



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

**BRUNSWICK  
Early Learning Center  
Family Handbook  
2025-2026**

Full Day Early Learning Childcare Center  
Ages 8 weeks – 5 years

In partnership with,  
Bath Area Family YMCA  
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## Welcome

Dear Families,

In partnership with General Dynamics Bath Iron Works, the Bath Area Family YMCA recognizes and values quality comprehensive early care and education services for young children. GDBIW and the Bath Area Family YMCA have a collaborative agreement to support the GDBIW workforce and the community with access to high quality early learning programming through enrollment in childcare slots through the Bath Area Family YMCA.

We welcome you to the Bath Area Family YMCA Early Learning Centers. This family handbook answers many of your questions regarding routines and general policies for the center. It's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the information in this handbook so you feel well-informed about the care your child is receiving each day. For the purposes of this document, the term parent is used synonymously with that of legal guardian. Our program supports children ranging from 6 weeks to 5 years. As families in our program, you play an important role in student learning! By selecting the Enrichment program for your child's care, you are demonstrating support for the learning environment that is critical to the development of our young children. Please feel free to ask questions at any time. ~ The Enrichment Early Learning Center Staff

## Shared Goals:

- To provide access to dependable, high quality early learning environments for GDBIW children from 8 weeks to 5 years of age, with a maximum of 150 children enrolled.
- To offer open enrollment for GDBIW children for first right of refusal. Upon which BIW employees are not utilizing all slots, the Bath YMCA reserves the right to fill slots with community members.
- To recognize the importance of offering financial assistance to any family who demonstrates a need, as indicated in the Bath Area Family YMCA's mission.

## Contact Information

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### Bath ELC Classroom Contact Information (phone extensions)

|                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Toddler Classroom 1:</b>   | <b>Toddler Classroom 2:</b>   |
| <b>Preschool Classroom 1:</b> | <b>Preschool Classroom 2:</b> |
| <b>Preschool Classroom 3:</b> | <b>Preschool Classroom 4:</b> |
|                               |                               |

### Brunswick Classroom Contact Information

|                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Infant Classroom 1:</b>  | <b>Preschool Classroom 1:</b> |
| <b>Infant Classroom 2:</b>  | <b>Preschool Classroom 2:</b> |
| <b>Toddler Classroom 1:</b> | <b>Preschool Classroom 3:</b> |
| <b>Toddler Classroom 2:</b> | <b>Preschool Classroom 4:</b> |
| <b>Toddler Classroom 3:</b> |                               |

Please note that if you need to reach the classroom teachers immediately it is best to do so by phone or through Brightwheel Messaging. Teachers are unable to check email throughout the day but will

periodically check Brightwheel for urgent messages. Voicemail messages may be left at any of the above extensions.

### **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 Childcare 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 provide 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. 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). 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. Parents are always welcome to join the campaign as volunteers.

### **Program Goals**

Our Enrichment Program is a safe, caring environment where each child is encouraged to learn new skills, express themselves 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, based on the standards set forth by the Maine Early Learning and Development Standards (MELDS) as well as the Infant & Toddler MELDS, 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 and help them move to the next developmental stage.

*“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.*

## Hours of Operation

**6:15 am – 4:30 pm**

**Monday - Friday (Full Day)**

## Child Staff Ratio

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

| Age Category                 | Ratio | Maximum Class Size |
|------------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Infant (8 weeks-15 months)   | 1:4   | 8                  |
| Toddler/Two (12-36 months)   | 1:6   | 12                 |
| Preschool (30 months-5 yrs.) | 1:10  | 20                 |

## **Rights for Children in Childcare Facilities**

The Bath Area Family YMCA is dedicated to protecting the rights of children enrolled in its programs. Maine's Department of Health and Human Services provides rules, summarized below, outlining the rights of children enrolled in each childcare 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 Childcare Facility.
- ★ Right to information regarding the Childcare 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.
- ★ 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.

## **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.

## **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 Childcare 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 the Maine Child Care Affordability Program (CCAP).

**No person will be excluded from admission or participation in the YMCA Childcare Programs because of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion.** This Institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## 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. Upon visiting, you will be able to 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 including physician form and current immunization record must be turned in to enroll your child in our Enrichment Program.**

### The Enrollment process is as follows:

- First year enrollment will open in January of 2025 for GDBIW families. During this open enrollment period GDBIW employees will have the ability to enroll in childcare slots. Families will be required to pay the first week deposit to hold their slots.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year and following enrollment: Assuming waitlists are in place any available slots in the new year will be made available for families on the GDBIW waiting list first. Families will have 72 hours to confirm their slot before slots are offered to the next person on the GDBIW wait list.

