



# 2025 Fergus Falls YMCA School Age Child Care and Summer Day Camp Handbook

**FIND YOUR FUN.  
FIND YOUR Y.**

YMCA of the Northern Sky  
1164 N Friberg Ave  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
218.739.4489  
[ymcanorthernsky.org](http://ymcanorthernsky.org)

March 2025

## **About YMCA Child Care**

You want the very best for your child – and so do we!

We believe the strongest partnership in a child's life is the one between the child's parents and the school their child attends. Our goal is for our staff to team with families to make this experience an excellent one for your entire family. We are committed to providing the highest quality of care to your child and your family.

YMCA Child Care is a place for children to explore, learn, and grow, and to feel safe, cared for, and celebrated. We encourage positive relationships between the children, child care staff, and families to ensure a high-quality experience. In every program and every classroom, we address the specific needs of children based not only on age, but also on individual pace of development. We believe the values and skills learned early on are vital building blocks for quality of life and future success.

With so many demands, families need all the support they can get. That's why child care at the YMCA is about more than looking after kids. It's about nurturing their development by providing a safe place to learn foundational skills, develop healthy, trusting relationships and build self-reliance. This is all accomplished through our values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. At the YMCA, we believe the values and skills learned early on are vital building blocks for quality of life and future success. That's why our School Age programs and Summer Day Camp programs are staffed with people who understand the cognitive, physical, and social development of kids, the need children have to feel connected and supported in trying new things, and the caring and reinforcement families need to help each other.

In YMCA Child Care, babies develop trust and security, preschoolers experience early literacy and learn about their world, and school age kids make friends and learn new skills. Most importantly, children learn how to be their best selves. That makes for confident kids today, and contributing and engaged adults tomorrow.

## **Connect with the YMCA**

We love having you and your family as part of our YMCA community! Stay connected with the YMCA through our website, social media, and more!

Website: [ymcanorthernsky.org](http://ymcanorthernsky.org)

Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube: @ymcanorthernsky

## **YMCA Philosophy and Values**

### **Mission**

The YMCA of the Northern Sky is a not-for-profit community service organization dedicated to enhancing the spirit, mind, and body of all persons through quality leadership, programs, services and, facilities.

### **Goals & Philosophy**

YMCA of the Northern Sky School Age Child Care Programs are dedicated to enhancing the spirit, mind, and body of all persons in a positive Christian environment through quality programs, services, and facilities. Upon that foundation, children, families, and staff in our learning programs are considered to be the three components of our programs. Our integrated curriculum, consistent administrative policies, health and safety standards, and positive guidance are built upon these statements.

### **What you can expect from the YMCA:**

- Your child will be treated fairly and with respect.
- We continually train our employees using the most current research in Child Development and Early Education.
- Our employees are trained and provide quality care and a safe environment.
- We will inform you of behavior concerns, and work with you to create a plan to support your child.
- We will do all that we can to provide a safe and happy experience for you and your family.

### **What we ask of families:**

- When in our programs, you follow our Core Values: honesty, respect, responsibility, caring, and health
- Your commitment to your child's learning experiences at the YMCA
- That you are a champion, along with us, in your child's development
- Your help in developing a consistent plan to work through behavioral concerns

### **The following actions are not permitted by, or at the discretion of, YMCA staff:**

- Corporal punishment or emotional abuse
- Punishment for lapses in toilet habits
- Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as punishment for unacceptable behavior
- Use of physical restraints other than to physically hold a child when containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm
- Use of mechanical restraints

## **Our Credentials**

### **Our Quality Staff**

Quality, continuity, and longevity of staff are priorities in a quality child care program. Picking our staff based on experience, competence, and education is a priority to ensure that we have the most highly qualified staff available to care for your children.

YMCA Child Care staff are all CPR/AED/First Aid Certified, go through a child abuse training, and receive on-the-job training, and gain experience in youth development and working with families. Staff are provided with annual trainings to ensure they are educated on best practices when working with youth. During our trainings and staff meetings, some things we focus on are behavior guidance, child development, and curriculum.

### **Certified through the State of Minnesota**

Our After School Program and Summer Day Camp programs are certified in the State of Minnesota.

This includes following all state requirements:

- Staff to Child Ratios
  - Preschool Age 1:10
  - School Age 1:15
- Completion of Basic Child Care Training
- All staff must have a background check and be fingerprinted
- All staff must be certified in CPR and First Aid
- Monthly emergency drills and evacuation plans
- Ongoing annual staff professional development

### **School-Age Programs**

Offering the very best quality programming has always been, and always will be, a goal of our program. To do this, we must assess a modest fee. All fees assessed are put directly back into our programs. The YMCA of the Northern Sky will never turn a child away based on their ability to pay.

