



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

## Enrichment Center Family Handbook 2021-2022

Full Day Enrichment Center  
Morning Y-Preschool  
C.H.O.I.C.E.S Wrap around Care

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**C.H.O.I.C.E.S.**

(Children Having Opportunities in Collaborative Early Settings)

## **Bath Area Family YMCA Mission**

The purpose of the Bath Area Family YMCA is to promote the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities.

We offer a broad range of programs and services to our members and the community. These programs and services are designed to nourish mind, body, and spirit; promote life skills; and improve health and wellness.

We are driven by the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We embrace the diversity of our community. We do not discriminate based on race, creed, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability or socio-economic status.

We always strive to provide our services without regard for one's ability to pay for such services.

## **Our Philosophy**

The Bath Area Family YMCA Child Care programs offer opportunities for children to interact in an inclusive, child-directed environment. We focus on learning through the developmental areas of social-emotional, physical, cognitive and language, utilizing "play" as the focal point for all learning. We respect and support children in the acquisition of new skills, believing that children learn at their own pace, developing skills as they build upon gained knowledge.

Families are an integral part of our program. Teachers help to introduce diversity while working with the children and families involved in our programs. Our goal is to create an environment that nurtures, encourages respect, promotes self-esteem and trust. Our hope is that the experiences we offer will promote unique and positive outcomes for the children and families we serve.

## **Y Annual Campaign and Scholarship Fund**

The YMCA is a charitable organization that provides financial aid to any individual that is not able to afford services. The funds for these scholarships are raised thanks to YMCA community volunteers that work with our Annual Campaign, as well as support from the United Way of Mid-Coast Maine. Parent volunteers are always welcome to join the campaign as a volunteer. Applications for financial aid are always available at the YMCA front desk or on the Y website at [www.bathymca.org](http://www.bathymca.org)

## **Program Goals**

Our Child Care Program is a safe, caring environment where each child is encouraged to learn new skills, express himself/herself freely and explore the environment. Teachers facilitate independence and self-esteem while modeling and supporting the development of problem-solving skills.

Teachers provide a group environment designed to promote social-emotional, cognitive, physical, and language skills. Using process-oriented activities, children learn risk taking and build self-confidence.

Our day is designed with individual and group activities taking place within the group setting, as well as free and structured playtime. Daily, teachers observe and interact with children attempting to maintain an environment that is stimulating and meets the needs of each child at his/her own level of readiness. Ultimately, in keeping with the purpose and philosophy of the YMCA, we strive to help children develop fully in body, mind and spirit.

## Developmental Philosophy Statement

We *respect* children as individuals, with their own unique needs and desires. We acknowledge and support their needs, assisting them in their work growing and developing. We support each child's progress in the areas of physiological development, safety, belonging and self-esteem recognizing that children may experience times in their lives when one area involves more time and energy, requiring examination, understanding and guidance. We support healthy brain development and resiliency. We believe in our ability as team members (teachers, administrators, the family and other professionals) to identify the needs of the group and individualize learning, to build upon the capacity of all children in the group. Above all, we believe each child is their own unique being, and we believe that children deserve to grow and develop in a safe, caring environment. We like to think of our program as an environment in which children can blossom.

## Curriculum

We believe that children learn through play. Therefore, the environment in our childcare programs will be designed to allow the children to explore and create independently. It is our goal to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum to enhance the healthy growth of your child as an individual. Through observation, teachers will design creative activities that teach skills needed to meet the individual needs of children.

*"When you observe children in our classroom, you see a room full of children playing. You may wonder what we are doing to help children learn. As children play, we watch how they use materials. We listen. We talk with them to find out what they are thinking and trying to do. We help children become aware of their actions, offer suggestions, and think about what materials to offer next. Then we challenge them to think further. This is how we encourage the development of skills children will need in elementary school."*—A Parent's Guide to Preschool, Diane Trister Dodge and Joanna Phinney, Teaching Strategies, Inc., copyright 2002.

## Portfolios

Classroom staff document observations involving social, emotional, cognitive and physical development. We also collect samples of artwork, pictures of structures built and anecdotal interactions with peers. This information is then used to determine the best approach in working with each child. In addition, three parent-teacher conferences will be held each year to discuss each child's progress. At these conferences, families will receive written reports and discuss the progress of their child. These will be held in November, May, and August.

## Admission Information

The YMCA admits families without regard to sex, race, national origin, religion, political beliefs, marital status, or disability.

- ★ Enrollment is limited and structured to provide the most positive experience for the children
- ★ All programs are licensed through the State of Maine Child Care Licensing Department
- ★ The Enrichment Program is Accredited through The National Association for the Education of Young Children
- ★ The Bath Area Family YMCA offers financial aid, scholarships and participates in CCSP.