## Tuition

At the time of registration, a deposit in the amount of the first week of care will be due. This deposit covers the first week of care, and orientation and administrative fees will be waived for GDBIW families.

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.

## 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 disenrolled:

- ★ 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.

## Waitlist

### The Waitlists process is as follows:

- The YMCA childcare program will maintain an ongoing waitlist for GDBIW families interested in care. To be placed on the waitlist, families must submit a **completed** waitlist application. As openings in the program become available, the Childcare Director will contact GDBIW families on



the waitlist to offer care on a first-come, first-served basis. If families do not accept an offer of care within 72 hours, they may be placed back on the waitlist but will be moved to the end of the GDBIW queue.

- The Bath Area Family YMCA will manage all aspects of enrollment, waitlists, and billing. Additionally, the Bath Area Family YMCA will manage the enrollment process with each individual family. Families enrolling in the program will enter into a childcare fee agreement and agree to the YMCA payment policy and procedures.
- GDBIW families must enroll in childcare directly through the Bath Area Family YMCA. GDBIW employees are required to present their employee identification badge upon enrollment as proof of employment. Following request to enroll, the Bath Area Family YMCA will contact GDBIW Benefits Department to confirm employee status, and then notify the employee family and GDBIW Benefits Department when the enrollment is confirmed.
- Those on leaves of absence for short-term disability, family medical leave, worker's compensation and health reasons may experience disruptions to the childcare service, if financial arrangements with the YMCA are unable to be met.
- If a GDBIW employee terminates employment with GDBIW, GDBIW will communicate this termination with YMCA during the normal bi-weekly review cadence. The YMCA will then provide notice to the family within 1 business day with a termination date for the child(ren)'s enrollment in the program. This termination date of care will be 2 weeks from the date that the YMCA communicates with the family. A copy of the notice will be retained by the YMCA and forwarded to GDBIW Benefits Department contact for awareness.

### **Attendance Policy**

Children's schedules are determined at the time of enrollment based on a family's need for childcare 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 between **6:15 a.m. and 8:30** 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 message us through Brightwheel by 9:00 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 appointments towards the end of the day, after 2 PM to prevent further disruption of your child's day. Returning from an appointment can be challenging for children.

## **Arrival and Pick-up Policies and Procedures**

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 their child into and out of the classroom daily. We use a childcare management app called Brightwheel to track attendance. Families will need to use their phone to scan the check-in/check-out barcode at drop off and pick up each day (if this is a barrier for any family, the staff is available to assist with check-in and check-out). The check-in process through Brightwheel also requires parents to complete three daily health screening questions. This health screening is used solely by the Bath Area Family YMCA and will not be shared.

Our program closes promptly at **4:30 pm**. **A late fee of \$2.00 per minute will be charged for a child who remains in the classroom after 4:30 pm.** A late pick-up slip will be created by the staff on duty, to be signed by the parents 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 family is repeatedly late.**

## **Supervising Siblings at Drop Off/Pick Up**

If siblings, or other individuals, accompany a parent during drop off or pick up, keep them under your immediate supervision at all times. Pick up or drop off can become unnecessarily hectic. Also, additional individuals, like siblings, may not be left in the foyers or hallways while you pick up your child. They must be with you under your immediate supervision.

## **Cell Phone Use**

We respectfully ask parents to refrain from using your cell phone as you are dropping off and picking up your children. This allows for better communication with the teachers and a chance to greet your child without disruptions.

## **Naptime**

Our childcare programs are designed with various activities to utilize each child's whole body and mind, 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 are happy to provide a blanket for your child, or you are welcome to 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, your child may bring a favorite, small stuffed animal. All rest time items from home will be sent home weekly to be laundered.

## **Safe Sleep Policy**

All childcare providers at the Bath Area Family YMCA will follow safe sleep recommendations for infants to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), other sleep-related infant death, and the spread of contagious diseases:

- Infants will always be put to sleep on their backs until 1 year of age.

- Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with a fitted crib sheet, in a crib that meets the Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards.
- No toys, mobiles, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, positioning devices or extra bedding will be in the crib or draped over the side of the crib.
- Sleeping areas will be ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. Infants will not be dressed in more than one extra layer than an adult.
- If additional warmth is needed, a one-piece blanket sleeper or sleep sack may be used.
- The infant's head will remain uncovered for sleep. Bibs and hoods will be removed.
- Infants will be actively observed by sight and sound.
- Infants will not be allowed to sleep on a sofa/ couch, chair cushion, bed, pillow, or in a car seat, stroller, swing or bouncy chair. If an infant falls asleep anyplace other than a crib, the infant will be moved to a crib right away.
- An infant who arrives asleep in a car seat will be moved to a crib.
- Infants will not share cribs, and cribs will be spaced 3 feet apart.
- Infants may be offered a pacifier for sleep, if provided by the parent.
- Pacifiers will not be attached by a string to the infant's clothing and will not be reinserted if they fall out after the infant is asleep.
- When able to roll back and forth from back to front, the infant will be put to sleep on his back and allowed to assume a preferred sleep position.
- Our childcare program is a smoke-free environment.
- Our childcare program supports breastfeeding.
- Awake infants will have supervised "Tummy Time"

### **Typical Daily Schedule**

The teaching staff in our childcare program strive to be consistent with schedule and routine to support the developmental needs of the children in our care. While every day at school will offer slight differences, you can expect an average day for your child to look like this:

#### **Infant:**

- 6:15-8:00: greeting inside classroom and free play time
- 8:30-9:00: morning feedings/diapers
- 9:00-10:00: morning naps/individual and small group activities
- 10:00-11:00: outside play/buggie ride or gym play
- 11:00-11:30: lunch and free play time
- 12:00-1:00: afternoon naps/individual and small group activities for awake infants
- 1:00-2:30: quiet transition from rest, inside play time, and afternoon feedings/diapers
- 2:30-3:30: outside play time
- 3:30-4:30: inside play time and transition to home

*\*Individual feeding and napping schedules will be followed throughout the day for all infants.*

#### **Toddler:**

- 6:15-8:00: greeting inside classroom and free play time
- 8:30-9:00: morning snack
- 9:00-10:00: outside play
- 10:00-11:30: inside free play/lunch and transition to rest time
- 12:00-1:00: rest time

- 1:00-2:30: quiet transition from rest, inside play time, and afternoon snack.
- 2:30-3:30: outside play time
- 3:30-4:30: inside play time and transition to home

#### **Preschool:**

- 6:15-8:00: greeting outside (weather permitting) and free play time
- 8:30-9:00: transition to inside, bathroom, and morning snack
- 9:00-11:00: morning meeting, inside free play, and/or organized activities
- 11:00-12:00: outside play time (hike, playground, fields, etc.)
- 12:00-1:00: lunch and transition to rest time
- 1:00-2:30: rest time
- 2:30-3:30: afternoon snack, pack-up for the day
- 3:30-4:30: outside free play time and transition to home

#### **Daily Supplies**

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

- ★ Lunch
- ★ Full water bottle
- ★ Two full sets of extra clothing, including socks and underwear.
- ★ Diapers/Pull Ups & Wipes (if needed)
- ★ Blanket for Naptime (see naptime for more info)
- ★ Small Stuffed Animal, if needed (ONLY for children ages 2 and up)
- ★ Swimsuit, towel, swim diaper (if needed) (swim days)
- ★ Pacifier/sleep sack (for children under 1)
- ★ Formula/Breastmilk/Milk alternative, etc.
- ★ Bottles/sippy cup (if glass please provide a silicone sleeve)

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

#### **Diapers**

The Enrichment Program does not provide diapers and wipes for the children enrolled in our care. Parents are required to bring diapers or pull-ups and wipes for their child; teachers will notify parents when supplies run low. Keep in mind that the teachers change diapers every 2 hours (more often if needed) so a child who is enrolled for a full day could easily go through 5-6 diapers and numerous wipes each day. For children aged three and up who are using pullups, please provide pullups that open on the sides for ease of use/changing.

#### **Potty Training**

We believe that potty training is an important developmental milestone. Children will indicate readiness at various ages. When a child begins to indicate/notice that they are wet and or communicate that they need to use the bathroom, our staff will begin the process of potty training in collaboration with each family. Should a child who is in the process of potty training have multiple accidents (3 or more) in one day, staff will return the child to a pull up for the remainder of the day.

#### **Dressing Your Child**

While the Enrichment Program does not have a 'dress code' policy for children at the center, it is expected that children come to school prepared to play, get messy, and engage outdoors comfortably.