### **Enrollment**

Enrollment at the YMCA is open to children from 5 years old through 6th grade. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability, and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, or disability. Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed online registrations form, signed agreements, registration fee, and a copy of your child's immunization record.

## Hours of Operation

- After School Care: Monday through Friday, 3:10 pm – 5:30 pm
- No School Days, Monday through Friday: 7:15 am – 5:30 pm
- Summer Day Camp, Monday through Friday: 7:15 am – 5:30 pm

## YMCA Child Care programs will be closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday (Day after Thanksgiving)
- Christmas Day

For Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, the Fergus Falls YMCA is open limited hours and Child Care will close early. These hours are subject to change according to the facility hours of operation. Families will be charged regular rates for all holidays listed above.

## If Your Child Will Be Gone for the Day

If your child will not be attending, please be sure to contact the program by calling or texting the Fergus Falls YMCA Child Care Program cell number at 218.671.1453. Leave a message. Please understand that we may not have time to call you back to confirm your message. If your child is not logged in for the day, we will call parents if we did not know they were going to be absent. If your child does not attend one of their scheduled days, you are still charged for that day/week.

## Daily Attendance & Authorized Pick-Ups

A parent or an authorized adult must accompany each child in and out of the Fergus Falls YMCA Child Care Program site each day. Children will be signed in and out by staff each day. Please call the program cell number, 218.671.1453, when you are dropping your child off or picking them up. Children will not be dismissed or released to an unauthorized person. YMCA Child Care Staff will ask for identification from the person picking up the child. A photo ID, such as a Driver's License, will be required to pick up children each day if staff don't know who you are.

- Authorized adults are only those individuals that you listed on the registration form.
- No authorized pick ups will transfer from one program registration to another.
- Only the adult(s) listed on your membership account will be allowed to add authorized pickups. This must be done in person and the adult must have a photo ID to add authorized pickups. NO EXCEPTIONS!

If an authorized pick-up person is appearing to be impaired by drugs and/or alcohol, the Fergus Falls YMCA Child Care staff will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit YMCA Child Care staff to deny a custodial parent access to their child, even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, YMCA staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible while contacting the other parent or emergency contact, the local police, and Child Protective Services.

## **Signing In and Out Each Day**

We require all parents to sign their child in and out each day, using our electronic tablets. Please do not drop your child off at a program without signing them in yourself. We ask that you walk them in to the program space to ensure safety. We are unable to send children out upon parent requests due to safety and ratio requirements.

Other individuals that are on your child's authorized pick-up list will be set up with their own codes, and will need to use those to sign your child in or out. Our school age staff will log in all children when they arrive from school. If your school age child is not logged in for the day, we will call parents if we did not know they were going to be absent.

## **Late Arrival and Pick-up**

If your child arrives late for care and we are out of the building on a field trip in town or at a park, you will need to transport your child to where we are currently located. Summer pick-up and drop-off is located on the back/side door of the YMCA.

Late pick up - If you fail to arrive by 5:35 pm to pick up your child, a \$15 Late Fee will be charged to your account for every 10 minutes you are late, per child. If we have not heard from you by 5:45 pm, we will call others that are authorized to pick up. If we cannot get a hold of anyone, we will notify social services and law enforcement.

For the safety of the children, if a parent/guardian arrives to pick up a child under the influence of alcohol or drugs, staff will contact law enforcement.

## **YMCA Activities Cancellation Due to Weather**

The decision will be made by 6 am if we will not be providing care for the day on No School Days. Otherwise, the Fergus Falls YMCA will consider Fergus Falls Public Schools' decisions.

- If school is 2 hours late - All child care programs after Noon run as normal
- School lets out early - All YMCA child care programs are cancelled for the rest of the day
- School Cancelled - All YMCA child care is cancelled

## **Withdrawal from Child Care Program**

We require a 4-week written notice to withdraw from our child care programs. Please contact our Youth and Family Director to process your withdrawal. This will notify your Director/Coordinator, Enrollment, and Billing of this change.

