



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Down East Family YMCA Early Learning Center Parent Handbook

An overview of our policies and procedures.

Our program focuses on our four core values of caring, respect, honesty, and responsibility which are incorporated through curriculum design and staff delivery.

Revised 2017

PARENTS PLEASE NOTE:

Updates to this policy handbook are made throughout the year. When significant changes are made as deemed necessary by the Down East Family YMCA, parents will be notified by letter. You may request a new handbook from your childcare center office at any time.

Please speak with your program coordinator or childcare director if you have any questions. The Down East Family YMCA reserves the right to change guidelines as particular situations arise. It is our goal to work with families to accommodate specific needs without jeopardizing the rules and regulations set forth by the State of Maine Rules for the Licensing of Childcare Facilities.

Down East Family YMCA Childcare Center reserves the right to make changes at any time, without notification, of policies in this handbook.

Contact Us

Down East Family YMCA Early Learning Centers

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Phone: (207)307-0324 · Fax: (207)664-0120
6:30am-5:30pm · Monday-Friday

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YMCA Beechland Early Learning Center

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6:00am-6:00pm · Monday-Friday

Childcare Director	Courtney Wood	cwood@defymca.org
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James Russell Wiggins Center · Down East Family YMCA

P.O. Box 25 · Ellsworth, ME 04605
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Associate Executive Director	Jean Wood	jwood@defymca.org

Hello Parents and Friends,

It is my absolute pleasure to welcome you and your family to the Down East Family YMCA Early Learning Center at the General Bryant E. Moore Community Center. We are grateful for your interest in our programs and look forward to serving your family.

Choosing our Early Learning Center means a great deal to us. We love our jobs and are anxious to show you how much! We feel we make a positive difference every day in a child's life.

Early childhood education gives your child the advantage for a successful transition into kindergarten. Getting an early start encourages confidence and builds a child's self-esteem for a lifelong love of learning. Whether you are beginning our Infant, Toddler, Preschool or Afterschool enrichment programs you are giving your child a life-long gift of learning. Learning how to be a part of a group, how to form relationships, and how to make meaningful contributions to classrooms and community are all part of the process to help support childhood development.

Our extremely dedicated staff is trained, educated, and knowledgeable in the field of child development and early childhood education. Between everyone, our teachers have over 200 years of experience! Pretty impressive! We require our teachers to complete up to 40 hours of continuing education and training each year to stay current in their field of work. Most of our teachers exceed this requirement for the sheer love of learning.

Our teachers have created an educational environment in which staff supports each other through positive interactions in all of our programs. This leads to positive learning experiences for your child. Without our remarkable, naturally gifted teachers, our centers' measured success would not be possible. I am excited that you will have the opportunity to form important, lasting relationships with this amazing group of people.

Should you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, or comments throughout your experience at our centers, please do not hesitate to contact me at 307-0324 ext. 307 or e-mail jmontgomery@defymca.org.

Again, welcome to our program!

My best,

Jessica Montgomery

Director

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Introduction to the YMCA

Mission Statement

Our mission is to build strong communities, families, and individuals by fostering respect and promoting a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

YMCA Early Learning Center Philosophy

The Philosophy of the Down East Family YMCA is to provide children with a safe, fun, high quality, reliable, friendly, and activity oriented environment. We will be teaching your child the YMCA's four core values: Caring, Respect, Honesty, and Responsibility.



Our centers are licensed by the State of Maine to provide care for children ages 6 weeks to age 5. Our afterschool programs provide care for kindergartners to 5th grade. All programs offer a secure and stimulating environment allowing children to develop imagination and share positive experiences with peers and adults. Our thoughtfully designed activities and play areas encourage children to explore and discover the world around them. Through this process, children develop self-help skills and a foundation for enjoyable learning throughout life.

We promise to follow best practices in childcare programming.

Our YMCA Early Learning department understands that parents/guardians are the primary influence in children's lives. We complement that influence by building a relationship of mutual trust and support; using open communication, we work with parents/guardians to create the best possible care for each child.

Best Practices

We implement best practices in our childcare program involving the entire staff, parents, and children by establishing attainable, realistic, and effective goals. When Best Practices are implemented, a positive environment for the staff and the children in our care is the inevitable outcome.

Our Childcare Centers strive to offer high quality, stimulating, caring programming where:

- Children have the opportunity to develop secure relationships with peers and staff.
- All children are treated equally.
- Children learn the ability to respect the rights of others.
- Staff co-operate with each other to provide positive role modeling.
- Children's self-esteem and individuality are encouraged.
- Staff provides a consistent approach with children and parents/guardians.
- Staff and parents/guardians work together.
- Staff respects the knowledge and abilities of others.
- A variety of activities are provided for children.
- Children are given choices throughout their day.
- Parents/guardians are listened to.
- Parents/guardians have the opportunity to contribute to the program and its evaluation process.
- The program reflects individual children's needs, abilities, and interests.
- The program enhances all areas of a child's development through thoughtful planning, observations, and communication.

Quality Rating System

Quality for ME is a voluntary system for licensed childcare providers to have their quality assessed on a 4 step rating scale. Expectations at each step must be met before moving to a higher level. Every step is an important quality measure based on the following criteria:

- Licensing history
- Learning environment (daily schedule, activities planned, etc.)
- Program evaluations (looking at strengths and weaknesses)
- Staff development (training opportunities for staff)
- Administrative policies and procedures (holiday closings, illnesses, etc.)
- Family involvement (welcoming parents into the classrooms)
- Community resources (where to find other services to help families)
- Child observations (watching for children's interests and skills)

The DEFYMCA Childcare Center is currently a Step 2. This means that our program has some policies, procedures and staff qualifications that are above and beyond those required by child care licensing.

Childcare Committee

A Childcare Committee exists to foster communication between parents/guardians and teachers regarding policies, fundraising, and program development. The committee consists of parents, the lead teacher of each room, and a Board member. Parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate any ideas, suggestions, or concerns with the committee.

The history of the YMCA Childcare Committee:

- Began in the summer of 2004, during our childcare expansion.
- Fund raising efforts have raised over \$80,000.
- Able to purchase more than \$40,000 of playground surfacing and equipment.
- Funds have been able to support staff trainings that go beyond our programs allotted in our budget.
- Addressed and changed health policies, medication policies, payment policies, and more.
- Volunteer efforts have included beautification of grounds, manning childcare information booths at childcare fairs, carpentry work, re-modeling projects, recognizing childcare appreciation day, arranging dinners for childcare staff, attending all fund raising events, designing marketing brochures and flyers, YMCA annual campaign volunteers, donating to Emmaus Center Families for Christmas, plus countless hours of personal time to help when the need arose.
- Continue to meet the needs of our community, childcare programs, and staff.

Staffing (requirements and training)

Each program is staffed by a Program Coordinator, whose responsibility is the operation of that particular program, including but not limited to the supervision of children and staff, program planning and implementation, communication and parent/guardian relations. The Program Coordinators are supported by additional staff based on the needs and size of the program.

The following requirements and qualifications were taken from the Rules for the Licensing of Childcare Facilities for the State of Maine.