We adhere to a ‘play-based’ style of curriculum where children are active learners in their environments. This activity could very well be in sensory, art, large motor, etc. Please dress your children in clothing that is comfortable and easy for them to move around in; as well as can get messy. Unless it is specified as a special event in the center or the classroom where parents are notified ahead of time, costumes and pajamas are not appropriate clothing to wear at school. If a child comes to the center wearing costumes or pajamas, then the teachers will change them into extra clothing. At the Enrichment Early Learning Center, the children will engage in painting, dirt/mud, glue, sand, messy foods for lunch, water, and other items that are ‘messy’. This is a perfectly safe environment to do so, and we encourage children to fully explore their materials and activities that are offered. It is understood that if a parent is choosing this program for their child, then parents will respect and appreciate the proper clothing for their child to successfully engage in their early childhood environment.

The teachers will not adhere to the following requests:

- Don’t let my child get dirty.
- Don’t let my child use the paint today.
- Take off my child’s ‘good clothes’ and put on his or her play clothes when you do something messy.
- Don’t take my child outside.

### **Swim Time and Attire (*available for children ages 3-5*)**

The Enrichment Program feels strongly about the importance of swim education including safety, water acclimation and basic skills in order to establish a lifelong, healthy approach to water. Each classroom will have an opportunity to swim (in 6-week sessions; pre-registration will be required). Please be prepared for swim time by sending your child with his/her swimsuit, towel, and swim diaper (if needed) weekly, and wear hair in a ponytail if their hair is collar length or longer. Children who are not potty trained must wear a swim diaper plus a swimsuit and rubber pants (2 tight-fitting layers). 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. We support the children in gaining confidence and independence with self-help skills. We also encourage preschool children to undress and dress themselves on swim day to help build their motor coordination skills. Families can support teachers by practicing with children at home getting their swimsuits on prior to taking a bath, and, taking their swimsuit off when getting out of the tub. This will ensure that the children have had some time to practice this skill at home and aid us in our process on swim day. Swim day is made easier if families send children in simple, comfortable fitting clothing on swim day (i.e. sweatsuits). 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. Due to ratio requirements, we cannot guarantee regular swimming for the toddler age group.

### **Weather Preparation**

State law requires that your child be given access to the outdoors for a minimum of two hours daily, weather permitting. This will include winter weather, so please send in boots, mittens, hat, and snow pants.

Summer brings some program changes, including a more relaxed daily schedule to provide for extended project work outside, special events, sunscreen and field trips. Please prepare your child for summer activities with appropriate clothing and footwear. Open-toed shoes will not be permitted on the playground.

## Mealtime 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 mealtimes. Our belief in the importance of independence for children is shown in the way we present children with 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 childcare. 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, soda, and carbonated beverages 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. All menu items served are nut free and meet nutritional requirements. We recognize that some children have different dietary needs (gluten free, vegetarian, etc.) and request that you communicate these needs in your enrollment packet.

## Infant Feeding Policy

The following policies are in conjunction with the State of Maine Licensing rules and regulations for center-based infant care.

### General:

- Feeding schedules shall be in accordance with each child's needs rather than according to the hour.
- Containers, bottles and cups used in the program cannot be made of glass.
- All formula and breastmilk will be warmed by water in a crockpot, never microwaved.
- All self-provided milk or milk alternatives should be provided daily in a labeled cup or at the beginning of the week in the commercial packaging it comes in. **Containers must be unopened.** (Any milk left at the center will be discarded at the end of the week).
- All milk or milk-alternatives that have been put into a cup for consumption will be discarded at the end of the day and will not be saved for use.

### Breastmilk:

- All bags and bottles must be labeled with your child's name, date and stored in the refrigerator.
- Freshly expressed or pumped milk can be left on the counter for up to 4 hours, in the fridge for 24 hours on site, and 2 weeks in the freezer.
- Thawed, previously frozen breast milk may be left on the counter 1-2 hours and in the fridge for 24 hours.
- Breast milk that has been warmed and if the baby did not finish the bottle, we must use it within 2 hours from when they finished eating it the first time.
- Breast milk bottles will not be shaken once warmed.
- Breast milk bottled that have surpassed the 2 hour mark will become unusable and be discarded. If you do not wish for the milk to be discarded, please seek out your child's care provider to make alternate arrangements.

### Formula:

- Formula must be made from commercially prepared products and provided to the center unopened. Homemade formula solutions are prohibited.