## **Right to Refuse Admission**

The Fergus Falls YMCA Child Care reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time, with or without cause. Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations
- The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations
- Staff deems the child too ill to attend
- Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff, or other children enrolled in the program if the child were to be present at the center
- Parent's failure to maintain accurate, up-to-date records
- Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion
- Parents' failure to follow the tuition policy as outlined in this handbook
- Parents will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program

## **Parent's Right to Immediate Access**

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at YMCA, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a Court Order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order), the YMCA Child Care must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the Court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the Court, both parents must sign the request for a more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a Court Order on file with YMCA Child Care, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The YMCA Child Care cannot, without a Court Order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, YMCA Child Care suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a Court Order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. The YMCA Child Care staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

The YMCA Child Care will dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon the property. Due to the parents' right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, YMCA Child Care cannot have a child at the program when the child's parent is prohibited access. The YMCA Child Care will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.

## **Photo Release/Information Forms**

During online registration, you will be asked to sign a Photo Release Form for your child. This allows you to approve in advance: (a) use of the child's picture for internal child care postings and communication, and/or (b) use of the child's picture for external YMCA public relations, marketing, promotion, and internal postings. Foster children may not be used for any public/external photos.

You will also be asked for additional authorizations when outside entities conduct photo shoots, surveys, and projects. We are not able to release information about your child to any unauthorized person. We can only accept authorization from the legal guardian to release information

## **Clothing**

Comfortable and washable clothing that will enable the children to participate freely in all activities without undue concern for spills, spots, and rips is recommended. Please mark all clothing and personal articles permanently with your child's name. Occasionally, check the Lost and Found for misplaced items.

The Fergus Falls YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Sturdy, well-fitting tennis shoes or non-skid shoes are essential for active play. Socks are required so the children can play in the gym. When skirts are worn, we ask that your child wear pants or shorts underneath.

## **Toys, Blankets, and Rest Time Items**

Please leave toys at home, unless it is a specific share day. The YMCA Child Care Programs do not assume responsibility for personal toys. On share days, please refrain from allowing your child to bring any type of toy weapon, electronic toys of any sort, or action figures to the program. Blankets/rest time items are only allowed during quiet/reading time. We ask that the items brought fit within the lockers provided. These items will need to be taken home regularly and laundered.

## **Immunization Policy**

All School-Age children are required to be up-to-date with their immunizations, and guardians are required to provide their child's immunization records. When children have new vaccinations, it is the parent's responsibility to make sure that the Child Care Director receives a copy of the new immunizations.



## **Administration of Medication**

We encourage that you give medication to your child before or after programming. If that is not the case, the Fergus Falls YMCA is required by the State of Minnesota to have written permission obtained from the child's parent or legal guardian before administering: prescription medicine, diapering product, sunscreen lotion, and insect repellent.

Nonprescription medicine, diapering product, sunscreen lotion, and insect repellent are administered according to the manufacturer's instructions unless provided written instructions by a licensed health professional to use a product differently.

YMCA Child Care will ensure all medicine is:

- Kept in the medicine's original container with a legible label stating the child's first and last name
- Given only to the child whose name is on the label, and not given after an expiration date on the label
- Returned to the child's parent or legal guardian, or destroyed, if unused
- Will be kept in a locked box out of reach of the children
- YMCA Child Care will document in the child's record the administration of medication, including:
  - Child's first and last name; name of the medication or prescription number; date, time, and dosage; and name and signature of the person who administered the medicine
- YMCA Child Care will store medicines, and insect repellents, according to directions on the original container.

## **Preventing and Responding to Allergies**

The YMCA requires that before admitting a child for care, the Child Care must obtain documentation of any known allergies from the child's parent or legal guardian. This form will be in your Summer Day Camp packet or emailed.

The YMCA will maintain current allergy information in each child's record. The allergy information will include:

- a description of the allergy, specific triggers, avoidance techniques, and symptoms of an allergic reaction; and
- procedures for responding to an allergic reaction, including medication, dosages, and a doctor's contact information.

YMCA child care will inform staff of each child's current allergy information. At least annually, and when a change is made to allergy-related information in a child's record, the Child Care must inform staff of any change. Documentation that all staff were informed of the child's current allergy information will be kept on site.

A child's allergy information will be available at all times, including on site, when on field trips, and during transportation. Food allergy information will be readily available to staff in the area where food is prepared and served to the child.