Director and/or Program Coordinator:

The Director and Program Coordinator shall be at least 21 years of age and meet one of the following:

- Degree in Early Childhood Education – Bachelor of science/ Bachelor of Arts (BA/BS) in Early Childhood Education; or

- Degree and experience- an Associate in Arts/ Associate in Science (AA/AS in Early Childhood Education and (3) years direct childhood experience; or
- AA/AS and experience – AA/AS in a related field with (18) credit hours in Early Childhood Education and (3) years direct childhood experience
- BA/BS and experience- BA/BS in related field with (18) credit hours in Early Childhood Education and (3) years direct childhood experience
- Credential and experience- Child Development Associate (CDA) as awarded by the CDA National Credentialing Program with (5) years direct experience, or
- Experience and training- (7) years of experience and (180) hour of training in healthy, safe environments, child development; observations and assessment; developmentally appropriate practice; guidance; relationships with families; individual and cultural diversity or business and professional development; childcare, early childhood education, topics related to operating a childcare facility; or other subjects related to age or characteristics of children for whom care is planned

School age childcare program:

Directors and Program Coordinators of school age childcare programs (Afterschool Care) will have a BA/BS in Early Childhood Education or closely related field such as elementary education or recreation management or an AA/AS in Early Childhood Education or closely related field such as elementary education, youth development, or recreation management and (2) years of experience or meet requirements of a CDA or (7) years of experience and (180) hours in above topics.

Qualifications of Childcare staff:

All staff must be at least (18) years of age.

All staff shall have a high school diploma or equivalent or is attending high school or enrolled in a GED (general Education Development) preparation program.

All staff shall demonstrate the following:

- The ability and willingness to comply with all applicable laws and rules;
- The ability to provide safe, compassionate services;
- A history of honest and lawful conduct. We require two complete background checks
- In addition, all staff will be required to have the following trainings:
- CPR/ First Aid in infant, child and adult
- 9 trainings hours per year in Health and Nutrition & Physical Activity/ Movement
- Maine Early Learning Guidelines for Preschool Age (preschool staff)
- Maine Early Learning Guidelines for Infants/ Toddlers (infant/ toddler staff)
- Caring for Infants/ Toddlers and their Families (Infant/ toddler staff)
- How to be a Mandated Reporter

Staff scheduled to work 20 hours or less per week must have 18 hours of training per year.

Staff scheduled to work more than 20 hours per week must have 30 hours of training per year

Program Coordinators and Childcare directors must have 40 hours of training per year.

Supervision of staff:

Upon hire, immediate supervisors and the Childcare Director will orient new staff, including volunteers, prior or during the first week of services in the following:

- Rules for the licensing of childcare facilities
- YMCA Personnel Policy Handbook
- YMCA Best Practices Handbook for Childcare Employees
- Fire drills and other emergency procedures

New staff members will have documentation of all service training prior to hire. All current staff will show documented evidence of on-going trainings. Each staff member will be evaluated yearly on performance and will have documented evaluations on file.

The childcare centers also provide staff with monthly meetings with immediate supervisors, childcare center wide staff meetings with the Childcare Director, and YMCA organization meetings with the CEO.

Volunteers and substitutes will be provided orientation to enable them to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

Confidentiality

We believe that our parents/guardians, children, and staff deserve the right to privacy. It is our goal to represent the organization's mission and core values. Absolutely no information regarding a present or former individual (child, family, student, or employee) is discussed by staff with anyone outside of our childcare center or posted online.

Staff members of the DEFYMCA Childcare Centers may not offer babysitting services to families with children in our care.

General Information

Holidays and Closings

The DEFYMCA Childcare Centers are closed to observe the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve
- Closed New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (4th of July)
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- The day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

There is no reduction of weekly fees due to these holidays.

It is not customary our centers to close due to weather. If you are unsure if we are closed or delayed opening due to a snow storm please call the YMCA, check our Facebook page, website (www.defymca.org), or listen to STAR 97.7 FM for postings. The YMCA Child Care centers have only closed for a full day three times in 18 years!!!

If your child is enrolled in one of our off-site afterschool locations the school reserves the right to cancel programing due to weather. Payment is still expected for these days.

Security/Front Desk

The Moore Community Center Site will have a staff member on duty at the front desk. This allows everyone to be greeted upon entering and someone to answer phones to answer questions or provide direction when needed. For security, the doors to the childcare wing are locked from 9 am to 4 pm, Monday-Friday. Please see the front desk staff or the main office for assistance accessing the classrooms.

Upon entering the buildings, parents are required to stop at the front desk to sign their children in and out of the building using our iPad system. If you have any questions about how the system works please do not hesitate to ask for assistance.

A photo I.D. is required for each person allowed to pick up the children in our care until teachers get to know each individual. We want to use every measure of precaution in regards to the safety and welfare of the children in our care.

Individuals that are not on the pick-up list may not pick up a child unless written or verbal notification is received from the child's parent/guardian. A photo I.D. will be required at time of pick up.

Enrollment Procedure and Forms

Available Childcare Programs

Infant & Early Toddler: 6 weeks - 18 months

Toddler: 18 months - 3 ½ years

Preschool 3 ½ - 5

Afterschool – Grades kindergarten - 5th grade

Summer Camp – entering kindergarten (age 5 by June 15th) - Grade 9

Infant through Preschool Enrollment Procedure

Over the years, our organization has identified a trend in the amount of hours families need for care for their child throughout the day. We believe the enrollment cost should honestly reflect the diverse flexibility we are able to offer each family. We have formulated an enrollment structure that accommodates the schedules of working families as well as our staffing demands. We ask that you commit to a 9 hour, 10 hour or 11 hour (full flexibility) time slot. **Our Beechland site does provide a 12 hour slot.** By providing us with a time slot that closely corresponds with your family's schedule, you provide us the opportunity to efficiently and effectively staff your child's classroom. Our teachers will know when to expect your child to start and end their day with us. For more information on time slots or pricing please see the enrollment forms in your parent packet.

The Child Care enrollment for new participants includes:

- A one hour minimum visit with a parent/guardian, child, and head teacher. The visit will acquaint the parent/guardian and child with the teachers, kids, and daily routine. The best time to visit is between 8 am and 10:00 am or 3 pm and 4 pm. Additional visits may be scheduled as deemed necessary by parents/guardians or teachers until the child feels secure, comfortable, and at home in the new setting.

- Immunization Record**
- Completed YMCA Registration Form
- Completed Financial Agreement
- Completed Bank Draft Information
- Other program specific authorization forms.
- If there are custody arrangements in place for a child, the custodial parent/guardian is requested to make those arrangements known to the center staff at the time of enrollment. If any relevant court orders are in effect, a copy of the court order(s) will need to be provided. Without a copy of the order, we cannot keep the child from the other parent.

****Please note: A copy of current immunizations is required upon enrollment. If you have chosen to abstain from vaccinations for religious, ethical or philosophical reasons, licensing requires a written document stating this upon enrollment.**

After School Enrollment Procedure

If your child will be requiring Afterschool care and you are currently enrolled in Preschool you will be guaranteed a slot until August 15th. After August 15th, enrollment will become first come first served.

To enroll, each child will need:

- Completed YMCA Registration Form
- Payment Contract
- Other various authorization forms

Licensing

All of the programs at the DEFYMCA childcare centers are licensed by the State of Maine. Copies of our licensing certificates are available for viewing throughout the childcare centers. Copies of the licensing rules and regulations are available in the offices as well as every classroom.

How to report a licensing violation:

The Down East Family YMCA Childcare Centers programs are licensed by the State of Maine. Copies from the Fire Marshall and Maine State Licensing Childcare Division are available for your review. Should you feel the childcare programs are in violation of the state requirements, you may contact the Maine Department of Health and Human Service Division of Licensing and Regulatory Services at (207)287-9300 or 1-800-791-4080 or email dhrs.info@maine.gov.

