

# **GREATER MARINETTE-MENOMINEE YMCA CHILD ABUSE POLICY CODE OF CONDUCT**

The YMCA advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention and the development of self-discipline. At no time will the following disciplinary techniques be tolerated: physical punishment, striking, biting, kicking, squeezing, shaking, withholding food or rest room privileges, confining children in small locked rooms or verbal or emotional abuse.

## **Child Abuse Reporting Procedures:**

In the event that there is suspected child abuse the YMCA will take prompt and immediate action as follows:

1. At the first report or probable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred, the employed staff person will notify the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in a professional & confidential manner. If the CEO is not immediately available this cannot in any way deter the reporting of child abuse by the mandated reporter(s). If the CEO is not available, the Director in the program area will be notified.
2. The YMCA will make a report in accordance with relevant state or local child abuse reporting requirements and will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved.
3. In the event the reported incident(s) involve a program volunteer or employed staff, the CEO will, without exception, suspend the volunteer or staff person from the YMCA.
4. The parents or legal guardians of the child(ren) involved in the suspected incident will be promptly notified following the directions of state or local agencies.
5. Reinstatement of the program volunteer or employed staff person will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the CEO.
6. All YMCA staff and volunteers will hold information regarding suspected abuse confidential and will not discuss the incident(s) with anyone other than the CEO.

## **Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct:**

1. All guidelines set forth that reference staff members also apply to YMCA volunteers. Whenever "staff" are referenced, volunteers will follow the same Code of Conduct.
2. YMCA program staff will not be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others.
3. Staff will never leave a child under the age of 12 unsupervised.
4. Staff will not allow children to use a restroom that is occupied by another individual without opening a bathroom doorway to remain within an earshot of the child. Children who require assistance while using the restroom will be helped only if the restroom or stall door is left open. Children using the restroom without adult supervision should do so in groups of three.
5. Staff should supervise diapering, changing into swimwear or showering in groups of three or more, and when this is not feasible will be fully visible to others.
6. Staff will not have secrets with youths and will only give gifts with prior permission from their direct supervisor.
7. Staff will not abuse children, including:
  - Physical abuse-striking, slapping, spanking, shaking or using unnecessary restraints.
  - Verbal abuse-humiliation, degrading, threatening or cursing
  - Sexual abuse-inappropriate touch or verbal exchange, exposing oneself
  - Mental abuse – shunning, withholding kindness, cruelty, neglect – withholding food, water, basic care
8. Staff will use positive techniques of guidance including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Staff will have age-appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.

9. Staff will conduct a visual health check of youth each day as they enter programs and note any fever, bumps, bruises that are unusual and report them to parents or guardians in a non-threatening manner. All marks will be documented.
10. Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion and culture.
11. Children are not to be touched on the chest or genital areas except when diapering.
12. Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others while at the YMCA.
13. Staff will appear neat, clean and appropriately attired.
14. Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs during working hours is prohibited.
15. Smoking, use of tobacco products or vape devices is prohibited while working.
16. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing details of one's personal life and any kind of harassment is prohibited.
17. Staff will not be alone outside of the YMCA with children they meet in YMCA programs. This includes babysitting, sleepovers and inviting children to staffs' homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation and are subject to administrator approval.
18. Staff will not transport youth in their own vehicles.
19. Staff will not date program participants under the age of 18.
20. Staff will not disrobe in locker rooms when program youth are present.
21. Staff will not engage in electronic communication with youths that does not include a parent or guardian.
22. Staff will report concerns or complaints about other staff, volunteers, adults or youths to their supervisor or the CEO, including red flag behaviors.
23. Staff will not release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian with written parent authorization on file with the YMCA.
24. Staff will receive ongoing training related to identifying, documenting and reporting child abuse.

No type of abuse will be tolerated, and any type of abuse will be cause for immediate dismissal.

## **Youth Abuse Prevention Policies**

1. Any form of abuse between youths, members/facility users, volunteers and staff is strictly prohibited. This includes but is not limited to verbal, physical and sexual abuse.
2. The child safety committee will annually review the youth abuse prevention policies.
3. All physical contact between staff/volunteers and youth should be appropriate. The Y strives to maintain a warm and positive atmosphere,

while maintaining a professional and safe environment for all. Here some examples of appropriate and inappropriate contact.