## **Childcare Illness Policy**

Children who arrive to Fergus Falls YMCA Child Care with any of these symptoms are not allowed into the Y or off-site locations:

1. **Fever of 100 degrees F or greater:** Children must be without fever for 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medication, before they can return to care.
2. **Vomiting and diarrhea:** Children must be without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before they can return. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools, increased water in the stool, and/or decreased form to the stool that cannot be contained by clothing.
3. **Bacterial infections:** Children with bacterial infections must have antibiotic treatment for 24 hours before returning to child care for:
  - Strep Throat
  - Scarlet Fever
  - Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
  - Impetigo
  - Bronchiolitis
  - Skin infections – such as draining burns/wounds
4. **Generalized rashes,** including those covering multiple parts of the body. These rashes must be evaluated by a health provider to determine cause before they can return to child care.
5. **Chickenpox:** Children with Chickenpox cannot attend child care until the sores dry up (usually 5-7 days).
6. **Symptoms of severe illness,** whether they would otherwise be excluded. Examples: Uncontrolled coughing, breathing difficulties or wheezing, stiff neck, irritability, poor food or fluid intake, or a seizure. Such children must be evaluated by a healthcare provider before they may return to child care.
7. **A child need not be excluded for a nasal discharge unless the discharge is green and accompanied by a fever.** Such symptoms may indicate an infection. Children with such discharge must be evaluated by a healthcare provider and authorized to return.
8. **If a child develops symptoms of illness after the parent or guardian has left, the child care must do the following:**
  - Contact and inform parent/guardian, as soon as possible and request they pick up the child.
9. **Head Lice:** If your child has or had head lice, all nits and eggs must be completely gone before a child can return to care. Sometimes multiple treatments and combing through is required to ensure all nits and eggs are gone.
10. **COVID-19:** If your child has been diagnosed or exposed to someone with COVID, we ask that you follow the local health department recommendations.

## **Accident and Emergency Policy**

In the event of a medical emergency, staff will take the necessary steps to obtain care for the child. These steps include:

- Administer first-aid deemed appropriate by staff.
- Completion of an Accident/Incident Report that is kept in HR files.
- Informing parent of accident/incident and what type of first-aid was administered. If appropriate, the parent may be asked to pick the child up from the program.

## **Severe Medical Emergency**

If immediate care of a physician or paramedic is required, staff will:

- Call 911 immediately. Parents will be contacted immediately after 911 has been called.
- If a parent cannot be reached, staff will attempt to contact an authorized person located on the Emergency Contact Form.
- In the event that a child needs to be transported to a medical facility, the YMCA staff reserves the right, with the assistance of paramedics, to determine if the child will be transported by an emergency vehicle.
- Families will be responsible for any expenses incurred due to a child's injury.

Because accidents can happen to all children, it is important that the YMCA has current phone numbers where parent/guardians can be reached during the day, as well as the numbers for the authorized persons listed on the Emergency Contact Form.

## **Insurance Liability**

Medical coverage for children is the responsibility of the parents.

## **Emergency Preparedness**

### **Evacuation Procedures**

Children are cared for on the main level of the Fergus Falls YMCA only. Children will exit through the closest emergency exit door with staff. All groups will meet in the back of the parking lot in the winter months, and the back of the building by the apartments when there is not snow.

- Fire drills, tornado drills, and lock down drills will be done on a regular basis.

### **Off-Site Evacuation**

If there is an emergency that the YMCA has to shut down for an emergency and everyone has to be evacuated, the kids will be evacuated to THE NAZ CHURCH (1319 North Cleveland, Fergus Falls). The YMCA will contact Otter Coaches/Otter Express to help with the evacuation. If evacuation transportation is not available, kids will be led by staff down the street to the church.

Parents will be notified by program cell phone (call or text) if this happens.

## **Tuition and Fees**

### **Tuition**

Tuition is due weekly on the Friday prior to each week's care. This is set up by automatic withdrawal when you register your child for the program. There is no tuition credit or refund given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or closings due to emergency situations, pandemics, inclement weather, or Acts of God.

Our rates are reviewed each year and subject to change in order to meet financial requirements for quality child care.

### **Late Payment or Returned Payments**

Late or returned payments will have a \$30 charge added to account. Tuition payments not paid within five days of the due date may result in termination of care. If your payment is returned, you will need to use another form of payment, such as money order or credit card (processing fees for credit/debit cards will apply), for the next three months.

### **Payment made by a Third Party**

Upon enrollment in a YMCA child care program, it is to be understood that all child care fees, tuition, and expenses are the responsibility of the guardian(s) enrolling in the program. All families enrolled in the program are subject to the same policies, including policies related to the payment of fees. In the event that a third party (i.e. Social Services, Child Care Assistance program, employer-sponsored flexible benefit account, non-custodial parent or extended family member, etc.) is assisting with all or part of the fees due, the agreement is between the guardian enrolling the child and the third party only. Under no circumstances will any family be permitted to attend the child care program without payment of tuition.

