

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

All employees and volunteers with access to consumers shall confirm that they have read and agree to comply with the organization's abuse prevention policies, Code of Conduct, and consumer protection standards by signing a written acknowledgment upon hire and annually thereafter

1. In order to protect YMCA staff, volunteers, and program participants – at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person or volunteer be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As staff and volunteers supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff and volunteers can see them.
2. Children in YMCA programs will be supervised at all times.
3. Restroom supervision: Staff and volunteers will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff and/or volunteers will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff and volunteers (not being alone with a child). If staff and/or volunteers are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child regardless of age should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children in groups of three, and whenever possible, with staff and/or volunteers.
4. Staff and volunteers should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs - diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. When this is not feasible, staff and volunteers should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
5. Staff and volunteers shall not abuse children or adults in any way including:
 - physical abuse – strike, spank, shake, slap;
 - verbal abuse – humiliate, degrade, threaten;
 - sexual abuse – inappropriate touch or verbal exchange;
 - mental abuse – shaming, withholding love, cruelty;
 - neglect – withholding food, water, basic care, etc.Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and will be cause for immediate dismissal.
6. Staff and volunteers must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Staff and volunteers will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), is only administered in a prescribed manner and must be documented in writing.
7. Staff and volunteers will conduct a health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented.
8. Staff, supervisors and volunteers will follow established mandatory YMCA of Sandusky County and legally required reporting protocols when made aware of any instance of potential abuse, whether the alleged abuse happened within the YMCA or outside the YMCA.
9. Staff and volunteers will respond to children and all persons with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture.
10. The YMCA of Sandusky County's physical contact policy promotes a positive, nurturing environment while protecting consumers, both adult and minor employees and volunteers. Our organization encourages appropriate physical contact and interactions with children/members, adult, and minor employees/volunteers, and prohibits inappropriate forms of physical contact. Staff and volunteers will respect children, minor employees and volunteers and all person's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children, adults, and minor employees/volunteers are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit. Any inappropriate physical contact by employees or volunteers towards members/children or minor employees/volunteers in the organization's programs will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The YMCA is committed to providing all youth with a safe environment and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one youth by another youth. Conduct by youth that rises to the level of abuse, mistreatment, or sexual activity will result in intervention or disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program.

Appropriate Interactions/Touches	Inappropriate Interactions/Touches
• Side hugs, • Shoulder-to-shoulder • Pats on the shoulder or back • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Verbal praise • Encouragement • Positive reinforcement • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations)	• Full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Showing affection in isolated areas • Lap sitting • Wrestling • Piggyback rides • Tickling • Allowing a youth to cling to a staff or volunteer's leg • Any type of massage given by or to a youth • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or member • Compliments relating to physique or body development, • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas.

2. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from speaking to members/children, minor employees/volunteers in a way that is, or could be construed by any observer, as harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Employees and volunteers must not initiate sexually oriented conversations with member/children or with minor employees/volunteers. Employees and volunteers are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with members/children or with minor employees/volunteers.

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
• Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise	• Name Calling • Bullying • Ridicule or Humiliation • Discussing sexual encounters • Cursing • Hazing • Off color sexual jokes • Shaming • Belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate a youth • Inappropriate games like <i>Truth or Dare</i> or <i>Never Have I Ever</i>

11. Staff and volunteers will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others at all times while in the YMCA and in the presence of children, members, parents, and staff.
12. While the YMCA does not discriminate against an individual's lifestyle, it does require that in the performance of their job they will abide by the standards of conduct set forth by the YMCA.
13. Staff and volunteers must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired. As a youth serving agency, whose staff and volunteers are viewed as role models for children, tattoos and piercings are discouraged. The YMCA has the right to ask to have any tattoos covered or jewelry removed while the employee or volunteer is working.
14. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours is prohibited.
15. All YMCA facilities and properties are smoke free. Use of any tobacco product or vapor product in YMCA buildings or on YMCA properties is never permissible.
16. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or adults is prohibited.
17. Staff and volunteers must be free of physical or psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
18. Staff and volunteers will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
19. Staff and volunteers may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, tutoring, private lessons/coaching, social gatherings and inviting children to your home. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to administrator approval. Additionally, staff and volunteers are to have no personal contact with program participants under the age of 18 without the knowledge of the parent. This includes any face to face contact as well as electronic contact such as phone calls, text messages, e-mails or any other possible electronic means. Staff and volunteers must not accept any request by a YMCA program participant under the age of 18, to become a friend as part of their personal web page (Facebook, Instagram, etc).
20. Staff and volunteers are not to transport children in their own vehicles.
21. Staff and volunteers may not date program participants under the age of 18 years of age.
22. Staff and volunteers under the age of 18 must be supervised by an adult
23. Under no circumstance should staff or volunteers release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
24. Personal visits by friends, relatives and others is permitted in appropriate areas during any breaks or lunch periods, but not during regular work time as your full attention needs to be focused on your job responsibilities.
25. YMCA facilities are to be used solely for YMCA generated activities and programs; they are not for private gain or usage. You must not accept remuneration directly from members or participants in exchange for services performed in the course of employment, or for services rendered on the grounds or in the buildings/program sites of the YMCA.
26. YMCA of Sandusky County staff and volunteers must never give (or accept) gratuities or gifts to (or from) members or participants. If you are given a gift from a member or participant, you are to report it immediately to your supervisor so that it can be returned.

27. Parental permission must be given to take photos of YMCA program participants. The use of personal cell phones to photograph participants or members is strictly prohibited.
28. Personal electronic devices such as cell phones, smart watches and any other similar equipment is not to be used at any time while on duty, unless the use is specifically for YMCA business. Further, while working in a YMCA program, your cell phone, etc. should be turned off and not be attached to your person via a belt clip or any other method. This could pose a safety hazard especially if you are working with children.
29. If you choose to post a personal Website, to participate in Web-groups or Blogs, please note the following policies:
- The use of photos, logos or images of the YMCA or its programs is prohibited. If you use the YMCA name (including names of camps or other programs) in any such communication, you should be especially careful to support and certainly not to harm or ridicule the YMCA's image or mission.
 - Staff and volunteers must uphold the YMCA's value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory statements about YMCA employees, members/participants, clients, partners, affiliates and others, including competitors.
 - Make it clear to the readers that the views expressed are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the YMCA.
 - Do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the YMCA or to any third party that has disclosed information to the YMCA. Consult the confidentiality policy for guidance about what constitutes confidential information.
 - Staff and volunteers should promote the core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith in their speech and behavior at the YMCA, with the community and in any public forum.
30. If you observe any inappropriate behavior, or are made aware of violations of the Code of Conduct, you must report it to your supervisor immediately.
31. Staff and volunteers are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.

I have read, understand and agree to comply with the above policies of the YMCA of Sandusky County. I further understand that any violation of this Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Employee or Volunteer Signature

Supervisor Signature

Date