- Pre-made formula must be labeled with your child's name, date, and stored in the refrigerator for no longer than 24 hours.  
Powder formula that has been opened and not used within the 1 month time frame will be discarded.
- Formula must be refrigerated within 2 hours of mixing.
- Once the feeding begins, formula will be offered for up to 1 hour then discarded.

#### Solid Foods:

- We ask that you introduce any new foods 5 or more times at home before sending them in for your child. In the event of an allergic reaction.
- Open jars shall be disposed of or returned to the parent/guardian the same day they are opened.
- No previously opened commercial baby food jars/pouches are to be accepted.
- Once feeding begins, any uneaten food can be left out and offered again for up to 2 hours.
- Containers of food stored in the center's refrigerator must be labeled with your child's name, the contents and date.
- All homemade baby food containers must be labeled with the date the center received it, containers will be returned daily.
- Homemade baby food may be stored in the freezer for up to 1 month only.

### 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 food 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 allergies to peanuts & tree nuts (including coconut). It is important that there is strict avoidance of these foods to prevent a life-threatening allergic reaction. We are asking for your help to provide the students 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 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.

## Emergency Closure Policy

- The Bath Area Family YMCA The YMCA will make every effort to remain open on scheduled program days but reserves the right to close or adjust hours based on weather or other safety concerns. Families will receive reasonable notification of such closures and be provided with 1 hour for safe pick-up of their child.
- 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.

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 at 207-443-4112 if you have any questions.

## 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 with training opportunities. Additionally, the Enrichment classrooms are closed three times yearly for professional development days.

## Holidays/Days Closed

Our childcare programs will be closed on the following holidays:

| YMCA Holidays & Closures:                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New Year's Day                                                                       |
| Martin Luther King Day                                                               |
| Presidents' Day                                                                      |
| March Professional Development Day (3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday)                          |
| Memorial Day                                                                         |
| Independence Day                                                                     |
| Labor Day                                                                            |
| August Annual Shutdown (Mon-Fri week before Labor Day)                               |
| October Professional Development Day (Friday before Indigenous People's Day weekend) |
| Thanksgiving                                                                         |
| Day After Thanksgiving                                                               |
| Christmas Day                                                                        |

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



## 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, which have been established in partnership with our health care consultant:

- ★ **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 a fever of 100.4°F 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 childcare 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 has improved 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 100.4° 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 childcare, we may request a doctor's note stating it is safe for them to return to care.
- If your child develops any of these symptoms, you will be notified to come and pick up your child. You are required to make arrangements for your child to be picked up within one hour of the notification. While waiting, your child will be provided with a safe and comfortable place to rest. The emergency pickup person must be on file for the release of your child to occur.

## Medical Records

Each child enrolled in the program has a file which includes health records as required by childcare Licensing and NAEYC Accreditation. Each child must have a physical examination on file, current within the last six months prior to admission. If the child's physical indicates there are ongoing special health needs, such as allergies or chronic illness, instructions must be kept in the child's file. Information about chronic medical conditions will also be kept in a classroom clipboard. An up-to-date record of immunizations is also required. This medical form, including current immunization records, **must be on file before a child is allowed to attend the program.** The physical examination must be renewed every year and immunizations must be kept current and for a family to continue attending care. Every year, a consultant from childcare licensing comes to the center and accesses children's records to make sure immunization records are up to date. Families will be notified with a list if any vaccine documentation is missing in your child's file. It is the responsibility of the family to update the required immunizations once

written notification has been given. Failure to do so may result in the loss of childcare services. Content in a child's file is confidential, but is available to Bath YMCA administrators, teaching staff, the child's parents, and any regulatory authority upon request.

## Medication

Families need to administer ALL medication to their children at home whenever possible. Please check with your child's doctor to see if the medication can be prescribed twice a day so it can be administered in the morning and in the evening. **First time dosages of all new medications MUST be given by a parent or guardian 30 minutes before the child is dropped off or the parent or guardian must stay in the room for 30 minutes in case of an allergic reaction to the medication.**

The Enrichment Program staff will administer medication as listed following parent permission:

- Prescription medication: must be in the original labeled, dated container with prescription label intact with your child's first and last name, the doctor's name, and dosage directions clearly indicated and the medication expiration date. You will be asked to fill out a permission form for administration of medication, sign it, and date it before the Bath Area Family YMCA may administer prescription medication.
- Non-prescription medication (including doctor's samples): will be administered only with a dated and signed note from the physician with the following information: the child's first and last name, name of the medication, explanation of condition requiring medication, date, and dosage. A doctor's note is required, even if it is administered by a parent, if the medication is to be administered on-site at the Bath Area Family YMCA Enrichment Program.
- Fever-reducers, such as Tylenol or Motrin, cannot be administered by our staff and should not be given to the child for that purpose prior to attending the center.