**No person will be excluded from admission or participation in the YMCA Child Care Programs because of race, color, national origin, sex or religion.**

This Institution is an equal opportunity provider

## Child Staff Ratio

All programs will follow NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) regulations as follows:

Age of Child:  
3 years to 5 years

Number of Staff:  
1 adult to every 8 children

Max. Group Size:  
20

## Hours of Operation

7:00 am - 5:00 pm

Monday - Friday (Full Day)

OR

8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Monday - Friday (Mornings)

**RSU 1 CHOICES Pre-K and West Bath Pre-K programs will run Monday-Friday from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm. Wraparound care is available on a first come, first serve basis.**

## Rights for Children in Childcare Facilities

The Bath Family YMCA is dedicated to protecting the rights of children enrolled in its programs. Maine's Department of Human Services provides rules, summarized below, outlining the rights of children enrolled in each child care program. We take the steps necessary to protect these rights.

- ★ Right to freedom from abuse and neglect;
- ★ Right to confidentiality;
- ★ Right to freedom from harmful actions or practices;
- ★ Right to a safe and healthy environment;
- ★ Right to be free from discrimination;
- ★ Right to consideration and respect;
- ★ Right to be informed of services provided by the Child Care Facility;
- ★ Right to information regarding the Child Care Facility's deficiencies;
- ★ Right to assistance in implementing a service plan developed with community or state agencies;
- ★ Right to a variety of appropriate activities, materials, and equipment; and
- ★ If a child has disabilities, he or she has the right to reasonable modifications and accommodations that do not fundamentally alter but allow the child to participate in the program.

## Teacher Professional Development

It is our belief that quality childcare happens when teachers have education and professional development. Teachers participate in ongoing professional development throughout the year, including workshops, curriculum development (Creative Curriculum) and continuing education of best practices and health and safety in childcare. All Enrichment staff are members of Maine Roads to Quality, a professional development network, which ensures staff are provided training opportunities. Additionally, the Enrichment classrooms are closed twice yearly for professional development days.

## Vacation Policy

This program allows a one-week vacation per schoolyear, which runs from the last week in August to the third week in August of the following year. Regular fees will not be required for the week chosen. Due to teacher scheduling, a two-week notice, in writing, of use of vacation time is required. This written notice needs to be turned in to the Child Care office for processing.

## Attendance Policy

Children's schedules are determined at the time of enrollment based on a family's need for child care services. We determine our staffing levels based on current enrollment, so it is important to communicate with us if your schedule changes for any reason.

We ask that parents drop off their children no later than **8:30 a.m. (8:30 for CHOICES and Enrichment)** in order to ease the child's transition into the classroom. Breakfast is served at approximately 9:00. Administrative approval in advance is required for parents who wish to drop their children off after 9:00 a.m. due to individual circumstances such as a doctor's appointment.

If your child will not be in attendance on a scheduled day, we ask that parents call the classroom by 8:00 a.m. to let us know. This helps with activity and meal planning. If your child arrives at school after 9:00 and we have not received communication around this, we will plan for an absence.

Families are welcome to park in the front loop of the parking lot for pick up and drop off purposes only. Please use this parking area with the understanding that you will promptly return to your vehicle. Please do not let vehicles idle to reduce environmental impact.

To support our programming, please plan to arrive with your child no later than 9:00 a.m. To keep the consistency of the teacher's goals and objectives please try to make appointment towards the end of the day, after 3 PM to prevent further disruption of your child's day. Returning from an appointment can be challenging for children.

## Emergency Closure Policy

- The Bath Area Family YMCA reserves the right to make closure decisions based on safety, conditions of roads, parking lots and sidewalks, as well as staff availability.
- If the Bath Area Family YMCA closes due to unforeseen circumstances, tuition remains due until further review of the situation.
- If the YMCA opens after 10:00 am, the Enrichment program will be closed.
- If RSU 1 is closed, we will not offer the CHOICES program.
- If RSU 1 has a delay, the CHOICES program will follow that delay.
- If RSU 1 has a two-hour delay CHOICES will not open.

We suggest that you check WCSH6 closure listings, as well as check our website, [www.bathymca.org](http://www.bathymca.org), the Bath Y Facebook page or call the Bath Y if you have any questions.

## Enrollment

Childcare is very important to us and we want all families to feel welcome and safe in all programs. We strongly encourage visiting our program prior to your child attending. A family orientation will be held prior to your child's 1<sup>st</sup> day. At that time, you will have a chance to ask questions of staff. Upon visiting you will be able view the design of the classroom and observe interactions between children and teachers. This will also be an opportunity to discuss the type of transition your child will need to enter the classroom successfully.