Child Abuse Prevention

The Down East Family YMCA Childcare Centers shall make all staff and volunteers aware during annual trainings provided by local organizations of their status and responsibilities as Mandated Reporters when there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of a child under the age of 18.

Staff and volunteers will be trained to recognize the common signs and symptoms of child maltreatment or neglect which are discussed during staff orientation and during annual trainings.

Whenever a staff member or volunteer knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or maltreated, the staff member will contact their immediate supervisor. The supervisor will then contact the Director who will then contact the CEO of the Down East Family YMCA. The immediate supervisor or Director will make the call to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) 1-800-452-1999 within 24 hours of becoming aware of the suspected abuse and neglect.

When reports are made in good faith, reporters are immune from civil or criminal liability for the act or reporting or participating in the investigation or proceeding. (Maine State Licensing for Childcare facilities, article 21.1)

Suspected Child Abuse by Childcare Providers/Volunteers

If a staff member or volunteer is suspected of child abuse or maltreatment of a child in our care, that staff member or volunteer will be reported to the proper authorities for investigation. They may be suspended or given leave (with/without pay) pending investigation of the accusation. Staff or volunteer may also be removed from the classroom and given a job that does not require interaction with children. No accusation or affirmation of guilt will be made until the investigation is complete. Staff or volunteers found guilty will be summarily dismissed or relieved of their duties.

The Down East Family YMCA Childcare Centers and staff/volunteers shall cooperate in the investigation of allegations of abuse and neglect by:

- Meeting with DHHS or law enforcement investigators and answering questions related to the investigation
- Testifying in court when served with summons
- Providing written records related to the investigation when served with a summons

Staff Requirements for Reporting a Licensing Violation

All staff is required to report to their immediate supervisor any licensing violations of DHHS licensing Rules and Regulations for operating childcare facilities.

Staff shall report to their immediate supervisor any witnessed detrimental actions or practices regarding the welfare of children in our care as defined by the division of Licensing and Regulatory Services. These actions include but are not limited to the following:

- Corporal Punishment
- Use of a stick or other instrument in disciplining a child
- Sexual abuse
- Lack of Supervision
- Neglect in any form
- Withholding food or drink
- Derogatory remarks to or about children or parents
- Name calling
- Shaming or embarrassment
- Unusual confinement
- Rough handling

Arrival and Departure

Children must be brought into the center by an adult. The adult must sign child(ren) in/out using the iPad system at the front desk. When dropping off your child:

- Please escort him/her to the classroom.
- Convey messages to the staff.
- Help your child unpack.
- Say a nice goodbye before departing.

Children will be released only to a parent/guardian or those people listed on the emergency contact card/registration form for pick up. Parents must authorize the YMCA in writing to release their child to a person not listed on the authorization form. In the event that written notice is not possible, parents must advise the YMCA as soon as possible by telephone. When the escort arrives, he/she will be required to submit a photo ID for verification purposes.

If a parent/guardian or authorized individual arrives to pick up children and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, center staff will request the local police evaluate the person to determine fitness to drive. If the individual removes the child from the facility before a police evaluation, the center staff will immediately notify the police of their concerns.

Injury

Accident and Emergency Procedures

YMCA Early Learning Centers staff members are all Infant and Child CPR and First Aid certified. Any accident requiring first aid treatment will be reported by staff on an Accident Report Form. Parents are asked to read, sign, and return the report to the teacher. A copy of the report is filed in the child's folder. Minor accidents such as small cuts, scrapes, skinned knees, etc. are cleaned and covered with a bandage. Bumps and bruises are treated with ice packs. Parents/guardians are notified immediately of accidents that may require a doctor's care. If an accident occurs that requires immediate medical care, the child will be taken to the nearest health care facility in the company of a staff member. The Emergency Procedure form in the registration packet authorizes the YMCA to obtain medical care when your child must be treated in your absence.

Accident Insurance

YMCA Early Learning Centers' liability insurance does not extend to accidents incurred by children on the premises. Parents should take steps to ensure they have adequate means to provide for medical expenses arising from any injury sustained while in care.

Illness/ Medication

The Downeast Family YMCA Early Learning Centers' (the "Center") Illness and Medication Policy adheres to the Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") guidelines and focuses on both the needs and behaviors of the ill child as well as the ability of the staff to meet the ill child's needs without compromising the care of other children. At our Centers, we understand and appreciate the needs of working and student parents/guardians. However, it is essential that children at our Centers are protected from exposure to illnesses to every extent possible. It is our belief that ill children, under certain circumstances, would benefit from care in the comfort of their own home.

The following sections outline the circumstances under which the Center will require an ill child to stay home, or if already in care, be sent home, as well as the Center's guidelines for administering over the counter ("OTC") and prescription medications.

DEFY Early Learning Center Health Consultant

Our Center's Health Consultant is Dr. Sheena Whittaker of Maine Coast Pediatrics. Dr. Whittaker trains staff annually in the following health procedures and practices:

- Medication dispensing
- Access to emergency medical services

- Prevention and control of communicable diseases
- Common childhood illnesses
- Inclusive and exclusionary illnesses

Through trainings and other resources, Dr. Whittaker advises all staff and parents/guardians of current health issues to help promote the overall health and well-being of the Centers' programs.

Symptoms Requiring a Child to be Sent Home

The following is a list of symptoms requiring a child to be sent home:

- Fever of 100.4° or higher with no known source (see Fever Policy below)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools (three or more consistently loose stools AND also exhibiting noticeable signs of discomfort)
- Blood found in stool
- Any illness accompanied by uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or wheezing.
- Unidentifiable rash
- Behaviors that require child to receive one-on-one care.

The Center reserves the right to send home any ill child at the discretion of either the Program Coordinator or the Childcare Director. In general, a child must be well enough to participate in classroom activities as our classrooms are not staffed so that a child can receive one-on-one care for all or a substantial part of the day. If a child has been exposed to/has contracted a contagious disease, the Center asks that the parent/guardian please report the details to the Program Coordinator as soon as possible.

When illness develops, the child's parent/guardian will be notified and the child will be required to be picked up within one (1) hour. If the Center is unable to reach the child's parent/guardian, or if the child is unable to be picked up within one (1) hour, the Center will call the child's emergency contacts on file with the Center.

Symptoms Requiring a Child to Stay Home

The following is a list of symptoms requiring a child to stay home:

- Fever that is higher than 100.4° and is not responding to OTC medications. Dr. Whittaker recommends that a child be fever free for twenty-four (24) hours without the use of OTC medications to return to care.
- Vomiting two or more times within a twenty-four (24) hour period.

- If a child has been prescribed a **NEW** antibiotic, the child must stay home for a twenty-four (24) hour period after the first dose is administered to monitor possible reactions to the medication. If a child has been prescribed a previously taken antibiotic, the Center requires a doctor's note stating the medication has previously been prescribed and that no reaction has been noted.
- If a child has a contagious illness and is prescribed antibiotics, the child must stay home for twenty-four (24) hours after the first dose is given.

For the health and wellness of all children and staff at the Centers, we request that parents/guardians exercise every precaution and keep their child at home under the foregoing circumstances in accordance with this policy.

FEVER POLICY

Fever Definition: For purposes of this policy, fever is defined as having a temperature greater than 100.4° when taken under the arm. The Center's staff will take an initial fever reading and then check again after thirty (30) minutes. This helps to give an accurate reading.

