



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# **YMCA**

## **Kinder Readiness**

### **Parent Handbook**

**Mt. Madonna YMCA**  
**171 W. Edmundson Ave.**  
**Morgan Hill, CA, 95037**  
**(408) 762-6000**

Revised February 2012

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## **WELCOME TO OUR YMCA PROGRAM!**

Welcome to our Y Family! We are delighted that you have chosen the Y Kinder Readiness for your child. The YMCA of Silicon Valley strives to provide an enriching experience that enhances the development of the whole child. At the Y, we believe the values and skills learned early on are vital building blocks for life. We nurture children's development by providing a safe place to learn foundational skills, develop healthy, trusting relationships, and build self-reliance through the Y values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. We promote a connection between families creating a community of learners. Our teachers and staff leaders are qualified and nurturing professionals who are committed to enriching the development of every child within our programs. We encourage parents to set up a time with our Y teachers to participate in or lead activities such as: reading to children, cooking, science, art, music, or sharing occupations or hobbies.

We are pleased to provide this handbook, which describes our program, goals, and policies, as well as a myriad of practical details that make the school days for your children happy, successful and secure. Please read this handbook and keep it for reference. The information in this handbook is subject to change. Parents will be informed when changes are made.

### **Mt. Madonna YMCA Kinder Readiness**

The Mt. Madonna YMCA Kinder Readiness program is a licensed Preschool for children ages 2.9-5 years old. The Mt. Madonna YMCA office hours of operation at the Centennial Recreation Center are Monday through Friday from 5:00am – 10:00pm and on Weekends from 7:00am – 5:00pm; The Center program hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 8:30am – 11:30am.

The YMCA is committed to the healthy development of children through individual attention and encouragement, as well as through group participation and sharing. Our goal is to provide children with a safe, caring, and cheerful environment in which they can make friends, learn new skills (both academic and social), and continue to develop self-esteem.

A typical day at our Y Kinder Readiness program includes child-directed play; organized activities such as music, drama, art, and non-competitive games; outdoor play; a nutritious morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack (lunch and afternoon snack at insert site name); and quiet story time. Monthly calendars will describe activities as well as occasional field trips and special events. All of the activities are based around the Y's four character values (Honesty, Responsibility, Respect, and Caring) and the *Programs on Purpose* (Grow Personally, Clarify Values, Improve Personal and Family Relationships, Appreciate Diversity, Become Better Leaders and Supporters, Develop Specific Skills and Have Fun).

### **Preschool Philosophy**

- Provide each child with quality experiences, companionship, activities, supervision and guidance in a safe and nourishing environment.
- Provide opportunities for new experiences, emotional satisfaction and the growth of independence and self-direction of each child.
- Provide an atmosphere in which children can learn to share and be a supportive and contributing member of a group or team.
- Provide support and help to strengthen the family unit.

## **Preschool Goals and Objectives**

A. To deliver a preschool program in a positive Y environment that:

- Provides safety, support, care and fun for children;
- Operates within Y principles and philosophy; and
- Broadens community, national and world understanding of children and parents/guardians.

B. To help children achieve their potential through:

- Self-awareness, confidence and feelings of self-worth;
- Interpersonal relationships;
- Asset and Values development;
- Academic achievement;
- Physical skills; and
- Health & nutrition.

C. To support and help strengthen the family unit by:

- Improving communications amongst family members;
- Increasing families' abilities to work and play together;
- Helping families share their values; and
- Increasing a sense of community with other families.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Entrance Requirements:** The Y Kinder Readiness program is for children ages two years nine months to five years old. All children must be completely toilet trained, in good health and ready for group experience. Parents are required to attend a pre-enrollment conference (Back to School Night) and to complete required state and local preschool enrollment forms.

**School Hours:** The Mt. Madonna Kinder Readiness program operates Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. during the regular school year. Children have the option of attending 2, 3, 4 or 5 days per week; part-time options can include any combination of days within the week. For the benefit of your child we ask that you arrive at our Kinder Readiness program by 8:30 a.m. and that you maintain regular attendance.

**Leadership:** The Y Kinder Readiness program is under the direction of a professional Center Director, skilled and educated in child development; group leadership; and health & safety. In addition, the Center Director meets stringent CA State Licensing requirements. All Preschool teachers are selected for their knowledge of child development, maturity, sensitivity, and ability to relate well to children. All Preschool staff participate in ongoing training sessions that focus on group building, safety, communication, positive discipline techniques, curriculum and other leadership activities. In addition to these skills, the Mt. Madonna Y Preschool staff demonstrate a level of commitment and dedication that really make a difference in the positive experiences they provide for each child.