Enrollment is offered year-round. If needed, a waiting list will be developed. As openings occur, they will be filled from the list. A completed Enrollment Packet must be turned in to maintain a place on our waitlist.

## Confidentiality

Any information that you share with The Bath Area Family YMCA staff will be treated with privacy and respect. Information gathered on forms will be kept in locked files and are available to approved staff and state of Maine Office of Child and Family Services. We need your written permission to share any information with another program or agency. We will also need your written consent to receive any information from another program or agency. All Bath Area Family YMCA staff and volunteers are trained to respect your privacy and to follow YMCA confidentiality policies.

## Tuition

At registration time, a non-refundable, \*\$35.00 registration fee is due. This fee covers the cost of orientation and administrative fees. *\*registration fee not applicable for CHOICES/West Bath Pre-K families that do NOT use wrap care.* Weekly tuition is due the Wednesday before the next week of care. In other words, tuition will be paid prior to the week of service. If tuition is late, a \$5.00 fee will be assessed for each week late. *A two-week written notice is required, prior to withdrawing from the program.* A child withdrawing from the program without this written paperwork will be required to pay the two-week tuition due. Payment is to be made at the Front Desk. Families may choose to draft from a checking or savings account.

## Arrival and Pick-Up Policies

Safety is an important consideration here at the YMCA. Our policy is to know where every child is at all times. Therefore, an adult must accompany his/her child into and out of the classroom daily. Our program closes promptly at 5:30 pm (12:00 pm for morning only Enrichment children). A late fee of \$2.00 per minute will be charged for a child who remains in the classroom after 5:30 pm (12:00 pm- morning only Enrichment children). A late pick-up slip will be created by the staff on duty, to be signed by the parent and staff. The fee will be added to the account and is due to be paid with the next payment due, (by the following Wednesday).

**We reserve the right to terminate services when tuition is unpaid or if a parent is repeatedly late.**

## Assessment

Children will be evaluated throughout the year by classroom teachers, using the Creative Curriculum Developmental Checkpoints. Teaching staff will meet and discuss any developmental concerns with the director and families to ensure a referral is made through CDS to provide additional support, if needed. All students entering pre-K through the CHOICES public pre-K program will receive an additional DIAL 4 screening prior to enrollment, including vision and hearing screenings administered by the school nurse. Assessments of children in our program will take place through anecdotal notes and observations and will take place in both group and individualized settings. All CHOICES public pre-K students will receive additional screening using the CPAA assessment tool in Fall, Winter and Spring. Enrichment Teaching staff will be highly qualified and trained in utilizing the Creative Curriculum Checkpoints to assess each child in their development. Families will meet with teachers throughout the year to discuss these assessments, address any areas of concern and create educational goals.

## Developmental Screening

The Enrichment Program collaborates with Child Development Services (CDS). This organization supports individual screenings, evaluates and provides the following services to children from birth through age five:

- ★ Assists staff with screenings
- ★ Evaluations in the area(s) of concern
- ★ Early intervention services for eligible children

- ★ Service coordination to support the family and monitor the child's progress
- ★ Transition planning for public school entry

Families at any time may request a developmental screening by contacting CDS at (207) 563-1411, fax 563-6312. Classroom teachers can act as a resource in this process.

### Collaborating Agencies

We believe that developmentally appropriate childcare programs are members of a large society of early childhood professionals with the shared goal of supporting children and families. Below is a list of some of the organizations with whom we currently work.

☀ United Way of Mid-Coast Maine ☀ NAEYC and Maine's Affiliate MEAEYC ☀ 5210 ☀ Maine Roads to Quality  
 ☀ United Way ☀ Family Focus ☀ Department of Health and Human Services ☀ Sweetser ☀ Child  
 Development Services ☀ The Autism Society ☀ The Diabetes Center ☀ The Center for Grieving Children ☀  
 C.H.O.I.C.E.S. Program & RSU1 ☀ Families CAN! ☀ West Bath School District ☀ So. Maine Community College  
 ☀ Merrymeeting Adult Education ☀ RSU1 and Wiscasset Adult Education

**If professionals from these, or other organizations, will be observing specific children, parent permission will be required.**

### Typical Child Guidance Procedures

In our classroom, we use various techniques to guide each child in using appropriate behavior yet encouraging them to manage his/her own behavior. In our *classroom design*, we create "areas" in which the children can access material independently and be geared to their level of interest.

Another technique we use is *language*. We use conversation, songs and books to broaden language skills. As skills increase, we assist each child in communicating his/her needs to peers directly, encouraging problem solving.