If the child has a fever, the child may remain in care under the following circumstances:

- A known source of the fever is determined
- The child is drinking and urinating well
- The child is comfortable enough to participate in daily classroom activities
- The child has no visible behavioral changes

The staff will monitor the child and contact the parent/guardian should the child's symptoms worsen.

If the child has a fever, the child is required to be sent home under the following circumstances:

- There is no known source
- The child is not drinking or urinating well
- The child is uncomfortable/unable to be consoled
- The child has visible behavioral changes

If any of the foregoing symptoms are present in addition to a fever, the child's parents/guardians will be notified and the child will be required to be picked up immediately. If the Center is unable to reach the child's parent/guardian, or the parent/guardian is unable to pick up the child immediately, the Center will call the child's emergency contacts on file with the Center.

Please Note: Any child with a fever registering 102° or higher will be sent home immediately.

HEAD LICE

Children with head lice (small, tan colored insects that live on the scalp) should be treated with a medicated shampoo rinse or lotion developed specifically for head lice. Upon detection of head lice, the child will immediately be sent home for the remainder of the day. When the child returns to child care, a staff member will check for live louse and nits. If live louse are found, the child must return home for additional treatment.

If no live louse are detected and nits are two (2) inches away from scalp and easily removable, the child may remain in care.

The parent or guardian is required to stay with the child and staff member during the check.

MEDICATION POLICY

Over the Counter (“OTC”) medications:

The Centers intention behind this policy is to avoid children remaining in care through continual and controlled comfort using primarily OTC medications, when in actuality there could be an underlying condition or contagious illness that may require a doctor’s care and/or rest. We believe that children who require more than one (1) dose of OTC medication and are in discomfort would benefit from rest in the comfort of their home. The Center will administer OTC medication according to the following guidelines:

- The Center staff will administer one (1) dose of any OTC medication per day.
- OTC medication must be in the original container.
- If dosing directions from the parent/guardian differ from the medication’s recommended dosage for a child’s age, a doctor’s note is required.
- Any OTC medications brought from home must be given to a teacher and a medication dispensing log must be completed. OTC medications may not remain in a child’s backpack or with a child’s belongings.

Prescription Medications

Children requiring prescription medications during care in our Centers shall receive the prescribed medication by staff under the conditions described below:

- All medication must be either prescribed or recommended by a physician.
- Medication will only be administered to a child with written parent/guardian authorization indicating the condition requiring the medication, the dosage, time and potential side effects. If the medication is given in response to certain symptoms those symptoms must be specified.
- Prescription medication must be in the original container and will be followed as indicated on the container.
- The first dose of all new medication or change in dosage of current medication must be given at home. Please notify the head teacher of any medication that the child is currently taking, including any cold medicine.
- Dosage time(s) will be followed as accurately as possible. The staff member who gives the medicine will sign or initial the medication form indicating that the medication was administered.
- Staff will communicate with parents/guardians about any concerns regarding the medication and or information about the child.
- All medications are kept in a medicine box or in the kitchen in the refrigerator out of reach of children.
- Medications that are to be given once a day should be given at home.
- Staff will attempt to administer medication, but cannot force the child to consume the medication.

Nebulizer treatments

Nebulizer treatments may be administered in the classroom. **First time treatments need to be given at home.** In the event that a first time treatment needs to be given in the classroom, we ask that the parent administer the treatment. Staff will make every attempt to administer on-going treatments to a child; however, if a child refuses treatment the staff will contact the parent for further recommendation. Our staff cannot administer medication to a child against their will.

Blood Exposure

An exposure is defined as contact with blood or bodily fluids to which universal precautions apply such as:

- An injury to the skin (i.e. Cut with a sharp object).
- Mucous membranes

- Skin that is chapped, chafed, or otherwise affected so that an effective skin barrier is not present.
- A bite or injury that results in blood exposure.

Latex or protective gloves are worn by staff when dealing with blood or bodily fluids. If exposure does occur the following steps will be taken:

- Wash with soap and water after exposure to infectious materials or after taking off gloves or other personal protective equipment.
- Use antiseptic, cleansers, or towelettes if no washing facilities are available
- Place contaminated items in a plastic bag and discard in the proper location.
- Notify supervisor immediately.
- Program Coordinator or Childcare Director will contact parent/guardian.

Communicable Disease

We are required to inform parents/guardians of illness in our Centers. These policies were taken from Managing Infectious Diseases in Childcare and Schools, American Academy of Pediatrics and through the direct consultation of Dr. Sheena Whitaker, Maine Coast Pediatrics.

Chickenpox

Chicken pox is an illness with a rash and fever caused by the varicella-zoster virus.

Signs or symptoms of chickenpox:

- Rash (small red spots and bumps blistering over 3 – 4 days, then forming scabs)
Blister crops will come out over a period of several days, so that the person who has the chickenpox for more than a day or so will have some red bumps, blisters and scabbed over blisters all at the same time.
- Rash is more noticeable on the trunk than exposed parts of the body
- Rash may appear inside mouth, ears, genital areas, and scalp
- Fever, runny nose, and cough

The incubation period for chickenpox is usually 14 -16 days but occasionally can be as short as 10 days and can last as long as 21 days after contact.

The most contagious period after exposure to chickenpox is while the rash is spreading. A child can be contagious a day before the rash appears. An infected person will no longer spread the virus when all of the blisters have scabs and no new blisters re-forming.

Chickenpox is considered a reportable illness. Please take the necessary steps to confirm your child has chickenpox. Once your child is confirmed, please notify the Program Coordinator. We are required to post the illness in our Center. A child may return to the

Center after no new blisters have formed, all blisters have scabbed (usually after 6 days of the start of the rash), and overall health has improved.

Biting

The safety of the children in our childcare program is our primary concern. As children achieve or reach major developmental milestones, they become increasingly independent. In order to foster a healthy independence, our staff provides our children with constructive and appropriate ways to manage behavior. Our staff models and facilitates to help our children make “good choices” and interact positively with peers.

Throughout the developmental process, biting can be one of the many obstacles that toddlers (0-3 years) will commonly face in group settings such as childcare. Biting may occur when a child:

- Is unable to communicate verbally (i.e. child is babbling and does not have many words).
- Is frustrated or angry.
- Is seeking attention.
- Is teething.
- Needs to satisfy their strong need for independence and control.
- As a defense mechanism for a child who feels threatened.

It is important to recognize that this behavior is a normal part of a child’s growth and development. Biting is developmentally appropriate but socially unacceptable. Biting is usually upsetting to all parties involved (including the family of the child who bit). During this difficult transition, we ask that parents be patient with the children and staff as they identify patterns or reasons for biting and implement a plan of action to prevent it.

The following sections contain information specific to each program, including how instances of biting are handled for that particular age group. Please refer to the appropriate section below for more information about how biting is handled in your child’s classroom. CONFIDENTIALITY OF ALL CHILDREN INVOLVED WILL BE MAINTAINED.

Infant

Though socially unacceptable, biting is developmentally appropriate for this age group. We understand that children need to express themselves through actions when they are not yet able to communicate verbally. Communication is a key reason that children bite, but also children in this young age group are explorers and need to discover how things taste, feel, and react when the child uses his/her mouth. We strive to help children communicate effectively with their peers and teachers so we will first try to understand why the bite happened and then determine the best approach to address the situation.

If/when a child is bitten the following procedure will take place:

- Give him/her big hugs and snuggles and lots of attention, comforting the child until he/she is in a good place to go back and join his/her friends.
- Wash the bite with soap and water.
- Ice the bite (as long as the child will let us - some children find this more upsetting).
- If the skin is broken, or if parents/guardians have requested so, we will call to inform them the bite has occurred.

