children are our top priorities.
- If a bite from another child were to occur during school, our staff will immediately provide the appropriate first aid. This includes washing the wound with soap and water and applying an ice pack to the area where the child was bitten.
- Staff will provide comfort, concern, and support to the child who was bitten.
- The preschool will provide appropriate programming and behavior modification for children to help prevent biting.
- Staff will encourage children who are biting to use words to express feelings and needs rather than biting another child. Staff will address the child that bit someone in a short, simple, and clear manner.
- Staff will assess the quality of relationships between the child and the primary caregivers and the environmental influences on the child's behavior.
- The preschool will continue to consult with child care resources to provide information and training for staff to deal appropriately and effectively with biting behavior.
- Staff will explain to parents the specific steps that are being taken to address biting and the rationale for these steps. Some of the positive responses include positive role modeling, re-direction and giving children words to use.
- If biting occurs, a report will be written in accordance with the accident/injury policy. A report to parents will be sent home with the child who bit and a copy will be kept in the child's file. A written report will also notify parents of the child who was bitten.
- Names and details of incidents involving biting are considered confidential and will not be released to other participants or outside parties. Only staff will be made aware of the incident.

Behavior Policies

The YMCA embraces the values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility as the basis of all YMCA operations, staff development, and program development. The YMCA is committed to a positive approach to improving our community through its future leaders, our children. Character Development challenges others to accept and demonstrate positive values. Our staff serves as role models as well as teachers that promote good character. Children are guided to respect the rights and feelings of others and avoid disruptive behavior that interferes with program activities.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS INCLUDE:

- **Aggressive behaviors**, such as hitting, kicking, spitting, biting etc.
- Stealing or vandalizing the property of others
- Disrespect towards staff and others
- Verbal put downs
- Using harsh, disrespectful or hurtful language
- Bullying of any kind (verbal or physical)

EXPECTATIONS/ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS:

- Be kind to everyone
- Clean up after yourself
- Keeping hands feet and other body parts to yourself
- No bullying of any kind
- Being respectful of staff and other students
- Use helping hands and uplifting words



BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES:

When a problem arises that threatens the safety or health of a child, other children or staff, the staff will take immediate action to stop the behavior. Depending upon the severity of the inappropriate behavior, it may be necessary to temporarily remove the child from the situation. The Parent/Guardian will be notified and together we will work with the child to correct the behavior. If the behavior is severe enough a Parent/Guardian may be called to come pick up the child. **When a child's inappropriate behavior is persistent or the behavior is violent, expelling the preschooler from the program will be considered.**

REASONS FOR TERMINATION:

- A child's behavior is so severe that a parent has been called/notified at least 3 times
- A child's behavior is extremely violent making the environment unsafe for others
- A child or parent/guardian who is continuously disrespectful of the rules and guidelines
- A child who is not completely toilet trained
- A child who has extreme struggles with transitions or listening skills and who is deemed "not ready or equipped for a preschool setting".

Toilet Training

Every child attending preschool must be toilet trained. This means, knowing when they need the restroom, alerting staff when they need to go to the restroom or when they have had an accident, and wiping themselves after the bathroom.

Accidents do happen, this is why an extra set of clothing is necessary, however, if accidents are very persistent, or the child is not alerting staff that they have had an accident more than five times, they will be on a one week suspension to relearn toilet training necessities. After the relearning week, if the accidents are still persistent, the child will be asked to leave the program.

Rates for preschool

Due to staffing ratios and space we need to keep all children on a consistent schedule. Therefore, if you choose the 2 day option Tuesday and Thursday will be the days your child will attend. If you choose the 3 day option Monday, Wednesday and Friday are the days your child will attend.

*** Blue text signifies Early Bird Rates***

Preschool	Member Early Bird Rate (before 6/01/23)	Member After 6/1/23	Non-Member Early Bird Rate (before 6/01/23)	Non-member After 6/1/23
Full Day 8:30–3:30	2 day rate: \$86 (Tue/Thurs): 3 day rate: \$115 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$165	2 day rate: \$91 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$120 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$170	2 day rate: \$100 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$130 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$180	2 day rate: \$110 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$140 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$190
Half Day 8:30–12:30	2 day rate: \$50 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$66 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$95	2 day rate: \$55 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$71 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$100	2 day rate: \$57 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$74 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$103	2 day rate: \$67 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$84 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$113
Full day preschool and before and after care Drop off: 6:30–8:30am Pick Up: 3:30–5:30pm	2 day rate: \$100 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$140 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$200	2 day rate: \$105 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$145 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$205	2 day rate: \$114 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$155 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: \$215	2 day rate: \$124 (Tue/Thurs) 3 day rate: \$165 (M/W/F) 5 day rate: 225

Payment/ Fees

Program fees are **due every Friday**. Most major credit cards (except AMEX), cash, checks and debit are accepted. Failure to make payments will result in the denial of services. Rates are calculated based upon the YMCA providing care during the course of the school year, then averaged to determine a flat monthly rate. **If payment dues are late by two weeks or more then your child WILL BE unrolled from the program until payment is made. Your child's spot will not be held during this time.** If a child will be out for a week or more they must contact director, Nichole Lawrence-Cole to ensure they are not registered or charged.

Cancellations/Changes

If you need to cancel or change your enrollment day, or have any schedule changes please reach out to Nichole Lawrence-Cole at 570-784-0188 or by email at preschool@bloomsburg.org. Any changes must be discussed/written two weeks prior to the cancellation or change.



Thank you for choosing the Bloomsburg YMCA for your child this school year. We look forward to getting to know you and your child even better and making this school year the best ever!

2023–2024 Bloomsburg YMCA Preschool Handbook Agreement

I have read and reviewed the Bloomsburg YMCA preschool handbook for the 2023–2024 school year. I agree to adhere to the handbooks policies outlined in this agreement and give my child permission to participate fully in this program's policies set forth to me. Please return the signed form to your child's teacher.

I parent/guardian of

(Student name, please print)

understand and have read the 2023–2024 Bloomsburg YMCA preschool handbook and acknowledge what is required of myself and my child to participate fully in the program. I agree to adhere to the handbook agreement and policies for the 2023–2024 preschool year as outlined.

(Parent name, please print)

(Parent signature)

Date:

For a better us.®