Teachers use *modeling* as an effective teaching tool in behavior management. Teachers model the appropriate use of language, positive affect and problem-solving skills. Using this technique, children can observe appropriate strategies to use when they enter a difficult situation. In addition, teachers facilitate suitable responses when a child is unable to respond appropriately.

We offer many *choices* for children during the day including the materials they use as well as self-care routines (toileting, meals) and how to solve the problems that arise in group care. In using choices, we are enabling the child to learn skills to resolve problems independently. As an example, "Would you like to leave the book on the shelf or take it to the playground with you?" If a child is not able to make a choice, we may prompt him/her by counting to three, and sometimes make the choice for him/her.

When these usual techniques become ineffective, a teacher may suggest or require that a child take some *time away* from the group, child or activity causing the disturbance. Allowing the child time to think about the consequences of his/her behavior and the effects of his/her behavior on another child or the group as a whole enables the child to return to play when he/she is more able to be productive. Teachers support the child as he/she refocuses and rejoins the classroom by setting limits and encouraging the child to recognize and talk about feelings.

## Social and Emotional Development

Our primary concern is to provide a safe environment for all children, all the time. The teachers in each program have been trained in supporting social and emotional development and will work to model this approach to the children in their care. The guide we will use is as follows:

### Problem-Solving Steps

- a) Help children calm down.
- b) Identify the problem.
- c) Generate solutions.
- d) Review solutions and choose one.
- e) Check back.

**At no time do we use shaming, withholding of food, verbal abuse or corporal punishment as a means of managing behavior.**

### **When our Typical Child Guidance Procedures are not Sufficient Support for a Child to be Successful and/or Participate Safely in the Program**

While most children in our care respond to our **Typical Child Guidance Procedures**, some children exhibit continuing behaviors that threaten the safety and development of other children, or have special needs necessitating the use of additional strategies. The Bath Area Family YMCA actively seeks the cooperation of parents, outside agencies, and experts in planning and implementing strategies to help all children be successful and participate safely in our program. The goal within our program is to limit the use of suspension, expulsion or other exclusionary measures with the children in our care. Maine's Rules for Licensing of Child Care Facilities requires us to compile a record for each child at the time of admission and maintain this record. The record must include a list of the child's special needs. We need parents to share this information with us, so that we may comply with state licensing rules.

To ensure a smooth transition into our program and to ensure that our staff are adequately trained and/or have sufficient experience to meet the needs of all children for whom they are responsible, we encourage parents of all children with known disabilities (medical, educational/developmental, and behavioral) to share additional information with the YMCA. (Helpful information includes diagnoses, recommendations by physicians, and recommendations by child development experts and other professionals who have relationships with the child and family.) We want to provide children with the supports they need to be successful in our program. If a child has known or diagnosed behavioral issues, we prefer to have an **Individualized Behavior Plan** in place at the start of the child's time in our program and ask that parents assist the YMCA in creating this plan. Cooperation and sharing of information go a long way toward making the child's transition as smooth as possible.

If it is becoming apparent that a child who has not been identified as having a disability needs more behavioral support to participate successfully and safely than our **Typical Child Guidance Procedures** provide, we expect parents to cooperate with us by participating in the procedures outlined here.

### **Procedures for Creating and Implementing an Individualized Behavior Plan**

1. Teachers regularly record observations about children's behavior
2. Child's teacher informs the Director that **Typical Child Guidance Procedures** are inadequate support for child to participate successfully and/or safely in the program.

3. Teacher and Director meet with Parents to discuss options, create **Behavior Crisis Plan**, plan the next steps to follow if the **Behavior Crisis Plan** is not sufficient to facilitate the child's success and safe participation in the program, and schedule a date to meet again.

A **Behavior Crisis Plan** is a document that lists specific behaviors exhibited by the child that are deemed unsafe by the family, teaching staff, and/or administration. The plan lists strategies that will be implemented in attempt to change the child's behavior before seeking outside assistance. The Plan includes steps to follow if the listed strategies are not effective. **Behavior Crisis Plans** are written for individual children by Teachers and Directors in collaboration with the child's parents.