If/when a child bites another child the following procedure will take place:

- The child will not receive a big reaction to the bite but will be removed to the other end of the classroom for space.
- The child will be offered an object to bite out of the "biting alternative box."
- We will try to satisfy all of the child's basic needs to see if the child was trying to communicate that he/she was hungry, needed a diaper, was tired, or wanted milk.
- We will show the child easy touches and teach words/signs to communicate with his/her peers/teachers more effectively.
- If the skin is broken, or if parents/guardians have requested so, we will call to inform them the bite has occurred.

TODDLER AND EARLY PRESCHOOL

As previously stated, biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior that may occur in the classroom. Although socially unacceptable, biting is considered developmentally appropriate up until age 3.

If/when a child is bitten the following procedure will take place:

- Remove the child from the immediate situation in a calm manner.
- Comfort with validation, snuggles, and empathy.
- Wash area with soap and water.
- Apply ice if child will allow.
- If skin is broken, a call to the parent will be made by lead staff.
- A bite report will be written requiring parent/guardian signature upon pick up.

If/when a child bites another child the following procedure will take place:

- Immediate attention will not be given as all attention is given to the peer who was bitten.
- Try to identify reason for bite to apply proper modeling (hunger, communication, emotional response, teething, and/or sensory overload).

- Give an alternative item to bite and explain, "Teeth are not for biting friends, but you may bite a teether".
- Explain that biting hurts. Do not make the child check on peer or apologize because the peer needs space and children do not yet understand apologies.
- A bite report will be written requiring parent/guardian signature upon pick up.
- If the bite breaks the skin a parent/guardian will be called by lead staff.

When the biting behavior becomes a safety issue requiring that a staff member be assigned one-on-one to that child, lead staff will call the parent/guardian and may request that the child be sent home for the remainder of the day.

If biting becomes a reoccurring behavior for a child (3 or more bites/week) an action plan will be created to assist the staff and parents on the situation. An action plan is a form developed for the child outlining goals and actions to be taken by parents/guardians and providers.

PRESCHOOL

Preschoolers are ruled by their emotions and impulses. They are just beginning to understand their feelings but have not learned all of the things they need to control them. Impulse control is not yet developed, so if your child feels something, they are most likely going to act on it whether it is positively or negatively.

Three and four year olds may use biting (as well as hitting or pushing) to resolve conflicts when they feel angry, frustrated, or overwhelmed. While biting is one of the more unacceptable, aggressive behaviors, children of this age still do not completely understand the difference of appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Our goal is to help them develop social skills and learn appropriate behaviors.

If/when a child bites another child the following procedure will take place:

- Intervene immediately, directing most of the attention on the child that was bitten. We will tell the child that bit "I do not like it when you bite people. It hurts!"
- Wash the bite with soap and water and get an ice pack for the child.
- A bite report will be written (one for each child's parent/guardian) requiring parent/guardian signature upon pick up.
- Parents will be notified at pick up or via telephone depending on the severity of the bite.
- We will continue to observe the child that bit and intervene as necessary.

If the biting incidents continue, we will schedule a meeting with the child's parents/guardians to discuss our concerns and observations and to prepare an action plan. An action plan is a form developed for the child outlining goals and actions to be taken by

parents/guardians and providers. Periodic meetings will be scheduled with parents/guardians and teachers to evaluate the progress of the individual child to determine if the child qualifies for early intervention through Child Development Services (CDS). If the child is eligible for specialized services through CDS, the parents/guardians, teachers, and CDS personnel will work together to navigate the best interest of the child. This may include specially designed instruction within the classroom through one-on-one support. If after Child Development Services intervention proves the child is not making satisfactory progress, the Center will determine if the child's needs are greater than what the Down East Family YMCA Early Learning Centers can provide.

Emergency Procedures

Our Centers practice drills monthly in case of emergencies. All staff are trained in emergency protocol and fire exit maps are posted in each classroom. For more information please talk to your program coordinator.

Inclusion Policy

Our Childcare programs are designed to help each child reach developmental milestones. Our curriculum enhances each child's potential with intention to build upon skills needed for school readiness.

When an individual child is in need of extra support reaching learning objectives and goals based on each program's developmental checklist, our Center will make every effort with the parents/guardians and child to bring any necessary community resources and assistance to the child.

Our Centers follow the steps below when identifying children in need of outside assistance:

1. The staff will evaluate the child's development through observations and documentation based on age-appropriate assessments.
2. The staff will document concerns regarding the child's social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and fine/gross motor development.
3. The staff and Program Coordinator will review collected documentation and discuss concerns. The Program Coordinator will notify the Childcare Director of specific concerns
4. The Program Coordinator will request a parent/guardian meeting to talk about the options of community resources available to the child and family.

When it is decided that additional outside support be contacted for evaluation, our program will use these community resources:

- The Center for Community Inclusion
- Child Development Services
- Child and Family Opportunities
- Private Practices

These free services provide our programs, children, and parents/guardians with information, referrals, and tools to help children reach their potential while enrolled in our Centers. The DEFYMCA Childcare Centers will make every attempt to include children receiving services. If the DEFYMCA Childcare Centers cannot meet the needs of a child determined by appropriate professionals, alternative care may be needed.

Clothing

Children should dress in comfortable play clothes that are weather appropriate. We strongly encourage shoes that support active play. Children often soil their clothes when eating, playing, and participating in program activities. As such a spare set of clothes should be sent each day or left in your child's cubby box. Please label all clothing with your child's name. Please do not inhibit your child by dressing them in clothes that should not get stained, dirty, or messy.

State law requires that your child be given access to the outdoors at least two hours each day, weather permitting. This will include the winter months so please make sure to send boots, mittens, hats, and snow pants when needed.

Program Structure

Ratios

Our staff to child ratio at Down East Family YMCA Childcare Centers:

- After School 1 to 13
- Preschool ... 1 to 8
- Toddlers ... 1 to 5
- Infants ... 1 to 4

These are the state licensing requirements. The staffing patterns in our Centers usually exceed the minimum staff to child ratios.

Transitions

The transitional process between rooms depends on the three criteria, all of which can be reviewed by the child care staff and parents/guardians based on individual circumstances:

1. Availability
2. Age
3. A child's development
4. Potty Trained before going into Preschool

Availability:

A child will only be allowed to transition when a slot becomes available. This is considered when the open slot left by another child can be filled by another child currently enrolled in the program. If this cannot take place, the slot will be opened to the public. This may indicate a waiting period for a child who has met the age requirement. The staff will make every effort to ensure that a child will be moved when the next slot becomes available.

Development:

All staff work cohesively to prepare children for their graduation into the next learning environment. To provide a child with the best possible foundation, each room implements a strong curriculum which includes growth in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Each classroom has specific development recommendations that need to be met before a child is able to transition. If there are any concerns with a child's development or special needs, a meeting with the Program Coordinator and the parents/guardians will be scheduled to discuss how to create a successful transition.

Parent Notifications of Transitions:

The parents/guardians will be notified by their current lead teacher two months prior to the scheduled transition that their child has met the criteria to transition to the next

program. Parents/guardians will receive a transition packet from the new Program Coordinator.

Based on availability, the scheduled transition from room to room will take place over a minimum of two weeks allowing the child to grow accustomed to their new teachers and classmates.