### **Child Care Financial Assistance**

Financial Assistance for child care families is provided by the YMCA Annual Campaign and grant resources. Financial assistance awards are based on income, enrollment, family size, and availability of funds. Families must apply at the Member Services Desk. An initial application must be submitted to determine eligibility for the program and resubmitted annually. Families who receive Child Care Assistance may have their financial assistance reduced or removed once the Child Care Assistance payment has been received. If the family is receiving financial assistance granted from the YMCA, that amount will not be refunded to the family.

## Curriculum and Activities

### Our Curriculum

A planned curriculum provides a dependable sequence of learning opportunities for children. Some components of each day's schedule include learning activities such as music, stories, self-directed play, excursions, and academic games. These activities promote learning in science, math, art, and literacy. Daily routines provide security in the predictable schedule and new activities keep interests high.

### School Age Curriculum

The YMCA School Age Child Care Program programs offer a variety of activities specifically planned by the Y child care directors and coordinators to fit the interests of the children in our programs. Each YMCA program works together to fulfill five common areas to make your child's day a fun and engaging experience.

- With our **daily greeting**, your child will feel welcomed into the program and be ready to start the fun activities.
- Your child also gets to go **outside** each day (weather permitting) to breathe the fresh air and play with their friends.
- The YMCA offers **healthy snacks** each day that fit in the YMCA HEPA standards (sweet- and treat-free).
- The children will also get to work on their large motor skills inside, as well when we go to the **gym** and play instructor-led games along with child-selected activities.
- The **Explore Zone** time of the day is when we infuse our weekly academic enrichments. These activities include STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics), literacy, and physical activity.

### Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a planned part of each day, weather permitting. We do not go outside if the heat index is over 95 degrees F, or the temp or wind chill is below zero F. Children are supervised at all times. For staffing reasons, all children must go outside if they are in attendance for the day. We will not keep your child inside due to illness or threat of illness, or if they did not bring proper clothes for outside play. If they are well enough to come to the program, they are well enough to go outside. When it is warm, we will take water with us outside and on walks. We may take children for walks to destinations that are no farther than one mile from the program, depending on the age of the children.

### Sunscreen

Sunscreen must be provided by each family individually. If your child fails to have sunscreen, the YMCA will provide sunscreen unless noted otherwise on registration forms. Please mark all sunscreen with child's first and last name.

## **The YMCA Supports Positive Behaviors**

At the YMCA, we believe the most useful means of supporting children in making good decisions is to reinforce and encourage positive behaviors. We always want to have a reliable and easy-to-understand system to recognize when kids are “doing the right thing”. We do this by re-enforcing the YMCA’s Core Values of Caring, Respect, and Honesty, as well as other positive reinforcement activities.

When children display challenging behaviors, we know that there are many reasons why a child acts out. It is important to address these challenging behaviors with empathy and fairness, while also remembering that no two children or situations are the same. At the YMCA, we have Four Core Rules: 1. Take care of yourself 2. Take care of others 3. Take care of this place 4. Stay with your group.

When staff are presented with a repeated challenging behavior, there are steps that we follow to help reinforce our rules. The first step is a Think Sheet: Take 5. This is used when a child shows a repeated challenging behavior and they have not done anything to purposefully harm themselves, others, or property. When this happens, the child works with staff to calm down and complete the form. Once they are ready, they are able to rejoin the group.

If a child has recurring behaviors, the Site Director/Coordinator or Lead Staff will fill out a Behavior Documentation Form. This is to keep a running documentation of behavior to determine if certain things are triggering this behavior. If the behavior continues, we then set up a meeting with the parents or guardians to create a plan, and we document that plan on our Behavior Action Form. This is to try and help the child thrive in our program.

If a child has physically caused harm to another child, YMCA staff, or destroyed a classroom or materials in the classroom, the child will be sent home or suspended until a parent meeting can be held to formalize a plan. More severe behaviors may warrant a multiple-day suspension. This is at the discretion of the YMCA Directors. Suspensions are necessary as it gives time to form a plan or revise a behavior plan, as the safety of all children and staff is of the utmost importance.