4. The teachers in the program will follow the plan for a period of time (typically two weeks) and document any changes. If the behavior increases, becomes harmful to the child himself, or staff, the next step will be implemented immediately without a waiting period. If the behavior has not improved during the two week period or if improvement has not been sufficient to allow the child to participate successfully and safely in the program, the next step will be implemented at this time.
5. The next step is typically for parents to seek a medical diagnosis from a physician and/or referrals to an early childhood support agency or other professionals. Parent consent/action at this step allows professionals from appropriate agencies to observe the child in the program. (In the past, suggestions have included specially designed instruction, provisions of additional staff from third party agencies to support the child in the group setting, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language services, and other similar services and interventions.)
6. Parents then share information with us sufficient for us to create and implement an **Individualized Behavior Plan**.
7. The Director, Teachers, and Parents will then cooperate to create an **Individualized Behavior Plan** that includes all reasonable suggestions of physicians, agencies, and/or professionals that do not fundamentally alter our program.
8. Teachers will implement the **Individualized Behavior Plan** and record their observations.
9. If use of the **Individualized Behavior Plan** does not improve the child's behavior or improve the behavior sufficiently to facilitate the child's success and safe participation, the Director, Teachers, Parents, and Experts will cooperate to revise the plan.
10. If all reasonable recommendations have been followed without sufficient results and no further recommendations for reasonable modifications are suggested, **or** if the child's parents fail to cooperate with YMCA staff in seeking outside help and creating, implementing, and modifying the **Individualized Behavior Plan**, the Director will make the recommendation that the family seek an alternate appropriate placement and the child will be dis-enrolled from the program. It is our hope to work with all children and families collaboratively to avoid this situation, but we know that our program will not meet the needs of all children and families.

## Withdrawal

On rare occasions, the YMCA disenrolls children from childcare programs. The YMCA reserves the right to terminate childcare services at any time. Here are some examples of times when children may be dis-enrolled:

- ★ If a pattern of behavior or condition exists and continues, thereby threatening the safety of children or staff
- ★ Non-payment of tuition or assessed fees

Should a child become disenrolled in our program, the Director will work with the family to access an alternative appropriate placement.

## Impairment Policy

If a childcare teacher or administrator has reason to believe that a family member or responsible adult is unable to safely transport a child, the teacher or administrator will address the concern and offer assistance in arranging for alternate transportation for the adult and child.

Examples of possible reasons a responsible adult may be deemed “unable to transport a child safely” include:

- Odor of alcohol
- Slurring of speech
- Disturbance of gait
- Confusion
- Unusual behavior that may indicate impaired judgment or risk to safety
- Voluntary sharing of alcohol consumption

If an observation is made which indicates the child may be at risk if the responsible adult operates a motor vehicle, the teacher or administrator will

- Document the incident using objective observation skills and language and report to DHHS, if deemed necessary (*see Reporting Abuse*)
- Attempt to find alternative transportation (contacting other responsible parties listed as possible pick up on emergency paperwork)
- Contact the police if the responsible adult refuses the above option (give the police the name of the driver and passengers, vehicle information, and share our concern that the child may be in danger).

## Reporting Abuse

The Bath Area Family YMCA believes strongly that the safety of children in our care is our utmost responsibility. Please be aware The Bath Area Family YMCA and the state of Maine considers physical, sexual or emotional abuse to be intolerable. Immediate action will be taken if an allegation of abuse is made. The following procedures will be followed in the event of an allegation:

- The alleged victim will be our primary concern ensuring safety, protection and comfort;
- The staff person, as soon as he or she is accused of abuse, will be suspended immediately with pay until the investigation is completed and a report issued
- The accusation, suspicion or risk of harm will be reported immediately to the appropriate State authority;
- The Bath Area Family YMCA will cooperate fully with the investigation;
- The Bath Area Family YMCA will act responsibly when the investigation is over to ensure that all children in our program are protected.
- In the case of an event observed by a staff member, or a direct report of a staff member, we will follow the following procedure:
  - The staff member will report the observation/incident to the immediate supervisor/lead teacher;
  - The supervisor/lead teacher will immediately report to the Director, and will determine what action should be taken;
  - If a report to the Office of Child and Family Services is needed, the above procedure will immediately be put in place; if no further reporting is necessary, the Director will report back to the initiator the rationale for this decision.
  - Parents will be notified if/when a report is made, unless fear of harm to the child is possible.

## Resolving Parent Issues

A conference or brief meeting with the Director or teaching staff may be requested at any time via phone, email, or written/verbal request (see below for contact information). For programming issues, lead teachers are an excellent resource. The Director is available to assist with policy issues as well as support classroom issues. The Bath Area Family YMCA feels that positive parent-teacher communication is necessary to create the best possible environment for children. When you have concerns or questions, we encourage you to communicate them to us in a timely manner. Most questions about daily classroom life can be answered by classroom teachers. Should you feel that your concerns or questions are not being addressed, a phone call or email message to the director will be the next step. The Director is available to meet in person as well, at a time that works for both parties. Only in this way may we hope and expect to be responsive to your needs. Should you feel that the Enrichment Director is not responsive to your issue, please reach out to Deb Young, Chief Operating Instructor for further assistance.

