

BEHAVIOR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

At the Lakeland hills Family YMCA, our behavior expectations and discipline procedures are based on our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. We believe in creating a safe, secure, and fun environment where all youth have the opportunity to learn the importance of demonstrating good character. We believe that in order to do this, all youth need to know and understand the rules and expectations for appropriate behavior. We also believe that when youth do not follow the rules or when they demonstrate inappropriate behavior, we have an opportunity to help youth learn from their mistakes.

The YMCA promotes behavior guidance and discipline through creating a positive environment, developing structure and clear limits, promoting social and emotional learning, reinforcing our core values, and addressing challenging behaviors.

The Lakeland Hills Family YMCA youth programs use six simple rules to communicate behavior expectations to the youth in our care. The purpose of these rules is to ensure the safety of our children and staff and to create a positive environment for all. These rules are:

1. Listen and follow directions.
2. Do what's right.
3. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
4. Try everything and do your best.
5. Be an Upstander. If you see something, say something.
6. Be safe and have fun!

All youth are expected to follow the rules established by the YMCA for the safety of all youth in the program. Your cooperation and support ensure that all youth have a safe and fun experience.

The YMCA does not allow the following behaviors including but not limited to:

- Any action that could threaten the physical or emotional safety of the youth, other youth, or staff. Prohibited conduct may include, but is not limited to abusive jokes, insults, slurs, threats, name-calling, or intimidation.
- Destructive behavior
- Behavior that is a violation of personal boundaries or is of a habitual nature and negatively impacts the program, and/or safety and enjoyment of others
- Behavior that is of a sexual nature
- Some behaviors could result in immediate suspension or dismissal.

The YMCA uses positive discipline which means staff members promote desired behaviors through teaching and reinforcement. Staff will redirect or problem-solve with youth when they are not displaying desired behaviors, rather than restrict behaviors by taking away opportunities or controlling youth with fear of punishment. We believe this approach focuses on the needs of the youth and contributes positively to the youth's overall development. Staff shall use positive discipline, which shall include the following:

- Communicate to youth using positive statements
- Encourage youth, with adult support, to use their own words and solutions in order to resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Communicate with youth by getting on their level and talking to them in a calm, quiet manner about the behavior that is expected

- There are times when restrictions may be necessary and will most likely be directly linked to the health, safety or well-being of the youth or others. The YMCA staff does not use corporal punishment under any circumstance. In the event of a youth harming themselves, another youth, or an adult, staff may physically restrain the youth to ensure safety.

BEHAVIOR REPORTS

Internal documentation is kept on incidents to help staff understand and identify patterns of behaviors and common triggers of the children. Staff members keep parents aware and alert to all challenging situations and ask for advice and support when needed. Parents will be asked to sign behavior reports any time a child is written up. Having three write ups may result in the termination of your child's enrollment in the program. **NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN.**

PROGRAM SUSPENSIONS

Program suspensions will be at the discretion of the program director and based on severity of the incident as well prior incidents for the school year. Suspensions will be issued the next scheduled day(s) of the program.

BULLYING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Bullying is any unwanted behavior that involves a power imbalance. Here at the Y, our goal is to stop bullying, and we encourage our participants, parents, and staff to be Upstanders. An Upstander is one who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. If there is disclosure, discovery, or suspicion of bullying we will handle each instance case by case and with care. At the Y we are building a caring, respectful, honest, and responsible community for all; the safety of our program participants is our main concern.

Conversely, we define conflict as a disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views and there is an equal power balance. We believe conflict with resolution is a natural and important part of Youth Development. Conflict can be constructive if managed in the right way. We will identify and resolve conflicts in a healthy and proactive fashion. The conflict resolution skills we learn, and practice will make a positive impact on our Y programs and in every child's future.