Please remember that our programs may not be for everyone, but we will take all steps to work as a team to help each child. The YMCA does not provide one-on-one care for children, and our staff are not trained in specific behavioral interventions. If a child receives one-on-one care while in school, please keep in mind that our after school group size ratio is 14 children to one staff.

## Pillars for Successful Behavior



When any of the above concerns arise, we will proceed with the following steps:

1. Initial warning to child
2. Think time (usually 5-10 minutes)
3. Loss of activity
4. A private conference with child and leader
5. Director has conversation with the child
6. Phone call to parent, conference set, and a written warning issued.
7. Probation: Parent will be notified and will be asked to pick up child immediately from the program, Child can return to program 3-5 days depending on situation
8. Expulsion from Program

Depending on the severity of the situation, the YMCA reserves the right to suspend and or exclude a child from the program at any time.

### Field Trips

Field trips and outings are an integral part of our program activities. Families will be given advance notice of upcoming field trips (except for walks to the parks, and other destinations within one mile). Parents and guardians are welcome to join us on field trips, although you may need to arrange for your own transportation. Talk to your child's Teacher/Coordinator or program staff if you are interested.

## **Swimming Lessons**

Swimming lessons are offered through our YMCA Aquatics Department, and transportation for specific lesson times is provided. Swimming lessons are provided through the YMCA during the school year and throughout the summer months. If you would like the child care staff to help transport your child down to the pool and back to programming, it is your responsibility to let the Director or Coordinator know, otherwise we will assume that the parent will be taking them to and from swimming lessons.

## **Other YMCA Program Opportunities**

Our YMCA offers various experiences throughout the year; such as, but not limited to, Sports of All Sorts, Youth Basketball, Youth Football, Lego Club, Nerf Nights, Parents Night Out, Soccer and Volleyball clinics throughout the year, etc. Look on our website or check your emails for upcoming youth program opportunities.

## **Social Media**

For privacy purposes, we ask that you do not post pictures of children from our programs on your social media platforms. These pictures may be taken innocently at school and program events, but not all families provide external photo release consent. Foster children photos are not allowed. Note that the YMCA does not condone posting pictures of children without written permission from a parent.

## **Staff Babysitting Policy**

As a client of the YMCA Child Care, you are notified that the YMCA supervises its employees and programs within the confines of the facilities under the policies of the YMCA, and the programs approved and managed by the YMCA. YMCA employees are not supervised by the YMCA during their off-duty hours, and are not acting within the scope of their employment. If you would like a YMCA employee to babysit for you, please ask the Program Director for a Babysitting Authorization Form. After completing the form, return to the Site Director/Coordinator.

## **Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA)**

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) teaches children how to make healthy food choices, and to enjoy physical activity, contributing to their social and physical development. Our YMCA has committed to meeting these nationally-recognized standards. For more information about the HEPA standard, visit [www.ymca.net/hepa](http://www.ymca.net/hepa).

### **Physical Activity:**

We provide a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity in our half-day programs, and 60 minutes of physical activity in our full-day programs. Activity is a blend of moderate and vigorous levels of physical play, and will take place both indoors and out. Y staff will model active living related to physical activity by being fully engaged with the children.



**Screen Time:**

Screen time in our programs is very limited. When screen time is used, it is to enhance our educational lessons. Occasionally, we may play a family-friendly movie to break up the kids' day, but this is typically on a rainy day or a day that we are limited on space availability.

**Food:**

Breakfast and snack times are presented in a family-style manner intended to make meal time a pleasant, positive, and enjoyable social experience. Children are offered all of the foods on our menu and are encouraged, but not required, to try them. Y staff will model healthy eating behaviors at all times. This includes consuming the same foods and beverages as children during program times.

**YMCA Provides Breakfast and Snack**

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide a lunch each day your child is here for a full day of care. If your child has special dietary needs or food allergies, please contact your Site Director/Coordinator. We will work to accommodate your request(s) by providing a food modification form that must be signed by a physician or accepting a doctor's order.

We encourage children to eat the foods provided and try new foods. Our menu includes whole grains, fruits, and fresh vegetables. We ask that the children do not bring gum, candy, or treats to the program unless it is for a special occasion such as birthday, etc. This must be approved by Director/Coordinator prior to child bringing treats. The YMCA is a nut-free facility.

**Peanut/Nut Free Programs**

Due to the extreme nature of some allergic reactions to peanuts/nuts and products containing peanuts and/or nuts in some children, the YMCA Child Care is a peanut/nut-free facility. The staff will also notify you of any other allergies in the classroom. Per our Confidentiality Policy, only the allergen will be identified, not the child. When families are bringing food into the program, for special occasions, it is important to remember to read the label of every food item you send. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts or nuts have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut/nut-containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label, look at not only the ingredients listed but also for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts."