## Contact Information

Annie Colaluca, Preschool Director: [annie@bathymca.org](mailto:annie@bathymca.org) 443-4112 ext. 20  
Kayla Royer, Y-Care Director; [kayla@bathymca.org](mailto:kayla@bathymca.org) 443-4112 ext. 34  
Jacqueline Stahl, Childcare Billing: [jacqueline@bathymca.org](mailto:jacqueline@bathymca.org) 443-4112 ext. 13  
**Enrichment 1 Classroom:** 443-4112 ext. 34  
**Enrichment 2 Classroom:** 443-4112 ext. 21  
**Enrichment 3 Classroom:** 443-4112 ext. 21

Please note that if you need to reach the classroom teachers immediately it is best to do so by phone. The teachers are unable to check email throughout the day. Voicemail messages may be left at any of the above extensions.

## Holidays/Days Closed

Our childcare programs will be closed on the following holidays:

<b>Labor Day</b>	<b>Columbus Day</b>
<b>Thanksgiving Day</b>	<b>Day after Thanksgiving</b>
<b>Christmas Eve Day</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>
<b>New Year's Eve</b>	<b>New Year's Day</b>
<b>MLK Day</b>	<b>Memorial Day</b>
<b>Independence Day</b>	

*Tuition will remain due as stated in the Payment Policy and Procedure.*

In addition to these days, The Bath Area Family YMCA child care programs will be closed during one of the last two weeks of August, for maintenance and repairs. Your child's weekly tuition *will not* be due during this week. Should the YMCA make any additional schedule changes, families will be given a two-week notice.

## Invitations/Birthday Celebrations

We believe in community and family meetings and offer opportunities during the year for these kinds of gatherings. However, we ask that all individual party plans be made outside of the classroom community. If invitations are for everyone in the classroom, they can be given to a teacher to be placed in the family's mailboxes (pockets). Due to our 5210 Let's Go! Policy, we do not serve birthday deserts/treats in our classrooms. We prefer not to serve baked goods from home to ensure food safety for all children in our care. Teachers supply special birthday paper goods on the morning of a child's birthday as we celebrate each child on their special day.

## **Photography**

We believe in the use of photographs in the classroom to promote a sense of self and encourage an understanding of multi-cultural differences. We also use the photos to create “good-bye” books for children who leave our program and for the children who remain with us. In addition, we believe the use of videotapes allow us to review the interactions happening in the classroom and encourage growth among teaching staff. Therefore, we allow persons connected with our program (staff, parents and consultants) to take pictures and videotape with written permission. Where possible publication is concerned, additional permission will be requested.

## **Weather Preparation and Daily Attire**

Children should wear clothing appropriate for freedom of movement and active exercise. Daily clothing should also be easily washable, because as you know these are the active and dirty years. State law requires that your child be given access to the outdoors with a minimum of two hours daily, weather permitting. This will include winter weather, so please send in boots, mittens, hat, and snow pants. Open-toed shoes will not be permitted on the playground.

Summer brings some program changes, including a more relaxed daily schedule to provide for extended project work outside, special events, and field trips. Please prepare your child for summer activities with appropriate clothing, footwear.

Your child should bring a bag/backpack with the following labeled materials:

- ★ Lunch
- ★ One full set of extra clothing, including socks and underwear
- ★ Blanket for Naptime
- ★ Small Stuffed Animal, if needed
- ★ Swimsuit, towel (swim days)
- ★ Shorts, sweatpants, gymnastics suit (gymnastics days)

*Please mark all clothing with your child's name in a conspicuous place with a permanent marker to avoid loss and confusion.*

## **Swim Time and Attire**

Each child should bring his/her swimsuit, a towel, and wear hair in a ponytail if his/her hair is collar length or longer. All articles should be clearly labeled with a permanent marker. Please also have your child bring a plastic/waterproof bag for his/her wet articles. All children enrolled in the Enrichment Center are required to suit up for swimming and sit in the pool area. Classroom teachers attend swimming lessons so there are no teachers remaining in the classroom to watch children who are unable to swim.

## **Field Trips**

There are various opportunities for field trips in our area. Prior to a field trip, a permission slip will be sent home to be signed. There is a place on the form for parents interested in volunteering. During field trips, our ratio is 1:4 children or fewer, thanks to the support of volunteers.

## **Toys from Home**

The Enrichment Program welcomes belongings from home such as napping items, comfort items, and books. We welcome materials related to the current curriculum or family culture. Teachers will work with families to incorporate these into lesson plans. We ask that other toys be left at home or in the car. The Program does not allow weapon type toys (i.e., guns, knives, swords, whips, etc.), war toys, or toys of destruction.