**Center Licensing:** This Y Preschool is licensed by the State of California's Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. As such, it meets rigorous standards to ensure the health and safety of all the children enrolled. The State of California General Licensing Requirements, Section 101195 states: The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to interview children or staff and to inspect and audit child or facility records to the operation of the facility. The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren).

## **CURRICULUM AND SCHEDULE**

**Curriculum:** This preschool program uses a Y developed curriculum that is thematic in nature and encompasses many elements such as science, nature, art history, cooking, reading, core values, character building, etc. Please ask to view the curriculum binder so that you may see what kinds of themes and activities your child will be engaging in on a daily and weekly basis. A monthly calendar of events and activities is posted to keep parents/guardians informed about what is happening.

- Child-Directed Play Time: Children need the opportunity for unstructured self-directed play. Emphasis is on providing each child with a variety of choices on a daily basis.
- Snack/Lunch Time: All children are to bring their own morning snack or lunch. The Y may also provide snacks to the children during the program. The snacks will be nutritious and represent two food groups. In addition to snack time, children will have the opportunity to make and eat their own creations on days when cooking is part of the curriculum.
- Activity/Small Group Time: Activities include crafts, drama, music, dance, non-competitive games & sports, science, cooking, special events or field trips.
- Quiet Time: This is a time to do stories, songs, puzzles, and other calming activities.
- Outside Time: We believe that outside play is important to your child's healthy large motor development. Children will have outside playtime every day, weather permitting.
- Nap Time: There is no structured nap time during the half-day program. However, the Center does offer quiet areas of rest should our participants seem too tired.

**Daily Schedule:** The Daily Schedule is subject to change depending upon weather, the season (getting darker earlier/later), or the children's engagement.

## **Mt. Madonna YMCA Kinder Readiness at Paradise Valley**

8:30am-8:45am — Welcome/Open Manipulative Centers  
8:45am-9:00am — Circle Time  
9:00am-10:00am — Instructional Time: Counting & Literacy  
10am-10:20am — Wash Hands/Snack Time  
10:20am-10:40am — Outside Playground Time  
10:40am-11:15am — Creative Arts in Play Centers  
11:15am-11:30am — Clean-up and Story Time  
11:30am — Pick Up Time

**Field Trips:** If we are to go on a field trip with the preschoolers, we will require 4 parent volunteers in order for the trip to run. We will be using a charter school bus to transport the children, staff, and volunteers on all field trips.

**Birthday Celebrations:** We welcome birthday celebrations in our preschool; however, we do not hold birthday parties. Please make arrangements with the Director ahead of time to bring a healthy treat to share with the class.

**Clothing:** Please provide your child with a change of clothes and a jacket each day. In order for your child to receive the maximum benefit from his/her preschool experience, we recommend that you dress your child in comfortable play clothes that can get dirty, covered in paint, glue, etc. Preschool children learn through exploration and play and we encourage such activity at Way To Grow Preschool. We will make every effort to use materials that are non-staining but we cannot make any guarantees.

### **Nap Time Bedding:**

Our site does not include naptime due to the hours of the program.

## **Mt. Madonna YMCA Registration and Fees**

**Registration:** Registration packets are available at our main office at the Centennial Recreation Center at 171 W. Edmunson, or at the Center at 1400 La Crosse Ave. (in Morgan Hill.) Parents must submit a completed registration packet prior to participation in program. Registration is on a first come, first serve basis. Returning participants receive priority registration for Fall. Children will be enrolled regardless of race, creed, or color. The Y complies with the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) when admitting children with disabilities.

All preschool participants must be Y members. A CRC facility membership or YMCA annual Program Membership is required for participation in all Y programs (see "*Membership*"). Payment equal to the first month's tuition is required prior to participation in program.

**Fees/Payments:** The Y is committed to providing affordable childcare for every child. For this reason our fees are maintained at a below-cost level by subsidies from Y fundraising efforts and other grants.

- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian who registers the child to ensure payment is remitted monthly to the YMCA branch office.
- Monthly tuition is due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month prior to the month of service. Monthly payments may be paid through monthly credit card/ bank draft or in person at the YMCA branch office
- Payment is considered late if payment is not received by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. *Failure to pay fees by required due date will result in termination from program.*
- There is a \$1 fee per minute that a child remains past 12:00 p.m. This fee is due and payable at that time.
- Fees are subject to increase with 30 days written notice.