## Handwashing Standards

To help control the spread of germs and disease we follow these standards.

Hands are washed:

- Upon arrival to the classroom
- Before and after all meals
- Before food preparation
- Setting tables
- After toileting
- After sneezing, coughing, or wiping runny noses
- Coming in from outside or playing in gym

## Sanitizing/Disinfecting

All toys are washed and sanitized as needed. Toilets, sinks, and bathrooms are cleaned and disinfected daily. Tables are sanitized before and after each meal. Floors are swept and vacuumed daily.

## Fire/Emergency Drills

The YMCA Child Care program conducts bimonthly fire, tornado, emergency/evacuation, and lockdown drills. Parents, staff, and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency/lockdown drill or real fire/emergency/lockdown situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the program until the drill is completed. Parents may wait with the child's class in the designated safe zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency/lockdown situation, the Director or designated staff member will inform each program room that the YMCA will be closing. At this time, any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. When parents arrive to pick up their child, we ask that you wait until the Director or designee has accounted for all staff and children, and has given the staff permission to release children. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified of the situation by telephone. Children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Procedures

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. **ALL EMPLOYEES of the YMCA are considered mandated reporters, under this law.**

Suspected cases of child abuse or neglect must be reported to the Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Line at 218.998.8150. YMCA employees are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. YMCA Learning Centers take this responsibility very seriously, and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff at YMCA Learning Centers cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

If a Learning Center staff member is accused of abuse and/or neglect by a parent or co-worker, such an accusation will be reported to the Director, and a determination will be made whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse and/or neglect. If there is reasonable cause, a report must be made to Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Line at 218.998.8150.

The YMCA Child Care Program will cooperate with any DHS investigation. In addition, the accused staff member will be informed of the allegations and be given an opportunity to respond. Staff person "accused" will be removed from ratio until investigation is completed. Termination of employment after a child abuse allegation and investigation is at the discretion of the YMCA.

The following is regarding mandated reporters and reporting abuse, as stated in our Employee Handbook:

- Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others at all times while in the presence of children, parents, and staff (this includes kisses and long hugs).
- Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration, and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, etc.
- No pet names, such as honey, sweetie, cutie, etc.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
- Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
  - Under no circumstances should a YMCA employee release a child to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
  - Staff are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.

### **Lost and Found**

The YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items. We make every effort to help teach your child responsibility to keep all of their belongings in order. We have a lost and found location for any items that are found. Items not claimed within a reasonable amount of time will be donated.

### **Incident/Accident Report**

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report will be given to Program Director for review. Staff will inform parents any time your child is injured or hurt even if it is minor. If you wish to have an in-depth discussion or meeting with Director or Coordinator regarding an Incident/Accident Report, we ask that you schedule a specific time with them.

### **No Smoking Policy**

The YMCA of the Northern Sky prohibits smoking at YMCA facilities and on YMCA grounds. In addition, staff are prohibited from smoking during work hours.

### **Gun Policy**

The YMCA of the Northern Sky prohibits carrying concealed weapons and firearms of any kind at YMCA facilities and on YMCA grounds.

### **Sex Offenders**

Sex offenders are not allowed into YMCA School Age Child Care or Camp Programming, regardless if they are a guardian or relative.

## **Social Media**

This Social Media Policy applies to parents, employees, students, and Directors/Coordinators of YMCA Child Care.

This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. YouTube)
- Micro-blogging (i.e. Twitter/X)

As part of our duty to safeguard children, it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all our families and employees. We therefore require that:

No photographs taken within the YMCA or at YMCA special events and outings with the children, are to be posted for public viewing, except those of your own child (except approved, appropriate use for marketing/fundraising purposes)

Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children.

No public discussions are to be held or comments made on social media sites regarding YMCA children, staff, or administrators (except approved, appropriate use for marketing/fundraising purposes), or that could be construed to have any impact on the YMCA Child Care reputation or offend any staff or parent.

If a parent names the YMCA Child Care on any social media platform, they must do so in a way that is not detrimental or derogatory to the YMCA, its employees, or its child care families.

Parents are not permitted to set up private or public social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X) accounts/groups related to YMCA Child Care without expressed written consent from the Executive Director.