During the process, the parent(s) and Program Coordinators of the respective rooms are required to meet to discuss the child's transition schedule, express ideas and thoughts, review the new program, and collect a transitional packet which contains:

1. A letter from the new Program Coordinator
2. A schedule of the transition days and times for the child
3. A daily schedule for the new program
4. New registration form and emergency contact card
5. Any other program specific information regarding the child's new environment

Please Note: Our Centers recognize transitional periods for children in June and September. Should space become available outside of these months parents will be notified by the child's current teachers.

Curriculum

We offer a secure and stimulating environment that allows children to develop their imagination and share positive experiences with peers and adults. Our thoughtfully designed activities and play areas encourage children to explore and discover the world around them. Through this process, children develop self-help skills as well as a foundation for enjoyable learning throughout life. We use Creative Curriculum as a framework for authentic assessment. We plan activities and develop individual goals for children in order to ensure that all children have meaningful opportunities for learning.

Additional Goals for children's development and learning:

- To explore and discover the world at an individual pace, with the support and guidance of responsive adults
- To involve parents/guardians as their child's most important teachers
- To build relationships with other children and adults
- To promote a healthy self-image

Experiences:

- Children have access to a variety of activities. They spend most of their time playing and working with materials independently and with other children.
- Children have the opportunity to play outside every day (weather permitting).

- Families are invited and encouraged to share their special talents, interests, and professions with the group.
- Opportunities exist for meaningful conversations throughout the day, sharing life experiences.
- Conversation between teachers and parents/guardians help support the development of individual child's goals.

Roles:

- Parents/guardians are considered to be the experts regarding their child(ren). Family members are partners that contribute to the development of curriculum. We encourage family input in the assessment process. We will be happy to meet with parents/guardians at any given time to discuss the child's development upon parent request.
- Teachers act as guides and facilitators for children as they gain skills. Teachers observe children and complete a developmental checklist twice a year. They use this information, in addition to parent/guardian input, to create meaningful experiences and programming for children. A teacher may request to meet with parents or guardians to discuss development.
- Childcare Director and lead teachers provide supervision and support to all teaching staff. Leadership roles also promote quality programming for children and support the continuing professional development of staff.

DEFYMCA Early Learning Centers use the following Early Childhood resources to support curriculum development:

- State of Maine Preschool Early Learning Guidelines
- State of Maine Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines
- Guiding Children's Social Development by Kostelnik, Stein, Whiren and Sodermen
- 5210 Physical Activity and Nutrition Resources
- Handwriting Without Tears
- Literacy and the Youngest Learner

Classroom Communication

The communication between parents, staff, and children is vital in creating a quality program. Parents are encouraged to talk with the teachers regularly.

Each Program has their own process for communicating with parents and distributing information. Some examples of this communication are:

- Newsletters containing current information and upcoming events
- Parent/Guardian bulletin boards or white boards outside of classrooms highlighting daily activities
- Daily information sheets / progress notes

- Daily Connect (an electronic daily communication)
- Parent pockets

Parent/guardian involvement is extremely important to our children as well as our programs, and we welcome volunteers and visitors. We have implemented several ways in which communication flows freely but still caters to everyone’s busy lifestyles.

We encourage parents to reach out to teachers or Program Coordinators if you have any questions, concerns, ideas, or just want to chat about your child.

Behavior Management

Our behavioral management policy is strongly guided by the Four Core Values of the YMCA:

Honesty Respect Caring Responsibility

Our staff models and teaches these life values in all of our programs. Beginning with infancy and continuing throughout their experience in our programs, the importance of following these character building values is key. We recognize the social and emotional development of the specific ages of the children in our care and follow the appropriate, positive action(s) needed to foster a healthy self-image.

We do	We do not
Praise, reward, and encourage	Physically punish
Reason with and set limits	Tease, belittle, shame, or make fun of
Model appropriate behavior and language	Talk to or about the child or their families disrespectfully
Build on problem solving skills to prevent or rectify situations before they occur	Never shame or punish for bathroom accidents
Listen	Deny food, drink, or rest
Give choices and alternatives for inappropriate behaviors	Relate discipline to food, drink, or rest
Utilize natural logical consequences of behaviors to enforce changes in behavior	Rely solely on apologies. Empty apologies do not promote empathy or emotional growth and understanding.
Remain consistent with practices	Leave children alone or isolated
Use age appropriate language	Speak out of anger or use sarcasm
Ignore minor behaviors	Disregard behaviors that are teachable moments or cause harm to others
Remember the developmental stages so that expectations are realistic	Set unrealistic goals that children cannot obtain

Our behavioral goals are to teach children to:

- Solve problems creatively
- Understand logical and natural consequences to their actions
- Understand self-responsibility
- Show empathy towards others
- Be open to the idea of inclusion, rather than exclusion
- Seek help from our staff when they feel overwhelmed
- Avoid using any form of negative resolutions such as: verbal, emotional, and/or physical attacks

Behavior is a way for a child to express a need. When a child in our program demonstrates the in-ability to practice these behavior goals, the lead teacher and staff of the respective room will develop and implement a positive plan of action specific to the need(s) of the child. Parents/guardians will be notified and asked to become involved in changing the behavior.

If the behavior is habitual or dangerous to the well-being of the child and/or other children, despite the on-going efforts of the lead teacher, staff, and parents/guardians, the child may be taken out of the classroom and sent home for the remainder of the day.

Our program puts the welfare of the child first. If the needs of the child are more than our programs can provide, alternative care may be recommended.

Potty-Training

We believe that potty-training should be an empowering endeavor for each child. We understand that it can be a lengthy process at times and that can be frustrating for children as well as parents/guardians. We feel that it is our position to support the child and the family routine using encouragement and keeping in constant communication with progress updates.

Parents are asked to supply the items necessary for their child's level of potty-training development (wipes, diapers, pull ups, underwear, and full changes of clothes including socks and shoes).

Quiet Rest Time

The State of Maine licensing rules and regulations require each program in our Centers to observe a rest time. Each program has a daily schedule that specifies the rules and length of quiet time. For the Toddlers and Preschoolers this is an opportunity for resting bodies. Sleep is not required. Infants and Early Toddlers sleep as their body requires it whenever they require it.

Toys From Home

We understand that children like to bring their favorite toys from home to show to their friends. However, problems can arise because sometimes children do not like to share their toys. Toys may become broken or lost or the toys may not be appropriate for a classroom setting. Accordingly, if a child wishes to bring a toy, he/she **may** display it to friends and/or share it at circle time and then the toy must be placed in the child's cubby box until the child leaves for the day. PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S CLASSROOM POLICY ON TOYS.

SCHOOL AGE

Before and Afterschool Care

The Down East Family YMCA offers quality care for school age children. Children enjoy physical activities, homework help, organized games, and much more while under the direct supervision of caring, experienced and trained staff. Programming, ages and times vary by location.

Before School Care

Offered in Ellsworth at the Moore Community Center location beginning at 6:30 a.m. and Beechland Road location beginning at 6:00 a.m. For Ellsworth Students ages kindergarten-5th grade. Designed for families working before school begins. Children at the Beechland Road location ride the bus to Ellsworth Elementary Middle School. Children at the Moore Community Center walk to EMMS (during inclement weather, children will ride the bus).

Afterschool Care

We offer afterschool in the following locations:

Ellsworth Beechland and Moore Community Center locations:

Monday-Thursday 2:30-5:30 p.m. Friday 1:30-5:30 p.m.

Lamoine Consolidated School

Monday-Thursday 2:45-5:30 p.m. Friday 1:30-5:30 p.m.