### ***Naptime Full day only***

Since our childcare programs are designed with various activities to utilize each child's whole body and mind, a naptime is included to allow time for each child's body to rest. The Enrichment Center provides each child with his/her own personalized mat. Every mat is cleaned and disinfected weekly. Each child is asked to rest quietly for the first half hour to an hour. Then, children who no longer nap can play quietly on their mats or at table activities. Once group needs are assessed, alternative quiet activities may be provided.

We ask that you provide a blanket or favorite covering from home, clearly labeled. This will help provide a sense of security and the realization that children haven't left everything at home. Due to State Licensing requirements, pillows will not be allowed. However, you may bring a favorite, small stuffed animal.

### **Meal Time and Nutrition**

Practicing good nutrition is an important role of quality childcare. Foods that are tasty and colorful, as well as a pleasurable eating environment, are important elements in a child's view of mealtime. Our belief in the importance of independence for children is shown in the manner in which we present children their lunches from home. At mealtimes, we allow children to self-select the order in which they eat their food. We do not insist that they eat one food before they can have another. Therefore, we ask families to keep this in mind when they select foods for their child's lunches.

We encourage you to teach your child the importance of health by making healthy food choices at home and at child care. Rather than cookies or chips, consider packing raw vegetables or fruit. Yogurt, applesauce, fresh fruit, raisins, sun butter and jelly and granola bars are not only easy to pack, but foods children enjoy. Since popcorn can cause choking, we ask you not to pack this item in lunches. Additionally, candy and soda are not allowed in our programs.

We do provide a morning and afternoon snack, along with juice, milk or water. The menu is posted in the classroom and is made available to all families at orientation.

### **Oral Health**

All children enrolled in our Full Day Program are provided with an opportunity to brush their teeth after lunch. Children are supplied with their own toothbrush, which is cleaned weekly and replaced on a monthly basis. Toothbrushes are kept in an individual compartment to prevent the spreading of germs. Fluoride toothpaste is supplied onto a paper cup, in a pea-sized amount by a staff member. Children utilize a specific sink that is sanitized before and after they brush their teeth. Visual aids and teachers support the children in the proper technique of brushing teeth. Oral health is discussed on to promote and encourage oral health.

### **Food Safety Policy**

To ensure that all foods are served at the proper temperature, childcare staff will not be responsible for heating up or preparing warmed foods for children in the program. Families are responsible for packing their child's lunch with an ice pack, if necessary or thermos, to keep foods at the proper temperature. Refrigerator space is reserved for breakfast and snack foods.

### **Nut Free Program Environments**

The Bath Area Family YMCA Childcare Programs are peanut and tree nut free environments. We have children with severe food allergy to peanuts, tree nuts, sesame seeds & mustard. It is important that there is strict avoidance to these foods in order to prevent a life-threatening allergic reaction. We are asking your help to provide the student with a safe childcare environment.

\*Should your child have a nut allergy, please include an Allergy Action plan with enrollment paperwork.

### The Bath Area Family YMCA and **5210 Let's Go!**

The Bath Area Family YMCA supports and participates in the **5210** program. The **5210** message (**5** or more fruits and vegetables, **2** hours or less of recreational screen time, **1** hour or more of physical activity and **0** sugary drinks, more water and low fat milk a day) is used consistently across all of the program areas. We use five strategies in our work with children.

**Strategy 1: Provide healthy choices for snacks and celebrations; limit unhealthy choices.** The Bath Area Family YMCA childcare programs only provide healthy, non-sugary choices for snacks and celebrations, including many fruits and vegetables.

**Strategy 2: Provide water & low-fat milk: limit or eliminate sugary beverages.** We limit (or do not provide) sugary beverages and ask that sugary beverages not be packed in lunches.

**Strategy 3: Provide non-food reward.** The Bath Area Family childcare programs do not use food as a reward.

**Strategy 4: Provide opportunities for children to get physical activity every day.** The Bath Area Family YMCA Childcare Programs provide ample opportunities for children to get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day; both indoors and outdoors, when the weather is good, most of the physical activity is outside.

**Strategy 5: Limit recreational screen time.** The Bath Area Family YMCA Childcare Programs do not allow any recreational screen time. The only screen that is allowed is for educational purposes only, which is limited to 30 minutes or less each day.