Safeguards staff conduct regarding administering medications:

1. Verifying the right child receives the right medication.
2. Medicine is administered at the right time.
3. Medicine is in the right dosage.
4. The right method with documentation is completed at each right time medication is given. The teacher signs the documentation of the above items on the permission form filled out by the parent.
5. Teaching staff who are required to administer special medical procedures have demonstrated to a health professional that they are competent in the procedures and are guided by written procedures from the doctor.

All medications are kept in a locked container.

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.

## Diaper Cream

Before Center faculty can administer any diaper cream ointment to a child, The Enrichment Program requires written authorization signed by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian should provide:

- A diaper cream ointment designated for use as a diaper cream on the label.
- A completed Authorization for Administration of Medication form specifying the dosage and the time(s) the ointment should be administered.
- The ointment, labeled with the child's full name.

Application of any type of ointment to a child with open, oozing sores, will be done using gloves and proper hand washing.

Diaper cream may be applied to a child as a protective measure after diapering to prevent diaper rash and to a child who has a mild diaper rash. If a child has diaper rash that persists and/or has a rash that is red, irritated and has open, oozing areas, that child should be seen by a physician. Note: Each application of diaper cream should be logged using the Administration of Medication Log. Duration of administration cannot exceed one year for diaper cream (designated as such on the label).

### **Typical Child Guidance Procedures**

In our classroom, we use various techniques to guide each child in using appropriate behavior yet encouraging them to manage their 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 their 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 them by counting to three, and sometimes make the choice for them.

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 their behavior and the effects of their behavior on another child or the group enables the child to return to play when they are more able to be productive. Teachers support the child as they refocus and rejoin 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 support 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 an 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 themselves, 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 disenrolled 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.

## **Safety**

Here are some ways parents can help to ensure safety of all children at the Enrichment Center:

- Keep phone numbers up to date. You are expected to answer the phone if we call.
- Keep us informed of any potentially unsafe or threatening situation that involves you or your family.
- Do not send someone to pick up your child who is not on your authorized pick-up list without first notifying staff.
- Have your child walk with you when entering and exiting the building; do not let them run ahead of you. Remember, when you are exiting the building, you are walking into a very busy parking lot.
- Do not leave your car running in the circle drive.
- Do not leave children unattended in your car.
- Drive S-L-O-W-L-Y in the parking lot and circle drive area.

## **Incident Reporting**

From time to time, an incident may occur involving your child. Incident reports will be filled out on the day in which the incident occurs. Incident reports will be filled out for the following reasons; accident, incident, injury, or behavior-based situation. All reports will include the date and time in which the incident occurred, name of the child, activity during the incident, description of the incident, if first aid was administered and by whom. Enrichment staff will convey the circumstances of the incident to the family and provide a copy at pick up.

## **Child Count Policy**

Enrichment staff will follow the State of Maine Childcare 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 always knowing the number of children in their care throughout the day.

## **Biting Policy**

Even though biting is a normal stage of development for many during childhood, it is required by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services Childcare Licensing and Regulatory Division that childcare centers maintain a safe and healthy environment for all children in care, and a chronic biting situation creates an unsafe environment. Biting occurs for many reasons whether it is teething, a lack of language, frustration, attention-seeking, or being overly tired.

### **How we minimize biting at the Center:**

1. Shadow the biter so that he is she is always near the providers or within arm's reach.
2. Provide lots of language such as "Biting hurts," and "We use our teeth for food."
3. Provide frozen teething rings for those who need something to chew on.
4. Provide supportive information to parents who are worried about their child biting and offer suggestions on how to stop the biting habit.

### **Our Center's policy on biting is as follows:**

1. If your child bites 3 times (as long as the skin on the other person is not broken) on any one day, then your child will be sent home for the remainder of that day.
2. If at any time the skin is broken due to a bite, the child will be sent home immediately for the remainder of that day.
3. If the biting continues and it becomes necessary to send the child home on a daily basis or adds undue stress on the other children or the environment, it may become necessary to disenroll the child from the program. This is not something we like to do and please know that this would be a last resort.