Hancock Grammar School

Monday-Thursday 3:00-5:30 Friday 2:00-5:30 p.m.

Blue Hill Consolidated School

Monday-Friday 2:30-5:30 p.m.

Bucksport Jewitt School

Monday-Friday School dismissal-5:30 p.m.

Afterschool Ratio of child to staff: 1 teacher to 13 children.

Please note: If your child receives support with an educational technician during the school day, please notify the Down East Family YMCA upon registration.

School Vacations

Vacation camps are offered during scheduled school vacations. A schedule of the activities for the week will be made available prior to the week. Children may sign up for the entire week or select days. Parents may register for vacation camps at the front desk or in the main office. Options vary upon location. Please refer to your location.

In Service Days

We offer programs for days that school is not in session based on the Ellsworth School Calendar. Parents/guardians can register in advance by phone or at the front desk.

School Closings

Care is typically provided on days that school has been unexpectedly closed- such as snow days. Hours and options vary upon location.

Bus / Transportation Rules

The Ellsworth School Department Transportation and the Down East Family YMCA have a written contract that allows the YMCA to rent a bus to transport children from school to the Moore Center and Beechland Road sites.

In cases where a child does not conduct themselves properly on the bus, the Afterschool Coordinator or the Childcare Director will inform the parents/guardians by phone, in person, or written referral when necessary. Children who become a serious disciplinary problem on the bus may have their bus privileges suspended for a reasonable time by the Afterschool Director. In such cases, the parent/guardian of the child is responsible for the child's transportation to the Afterschool site until such time that the student's behavior allows him/her to be permitted to resume riding the bus.

Outside Programming Opportunities

It is important to us that we offer a variety of programs outside of our everyday activities. We understand the importance of offering age appropriate activities keeping in mind developmental needs and goals.

PRESCHOOL SWIM PROGRAM

Moore Community Center Site:

This is a curriculum based, instructional swimming program offered through the spring,

summer, and fall months (weather permitting). Children who are exhibiting unsafe behavior during the walk, on the pool deck, or in the pool will be asked to sit out for swim class.

Preschool children are beginning to exert self-responsibility and self-help skills such as putting on socks, shoes, pants, shirts, and jackets by themselves. Our staff encourages the development of these skills and gives all children the opportunity to display their competency in getting dressed on their own. You may see pants and shirts on backwards on swim day! We can guarantee your child feels a sense of pride and accomplishment knowing that they did it all by themselves.

Afterschool Swim:

Swim at the YMCA is an activity choice that is regularly offered. Participants will walk from the Moore Community Center to the Wiggins Center pool area to swim, returning to the Moore Community Center afterwards. Swim tests will be conducted to determine the ability level of each child. Once established, there are designated areas of the pool based on swimming abilities.

In case of emergency (i. e. chemical issues, thunder & lightning) all swimmers will evacuate from the pool into the locker room and wait for instruction from staff.

Water Safety Rules:

When children are active in water play or enrolled in our YMCA swim program, all staff and children will adhere to the following:

1. Children are allowed to swim or play in the pool/water area only when an adult staff is present.
2. Walk slowly in the pool/water area.
3. No rough housing (dunking, pushing, or wrestling).
4. Do not bring glass material near pool/water area.
5. Do not eat or chew gum while in the water.
6. Swimming or playing in the water during thunderstorms is not permitted.
7. Non-swimmers must wear approved flotation devices.
8. All posted water safety rules.
9. Children are instructed in water safety rules.

The pool/ water area shall:

1. Have a water safety attendant on duty at all times. Lifeguard certification or water safety training certificate is posted.
2. Be free of toys, clutter and debris.
3. Riding toys should not be near the pool/water area.

4. Have sufficient clarity. The bottom of the pool/water is clearly visible at the deepest part.
5. Have all lifesaving equipment conspicuously and conveniently on hand.
6. Have a first aid kit readily available.
7. Have an emergency plan readily available.
8. Legible water safety rules posted.
9. Telephone in the pool area is available and in working order

Nutrition

Food Program - Prepared Meals

(Moore Center Location Only)

Our Early Learning Center located at the Moore Community Center participates in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program. Children in our Infant, Toddler and Preschool programs are given a delicious and nutritious breakfast, lunch, and snack daily prepared fresh in our kitchen located on site at no additional cost to the family. The meals and supplements meet or exceed the nutritional requirements set forth by the U.S. Government. Upon enrollment, parents are asked to fill out an income eligibility form. Every income is eligible to participate in the food program.

A menu is provided for parents and also posted in classrooms. We will feed your child from the menu unless you have indicated to the classroom lead teacher that your child will not be eating from our menu. Please pack your child nutritious food choices in his or her lunchbox when not participating in our food program. Please do not pack hard candy or soda in your child's lunchbox.

Our Center practices family style dining in which every food is offered on a tray to your child. Teachers sit at the table with the children to encourage healthy eating habits. Our preschool children transition to our cafeteria for breakfast and lunch in preparation for kindergarten.

Should you have specific questions regarding the food program and how it relates to your child, please see your classroom teachers.

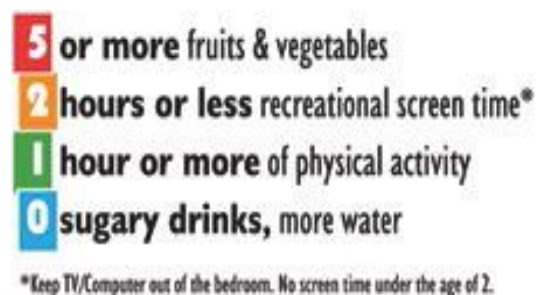
USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer, and Lender

Nutrition Policy

Our Early Learning Centers believe that all children deserve the opportunity to be healthy and successful. Healthy eating and physical activity are required for proper development.

Water is available throughout the day. We have a food pantry initiated by our Center's Parent Committee in which snacks are kept in each classroom should children show signs of hunger. We welcome snack donations from our parents such as: crackers, fig newtons, pretzels, goldfish, cheese sticks, and graham crackers. If you would like to donate snacks, please see your Program Coordinator.

We are pleased to share with you that our programs support 5-2-1-0 Every Day message, which states the following:



To further support healthy children, staff, and families, we participate in *Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 Goes to Childcare*. As part of this program, we promote and follow the *Let's Go!* The five healthy strategies below support the 5-2-1-0 behaviors:

1. We limit unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations and provide healthy choices instead. Please refer to the healthy options listed for ideas if you are considering bringing a food item into your child's classroom for a celebration.
2. We do not offer or serve sugary drinks.
3. We do not reward children with food. This includes food incentives for potty-training.
4. We provide opportunities for children to get physical activity every day.
5. We limit recreational screen time.

These strategies and the 5-2-1-0 message are promoted at other *Let's Go!* Childcare programs, schools, out-of-school programs, and health care practices in our community and throughout Maine. Together we can help ensure a healthy environment for children throughout the day.

Our Center will provide *Let's Go! 5-2-1-0* nutrition education and resources for families and children in the form of Center postings and notes sent home from classrooms.

If you would like more information about *Let's Go!*, please visit www.lets-go.org.

Infant Feeding Policy

These policies are in conjunction with the state of Maine Licensing rules and regulations for Center based Infant care.