### **Violation of Social Media Policy**

Any parent found to be in violation of the Social Media Policy, or by posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality, bring the YMCA Child Care into disrepute, or that are deemed to be detrimental to the YMCA Child Care Program, its employees, or other children could result in immediate dismissal from the YMCA.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

YMCA Child Care always requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of YMCA Child Care is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of YMCA Child Care, but is the responsibility of every parent or adult who enters. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on YMCA property thereafter.

## **Swearing/Cursing**

No parent or guardian is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on YMCA or school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or guardian feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

## **Threats**

The threatening of employees, children of other parents, or adults associated with the YMCA Child Care will not be tolerated. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities, and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the YMCA will not assume the risk of a second chance. PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR, AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.

## **Physical/Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Other Children at YMCA Child Care**

While YMCA Child Care does not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in our child care facilities. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher, and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving inappropriately or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the Coordinator and/or Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the Coordinator or Director's attention. At that point, the staff and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, staff and/or Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in YMCA child care have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting our child care.

### **Confrontational Interactions with Employees, other Parents, or Associates of The YMCA Child Care**

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of YMCA Child Care or the parents of other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled calmly and respectfully. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

### **Policy for Handling Parent Concerns**

If a parent has a concern, they should first discuss it with the Coordinator/and or Director. If the Coordinator/Director and parent cannot resolve the concern together to the satisfaction of both, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Operations Director. A three-way conference may be arranged at this time. If a resolution is not reached, the matter will then be brought to the attention of the Executive Director for their consideration.

## **Typical After School Day Routine**

3:10 – 4 pm	Off the Bus and Snack time
4 – 4:30 pm	Structured Gym Games (Room Rotation)
4:30 – 5 pm	Homework, Reading time (Room Rotation)
5 – 5:30 pm	Gym time/ Organized free time

## **Typical Summer Day Camp Day/ No School Day**

7:15 – 9 am	Arrival, Organized Free Time
9 – 10 am	Group Rotations (Craft, Gym, Outside, STEAM, Special Activity)
10 – 11 am	Group Rotations (Craft, Gym, Outside, STEAM, Special Activity)
11 am – Noon	Lunch Time
Noon – 12:30 pm	Reading/Quiet Time
12:30 – 1:30 pm	Group Rotations (Craft, Gym, Outside, STEAM, Special Activity)
1:30 – 2:30 pm	Group Rotations (Craft, Gym, Outside, STEAM, Special Activity)
2:30 – 3 pm	Afternoon snack
3 – 4 pm	Group Rotations (Craft, Gym, Outside, STEAM, Special Activity)
4 – 5:30 pm	Finish up daily projects, Outdoor Time

## **Fergus Falls YMCA Summer Day Camp 2025 Scheduled Weeks and Themes**

June 2 – 6	Dive into Summer
June 9 – 13	Animal Planet
June 16 – 20	Travel Week
June 23 – 27	Sports of all Sorts
June 30 – July 3	Stars and Stripes (*YMCA Closed on the 4th of July)
July 7 – 11	Color Craze
July 14 – 18	Wet & Wild
July 21 – 25	Mad Science
July 28 – August 1	Disney/Superheroes
August 4 – 8	On the Farm
August 11 – 15	National Parks Week
August 19 – 23	Fall into Fun
August 26 – August 30	Day Camp CLOSED this week





**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®**  
**FOR HEALTHY LIVING**  
**FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**YMCA OF THE NORTHERN SKY  
FERGUS FALLS MANAGEMENT STAFF**

Steve Smith, CEO, YMCA of the Northern Sky  
smith@ymcanorthernsky.org

Stephanie Grow, Operations Director  
grow@ymcanorthernsky.org

Nicole Washek, Youth & Family Director  
washek@ymcanorthernsky.org

Christine Muller, Youth Development Program Manager  
muller@ymcanorthernsky.org

Emily Stawarski, Membership & Marketing Director  
stawarski@ymcanorthernsky.org

Steve Nelson, Property Manager  
SNelson@ymcanorthernsky.org

Blake Buer, Health and Wellness Director  
buer@ymcanorthernsky.org

Bain Laine, Sports Coordinator  
Laine@ymcanorthernsky.org

Anna Drenth, Aquatics & Safety Director  
drenth@ymcanorthernsky.org

**Fergus Falls Child Care Program Cell Number 218.671.1453**

YMCA of the Northern Sky  
Fergus Falls Branch  
1164 N Friberg Avenue  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
218.739.4489  
ymcanorthernsky.org