## **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 Amy Vendt, Chief Operating Officer ([amy@bathymca.org](mailto:amy@bathymca.org)), for further assistance.

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

The Early Learning Center is open from 6:15-4:30 Monday-Friday. There will be a staff member on duty at the front entrance. This allows everyone to be greeted upon entering the facility. 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.

### **Security Cameras**

The Early Learning Center facility has security cameras throughout the building, including classrooms. The purpose of these cameras is to promote safety. The footage is recorded and can be viewed if needed, but only the management team, local law enforcement, and state childcare licensing personnel will have permission to gain access to footage, if needed.

### **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. All Enrichment Program staff are Mandated Reporters (as required by the Maine Department of Health & Human Services and Maine Childcare Licensing). 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 they are 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.

### **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 help 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 and/or marijuana
- 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).

### **Parking**

Parents are responsible for adhering to all policies related to parking. Any problems with parking should be directed to the Welcome Center. Parents may use the circle drive in front of the center to drop-off and pick-up their children. Although a permit is not required to park in this area, the following rules apply:

- Parking in the circle drive is limited to 30 minutes. This area may NOT be used for all-day parking. Any car that is left in this area for an extended time may be ticketed or towed.
- Adhere to the “one way” direction of the circle drive. You may park along the side of the curb closest to the building only.
- Please avoid parking in front of the fire hydrant; this needs to be accessible to fire fighters in case of an emergency.
- Do not park on both sides of the drive or in such a way that you will block others from getting through.
- Do NOT leave your car running. This is an illegal and unsafe practice.
- Do NOT leave children of any age unattended in the car (this is considered child neglect, and our licensing representative has instructed us to call OCFS if this occurs).
- We expect parents to use the safe practice of placing children in a car seat in the back seat of your car and buckle them in before you leave. Remember, it’s the law and we want to make sure all children ride safely.

### **Fire Drills**

To ensure safety and best practice, we complete monthly fire drills preparing 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. Evacuation routes are clearly posted in each classroom. Children and staff evacuate and gather away from the building for a head count. Non-mobile children are held by childcare staff and or evacuated from the facility in evacuation cribs.

### **Emergency Response Plan**

In the event of an emergency, childcare 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, childcare staff will follow our evacuation plan, which includes escorting children to the Tractor Supply Store next door to the facility. 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.



## **Communication**

The Enrichment Program believes in developing home school relationships for providing developmentally appropriate care and education. We encourage parents to interact daily with their child's Primary Caregivers for just a few minutes when your child is dropped off and/or picked up. The caregiver will use the pick-up interaction to report on your child's activities during the day. We would also like to be made aware of any home event, which may change your child's feelings and/or behaviors (e.g., new baby, separation, divorce, death in the family, a new pet, or a special visitor). Communication can take place through a variety of methods including person-to-person, email, phone calls, and the Brightwheel app. Please let the teachers know if you are inclined to a particular preferred method. Staff are sensitive and responsive to family engagement. If at any time throughout the year you have concerns, which cannot be addressed during drop off or pick up, you may request a meeting with your child's teacher. Likewise, if the staff has concerns, they will request a meeting with you. If you should need assistance in communication in your family's preferred language, please let us know so we can include resources that will be most helpful to your family and to building our relationship with you and your child.

## **Brightwheel**

The Brightwheel application is a tool that we utilize in the Enrichment Program to stay connected with families throughout the school day. This app allows the teachers to provide you with:

- Daily updates including a real-time feed of activities throughout the day.
- Photos so you can watch your child's day unfold with snapshots delivered to your mobile device.
- Messaging features that allow you to stay in touch with your teachers and strengthen the home to school connection.

The Brightwheel app also includes tools that help families manage their child's routine:

- Digital check-in that allows for quick and easy drop-off and pick-up.
- The ability to add approved adults to pick up your child and see when your child is checked in or out.
- The ability to invite grandparents, nannies, and friends – with control over what they can do and see on Brightwheel.

Upon enrollment, each family will be invited to join Brightwheel via an email or text. Families will need to download the application on their mobile device and make note of their four-digit pin code for drop-off and pick-up. This code can be changed in your profile to a number that is more easily remembered. Families will be expected to have a mobile device available at both drop-off and pick-up to check their child in and out using the available QR code (if this is a barrier for any family, the staff is available to assist with check-in and check-out). Instructional videos are available if you should need them, or you can reach out to the Enrichment Program Director for further assistance.