- Pre-made bottles of formula and breast milk must be labeled with the child's name, dated, and stored in the refrigerator
- Formula can be stored in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Breast milk can be stored for 48 hours.
- Frozen breast milk must be used/discarded within 2 weeks.
- No previously opened baby food jars shall be accepted.
- Open jars shall be disposed of or returned to the parent/guardian the same day they are opened.
- Formula shall be made from commercially prepared products.
- Feeding schedules shall be in accordance with each child's needs rather than according to the hour.
- Dishes and bottles used in the program cannot be made of glass.
- Our Center asks that you introduce any new foods at home in case of allergic reactions.
- **For infant formula:** We use tap water to prepare bottles. If you do not wish to have your child's bottles prepared with tap water, we ask that you bring in the water that you would like to use.

Physical Activity

We strive to provide at least 120 minutes of active play to all children each day. This is offered through inside play as well as playground time and gym time. We understand the importance of physical activity in child development and give these opportunities several times throughout each day.

We do not withhold active play for behavior purposes. We provide additional active play as rewards.

The amount of time outside is determined by the weather conditions. When the weather is extremely hot (over 95) or cold (wind chill below zero) children will not go outside.

If your child is not feeling well enough to go outside, please do not bring them to childcare. Unfortunately our teacher/child ratio does not allow us to stay inside with an ill child while the remainder of the class plays outside.

We play outside almost every day, even if it is for a short time. Please dress your child appropriately.

- Sun hats and sunscreen are recommended for sunny days.
- The YMCA provides sunscreen, if your child has skin sensitive please provide your child sunscreen for the classroom.
- Please apply sunscreen in the morning before attending childcare
- In the winter, snowsuits, boots, hats, and mittens are essential.
- Clothing often gets wet. Please provide an extra set of clothes.
- The amount of time outside is determined by the weather conditions. When the weather is extremely hot (over 95) or cold (wind chill below zero) children will not go outside.

Inclement Weather

Heat

Maine periodically experiences either a heat wave or single days when the heat index puts children at risk for heat related illnesses. **Infants and newborns are at particularly high risk for heat related illnesses.**

Children get heat related illnesses more quickly than most adults. This is because:

- Children create more heat and are generally more active.
- Children sweat less and this reduces their ability to cool.
- Children are less likely to drink enough fluids.

Our childcare Centers' policy in regards to heat is to identify when the heat index puts the children in our care at risk, to identify when a child in our care is exhibiting signs of heat related illness, and to take the correct steps once there is suspicion of illness.

Our Centers' approach is to:

- Encourage children to drink plenty of fluids, especially water.
- Offer our children cool, shaded areas to play on the playground.
- Recommend light weight, loose clothing.
- Check the heat index before taking our children out to playground.
- Watch for signs of dehydration.

Cold

When weather permits we utilize our playground. If the weather is below 10 degrees Fahrenheit or the wind chill factor dictates freezing temperatures we will opt for inside physical activities.

Childcare Accounting/Billing Department Contact Information

Amy Curtis is the Billing Specialist for the Early Learning Centers and Afterschool Programs. She is available for consultation or questions via 307-0324 ext. 306 or acurtis@defymca.org.

Deposits

A two-week, non-refundable deposit is required to enroll your child in Early Learning Centers (Infant to Pre School). This deposit will be applied to your last two weeks in the program (less any late fees, charges, etc.). Parents are responsible for any differences in weekly fees if they increase from their original deposit amounts when used for their child's last two weeks of enrollment. **A one week deposit is required for the Afterschool program.**

Payments

ALL PAYMENTS ARE TO BE BANK DRAFTED UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED. Fees are based on enrollment not attendance. To maintain a reserved space, your fee must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation, or any other reason. Our Childcare Centers accepts families on voucher programs.

- Families will receive a \$5.00 discount on an older child's fee when two children from the same family are enrolled in any YMCA Childcare Program.
- Children who are members of the YMCA will also receive the discounted member rate for all childcare program.
- Bank draft, credit card payments, or EFTs that are returned for nonsufficient funds will be assessed a fee of \$10.00.

If your child is enrolled in our afterschool program, payment is expected regardless of attendance as we staff according to expected enrollment.

Attendance

Please call to notify your child's teacher if your child will not be attending or will be late.

If your child has any contagious conditions please let us know, even when they occur over the weekend. Please let staff know about extended absences. After one week of unexplained absences we reserve the right to terminate services and fill your spot with another child.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late fees will be charged for each child picked up after the scheduled closing time. Please be considerate and pick up your child on time. We know that on occasion there may be an emergency that arises. However a late fee will be charged for late pickups after the second offence at a rate of \$1.00 per minute after the first 5 minutes. If you are going to be delayed please notify the YMCA Childcare Center ASAP.

Changes/Withdrawals

In order to assure accuracy, a written notice is required for changes such as: payment options, change in schedule and attendance, or things in which a fee change would be applicable. Please allow up to 14 days processing for changes in the program

Please note that it is your responsibility to inform the billing specialist of any changes. It is not that of the classroom staff.

Additional days of care may be available depending on program availability. Please contact your child's Program Coordinator for more information.

State Licensing requires a written notice stating your intentions to withdraw from our program a minimum of two weeks prior to your child(ren)'s last day.

YMCA Membership Benefits

Family membership cost is \$58.00 per month for a Supporting Community and \$66.00 per month for a non-supporting community.

One parent Family Membership cost is \$47.00 per month for a Supporting Community and \$56.00 per month for a non-supporting

Youth membership cost is \$14.00 per month for a Supporting Community and \$16.00 per month for a non-supporting

Aside from the standard benefits like usage of the Down East Family YMCA facilities and receiving YMCA news and information first, members receive the following:

- If your child is a member and enrolled in the childcare programs you save \$5.00 per week or \$260.00 per year!
- Members save an average of \$15.00 per session on other Youth Programs!

If you are interested in joining or you have any questions please contact Heidi Tupper at the Wiggins Center at (207)667-3086.

Supporting communities include:

Blue Hill	Brooklyn	Brooksville	Bucksport	Ellsworth
Hancock	Lamoine	Mariaville	Milbridge	Orland
Otis	Sedgewick	Sorrento	Stonington	Sullivan
Surry	Trenton	Waltham	Winter Harbor	

NOTE: If you withdraw from one of our Childcare Centers with an outstanding balance, your membership benefits could be put on hold and you may not be eligible to enroll in programming until your outstanding balance is paid.

Parent/Guardian Statement of Understanding

This information is important for the safety and protection of your child. Please keep and refer to your copy of the Down East Family YMCA Early Learning Center Parent Handbook, which includes the following program policies:

- I understand that I am not to leave my child at the YMCA Early Learning Center unless a YMCA staff member is there to receive and supervise my child.
- I understand that the YMCA staff and volunteers are not allowed to baby-sit or transport children outside of the YMCA program at any time without prior authorization from the Executive Director. The YMCA will take immediate disciplinary action toward staff and volunteers if a violation is discovered.
- I understand that my child will not be allowed to leave the program with an unauthorized person. Any person authorized to pick up my child must either be listed with the YMCA (Emergency Contact Information) or other arrangements must be made by calling the Early Learning Center to inform them of the change.
- I understand that should a person arrive to pick up my child who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, for the child's safety, staff has no recourse but to contact the police. (Please do not put staff in a position where they have to make this judgement.)
- I understand that my child cannot return to school for a 24 hour period after beginning a new antibiotic treatment.
- I understand that the YMCA is mandated, by state law, to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation.

I have received a copy of the Down East Family YMCA Early Learning Center Parent Handbook. I have read and understand the policies and procedures stated above as well as the information included in the handbook.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date