### Illness Policy

Illness is an important topic to address in childcare. We understand the importance of having a safe place to leave your child but must keep the health of the group the top priority. Please assist us with reducing the transmission of childhood diseases by noting your child's behavior and checking for signs of illness. We trust that you will follow these simple guidelines:

- ★ *A child, who is not well enough to participate in all daily activities, including swimming, gymnastics and outdoor play, should not attend.*
- ★ Children must be without fever of 101° or greater for 24 hours and/or must be without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to the program. (Vomiting includes two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours.)
- ★ For example: If a child is sent home from our child care program at 9:00am with a fever of 102° and the child's fever is back to normal by 5:00pm that evening, the child must remain home for 24 hours after 5pm, to ensure their illness is, in fact, better and they are able to return to care, fever free.
- ★ A child who is presenting any of the following symptoms should be kept home and will be sent home if any of these symptoms are noted.
  - ★ A temperature (of 101° or higher)
  - ★ Diarrhea or Vomiting
  - ★ An Unexplained Rash
  - ★ Discharging Eyes or Ears
  - ★ If your child is sent home with conjunctivitis, it is our policy that he/she may not return to the program for 24 hours after beginning treatment.
- ★ Please monitor your child for any unusual symptoms. If your child has been exposed to a highly contagious disease, please notify us. *Strep throat, pinworm, viral infections, measles, mumps, chicken pox, fifth disease, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis, diarrhea and impetigo* are among those conditions characterized as "highly contagious".

- ★ If a child has been exposed to a contagious disease, we will post notification to inform all parents of the possible exposure, symptoms to look for, as well as treatment. If your child has a contagious disease and there is a question as to when they should return to care, we may request a doctor's note stating it is safe for him or her to return to care.
- ★ If your child develops any of these symptoms, you will be notified to come and pick up your child. You will then be required to make arrangements for your child to be picked up within one hour of the request. While waiting, your child will be provided with a safe, comfortable place to rest. The emergency pickup person must be on file for the release of your child to occur.

### **Medication**

Children requiring medication during childcare hours will require a Medication Authorization Form. Please see your child's classroom teacher if this form is necessary. We have a locked box in our classroom. Please place medications in this box and provide the teacher with the completed medication form. For medications needing refrigeration, please give the medication to a staff member along with the completed form. Prescription medication must have written permission from the physician and a medical label that includes the child's name, name of medication, amount to be given and the time to be administered. This medication must be in the original container. Over the counter medications will not be given without written permission from the physician including the above-mentioned details. If a child has been given an over the counter medication prior to school, please notify your classroom teacher. If a physician has ordered a special medical management procedure for a child while in care, an adult trained in the procedure must be on site when the child is in attendance.

### **Emergency Response Plan**

In the event of an emergency, Enrichment staff have been trained to respond with the safety of the children in their care as the primary focus. Staff will follow the Bath Area Family YMCA Emergency Procedures Manual to ensure the safety of all children in various emergency scenarios. Should staff have the need to evacuate the building, Enrichment staff will follow our evacuation plan, which includes escorting children to the Bath Rec. Department building adjacent to the Y. Families will be contacted promptly, and a written statement will be provided documenting the incident. For more information regarding our emergency procedures, families may request a copy of the emergency procedures manual at any time.

To ensure safety and best practice, monthly fire drills are practices to prepare the children for an emergency. This ensures that the children have had ample opportunities to practice exiting the building as a class and we teach the children the importance of safety procedures.

### **Child Count Policy**

Enrichment staff will follow the state of Maine Child Care Licensing Guidelines when supervising children in their care throughout the day. In addition to those guidelines, staff will conduct a child count prior to leaving a classroom, and when arriving in a new location such as the playground, locker rooms or gymnasium. Counting children prior to leaving a classroom, playground, or other setting will be mandatory. Likewise, counting children once arriving in a new location will also take place. Staff are responsible for knowing the number of children in their care at all times throughout the day.

### **Building Security and Access to the Program**

The Bath Area Family YMCA is open for members and guests and at times, the general public. The Enrichment program remains secured behind locked doors and only YMCA and Enrichment staff have access to the program with keys. Families are welcomed into the program, but the doors remain locked, during regular program hours. The Bath Area Family YMCA facilities manager is responsible for maintaining the security of the building and conducting routine safety checks in all areas of the facility.

## **Family Participation**

Families are welcome to visit, observe and participate in our programs. You are welcome at any time. It is not necessary to notify the teachers that you will be dropping in, but keep in mind that the teacher's first responsibility is the children.

There will be times when we may request extra helpers in order to provide your child the opportunity to experience field trips. If you would like to share your professional, special talents, a game or your favorite story with our children, please contact one of the teachers or our director.

(If you would like to volunteer in our programs, please ask the teaching staff for an application. All volunteers must have a background check completed and must have an application on file.)

We recognize the important role families play in our programs. We appreciate the support of family members in the classroom. We understand that family members have important information to share with us. We hope to build relationships with family members in order to create a partnership. We value everyone's constructive input.

We believe that children learn through modeling and we, as teachers, work to interact respectfully with each other. Therefore, we ask families to follow similar guidelines when they interact with others in the classroom environment. Please use respectful language, avoid adult conversation in front of children, listen attentively, and talk or meet outside the classroom away from children