Appropriate Physical Contact	Inappropriate Physical Contact
Pats on the back or shoulder	Deep Hugs
Handshakes	Kisses
High-fives or hand slapping	Showing affection in isolated areas
Verbal praise	Tickling
Arms around shoulders	Wrestling
Touching hands, shoulders and arms	Any type of massage given by or to another youth.
Holding hands when escorting young children	Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or staff/volunteer.
	Compliments relating to physique or body development.
	Touching bottom, chest or genital areas.

4. All verbal interactions between staff/volunteers and youth should be appropriate and fit the mission of the Y. Here are some examples of appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions.

Appropriate Verbal Interaction	Inappropriate Verbal Interaction
Positive reinforcement	Name-calling
Appropriate jokes	Secrets
Encouragement	Cursing
Praise	Off-color or sexual jokes
	Shaming
	Belittling
	Derogatory remarks
	Discussing sexual encounters around or in any way involving youths in the personal problems or issues of the staff.
	Harsh language that may threaten or humiliate the youths

5. All interactions outside of regular program time between staff/volunteers and youth in the YMCA programs must be appropriate and

approved by management. Here are some examples of appropriate and inappropriate interactions outside of regular program time.

Appropriate Outside Contact	Inappropriate Outside Contact
Taking groups of youths on an outing or to a sporting event with their parents' consent.	Taking one youth on an outing without their parents consent.
Attending functions at a youths home with their parents present	Visiting one youth's home without their parents present.
	One youth spending the night with staff or volunteers.

6. All electronic communication between staff/volunteers and youth must be appropriate. Here are some examples of appropriate and inappropriate electronic communication.

Appropriate Electronic Communication	Inappropriate Electronic Communication
Sending and replying to emails, online messages and texts in a non-private or exclusive manner.	Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating comments.
Communicating through our organization's social media pages.	Sexually Oriented Conversations.
	Private messages between staff/volunteers and youth.
	Posting pictures of organization participants on staff/volunteer's personal social media page.
	Posting inappropriate comments on pictures on social media.
	"Friending" youth program participants on social media sites.

7. Staff/volunteers are prohibited from using cell phones while in a program area or in an area in direct contact with members/facility users unless approved by their supervisor.

8. Staff/Volunteers must limit and manage risk when they must be one-on-one situation with a youth.

Guidelines for one-on one-contact with a youth
When meeting one-on-one with a youth, always do so in a public place where in full view of others.
Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted. Limit physical affection to pats on the shoulder, high-fives and handshakes.
If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area can be easily observed by others passing by.
In form other staff/volunteers that you are alone with a youth and ask them to randomly drop in.
Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

9. The Y reviews all employees'/volunteers' criminal history upon their hire and additionally on a bi-annual basis and reserves the right to review employees'/volunteers' criminal history at any point. If unlawful activity is found, the Y can pursue disciplinary action up to and including termination. Criminal history findings will be reviewed by YMCA management . Factors that will be considered include, but are not limited to, as follows.

Factors that will be considered in criminal history review.
Seriousness of the crime
Statutes that may legally disqualify the person from working with youth
Length of time since last offense
Pattern of criminal activity
Activities that applicant/employee has been involved in since last offense occurred

10. All staff are required to inform their supervisor if they are arrested or convicted of a crime while employed at the Y. This must occur before the employee(s) reports for their next shift after arrest or conviction. The Y reserves the right to suspend any employee(s) with a pending legal matter.

Failure to report an arrest or conviction prior to working another shift can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

11. Bathroom and Locker Room Supervision Procedure.

For Group Bathroom Breaks
We should minimize youths of differing ages using the restroom at the same time together.
Staff must remain in an observable area while in the bathroom
Staff must never use the restroom at the same time as youth.
If needed to assist a youth in a restroom stall due to age, injury, disability or otherwise, the staff should keep the door of the stall open.

For Individual Bathroom Use
Youth program participants must ask permission to use the restroom.
Staff/volunteers must check the restrooms and maintain awareness of the youth's time away in the restroom.

Locker Room Procedures
Staff must stand within earshot of the locker room..
Staff must briefly and intermittently check inside the locker room.
Use of the locker room by children of different age groups at the same time is discouraged.
Locker room horseplay is prohibited
If possible, assign or arrange lockers to minimize unnecessary privacy.
All Staff (not just program staff) must watch for suspicious or inappropriate locker room conduct.