## **Weekly Director's Report & E-mail**

Expect a weekly Director's Report and emails with news of upcoming events and program information from the Enrichment Director. Please be sure to read these, as they often include date changes, requests, and other useful information. Email and Brightwheel are widely used to disperse forms and other pertinent information. It is the responsibility of the parents to make sure the Enrichment Program has a correct email address and that emails and Brightwheel messages are checked regularly.

## **Family Participation**

Families are welcome to visit, observe, and participate in our programs. Please discuss with the classroom teachers or administration about the best time to visit because the teacher's first responsibility is the children.

There will be times when we may request extra helpers to provide your child with the opportunity to experience field trips. If you would like to share something special with the classroom please contact one of the teachers or our director. 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 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.

### **Professional Relationships**

Parents are expected to maintain professional relationships with center staff. Although individual friendships and bonds may develop, parents and staff need to be careful about the appropriateness of the relationship. When a deeper friendship develops between a parent and a staff member, the boundary lines of friend/parent/teacher can become blurred causing miscommunication, confusion, and possible breaches of confidentiality. Confidentiality can be significantly compromised through social networking sites, such as Facebook. Any communication related to the center needs to go through appropriate channels; Facebook, text messages, personal e-mail, etc., are NOT considered appropriate ways to communicate with our staff. Appropriate forms of communication with staff include – calling the center to talk with staff members; talking at pick-up and drop-off; messaging staff via the Brightwheel app; and e-mailing questions or information to their work account. The staff in the Enrichment Program are professional teachers, so it is expected that parents will not ask our teachers to babysit for them or transport their children.

### **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.

### **Assessment**

Children will be evaluated throughout the year by classroom teachers, using the Maine Early Learning and Development Standards (MELDS) or the Infant and Toddler MELDS. 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. Enrichment Teaching staff will be highly qualified and trained in utilizing the Maine Early Learning and Development Standards 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.

### **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, two 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 and May.

### **Transitions**

The transitional process between childcare rooms depends on the following criteria, all of which can be reviewed by the childcare staff and family based on individual circumstances.

#### **Availability, Age, Development, Toilet-training readiness**

The family will be notified by their current lead teacher 2-3 weeks prior to the scheduled transition that their child has met the criteria to transition to the next classroom. Based on availability the scheduled transition from room to room will take place over a minimum of two weeks allowing the child to grow accustomed to their new teachers and classmates. During the process, the parents and classroom teachers will meet and discuss the child's transition schedule, express ideas and thoughts to ensure a successful process.

Please note: our center recognizes transitional periods for children in June and September. Should space become available outside of these months, parents will be notified by the child's current teacher.

### **Photography**

We believe in the use of photographs in the classroom to promote a sense of self and encourage an understanding of multicultural differences. We also use the Brightwheel app to share photos with families on a regular basis. In addition, we believe the use of videotapes allows us to review the interactions happening in the classroom and encourage growth among teaching staff. Therefore, we allow people 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.

### **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.

### **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 backpacks. Due to our 5210 Let's Go! Policy, we do not serve birthday desserts 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 napkins on the morning of a child's birthday as we celebrate each child on their special day.

### **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.**

**BATH AREA FAMILY YMCA**

**ENRICHMENT EARLY LEARNING CENTER HANDBOOK  
REVISED EFFECTIVE June 27, 2025**

## ENRICHMENT FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the provisions of the Enrichment Family Handbook, revised effective January 1, 2024. I understand that it describes the Bath Area Family YMCA's policies and procedures, and that it is a guide to assist families in following these policies and procedures. By accepting this Handbook and acknowledging its receipt, I agree to follow these policies and procedures.

I also understand the following:

The enrollment relationship between me and the Bath Area Family YMCA can be terminated at any time and for any reason not prohibited by law.

There is no verbal agreement regarding the terms, conditions, or length of my child's enrollment.

The policies set forth in this Handbook do not constitute a contract of enrollment.

The policies contained in this Handbook may be changed without notice at the sole discretion of the YMCA, which retains the right to interpret and apply the stated policies as it deems appropriate. In addition, the YMCA may have policies in force that are not included in the Enrichment Family Handbook.

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received and have read this Enrichment Family Handbook. I have had the opportunity to meet with the Enrichment Director or the Executive Director of Child and Family Services to clarify any questions which I may have concerning one or more portions of this Handbook. I further agree that a copy of this Acknowledgment will be kept in my child's enrollment file.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and date one copy of this acknowledgment form  
and return it with your completed enrollment packet.