## **KINDER READINESS RATES**

5 days per week: \$479 per month  
4 days per week: \$384 per month  
3 days per week: \$289 per month  
2 days per week: \$194 per month

**Returned checks:** If a check is returned to the Y due to insufficient funds or the like, a \$35 service charge will be added to your account. If the Y receives two returned checks during a program term, you will be required to make all payments with a cashiers check or money order for the duration of the program. Failure to pay tuition or returned check fees will result in termination from the Y Preschool program. If care is interrupted due to non-payment, a deposit equal to 2 months tuition must be made in order to return to the Kinder Readiness Preschool.

**Refunds:** Refunds of advance payments, deposits, and registration fees may be granted if the Y cannot provide care. Refunds of advance payments will only be granted when two weeks written notice of withdrawal from the Y Preschool Program is given. The Y cannot grant refunds for brief absences due to illness. When you enroll, you are reserving time, space, staffing and provisions, whether or not your child attends. Therefore, we cannot deduct for days missed.

**Program Closures:** Program is closed on the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, President's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Memorial Day. Program will also be closed during the last week of Summer and the 2 weeks at Christmas. See the Preschool Director for specific days/dates.

**Termination of Agreement:** This agreement is terminated when a child withdraws from the Y Preschool program and all fees have been paid. Parent/guardian may withdraw his/her child for any

reason. Two weeks written notice of withdrawal from the Y Preschool program is required. The Y reserves the right to terminate this agreement if the program does not meet the needs of the child, failure to make payment of agreed upon fees for services rendered, failure to abide by The Y Preschool policies, or at the discretion of the Program Director.

## **ARRIVAL/CHECK-IN AND PICK-UP/RELEASE**

**Arrival/Check-In:** Parent/guardian must escort his/her child inside the center and sign-in the child daily. All children should arrive at the Center by 8:30 a.m., unless previous arrangements are made.

**Absences:** It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the Y Preschool staff if a child will not be attending for any reason. It is imperative that the parent/guardian contact the Y Preschool staff prior to the child's normal arrival time. Each site is equipped with a 24-hour voicemail for convenience.

**Pick-up:** Per licensing requirements, the parent/guardian must sign-out his/her child daily. The sign-out sheet is a legal document of each child's attendance.

- Failure to sign-out a child will result in a \$1 surcharge per each occurrence.
- Following three failures to sign-out within a 30-day period, your child will be suspended from Preschool on the following program day.
- Y staff are prohibited from signing-out children and/or providing care outside of the Y Preschool.
- For the safety of all concerned, children must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or designated adult when leaving the Y Preschool.

**Release:** To release a child, the following conditions must be met:

- The person picking-up the child must be authorized to do so on the emergency form, or a written authorization is received from the parent/guardian prior to the release of the child.
- Verification of the identity of any person that is not known to the preschool staff is required (i.e., drivers license).
- The person picking-up must be at least 18 years old.

**Denial of Release:** The release of any child may be denied if Y staff have any reason for the concern of the safety of a child.

Cause for denial of release may include:

- Person picking-up is suspected “under the influence.”
- Person picking-up is abusive or threatening toward child or staff.

Denial of release may result in:

- Child released to an alternate authorized adult.
- Notification of law enforcement and/or Child Protective Services.
- Termination from program.

**Divorce/Separation:** When a child’s custody is in question, the following will govern the child’s release.

- If there is a custody problem the Y is legally bound to abide by the wishes of the parent with legal custody. A copy of the most recent court order must be provided to retain in the child’s file. Release will be guided by the court document.
- Without a court document the Y will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent has legal custody. If there is a concern about a possible problem, a written agreement signed by both parents that spells out who can pick-up the child(ren) and when will be required.

**Late Pick-up:** The Y Preschool is open at 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. on Monday through Friday. The staff cannot leave until every child has been picked-up. When a parent/guardian is late picking-up a child, it creates a hardship for all. The parent/guardian should

make every effort to pick-up his/her child on time. If the parent/guardian is going to be late, he/she must contact the Preschool Director as soon as possible.

- There will be a mandatory \$1 surcharge per each minute (according to the Y Preschool clock) that a child remains after 11:40 a.m. This surcharge is due and payable at that time.
- Following three late pick-ups within a 30-day period, your child will be suspended from Y Preschool on the following day.
- If after one hour the parent/guardian has not contacted the Y Preschool staff to notify them of an unavoidable delay, and after all attempts have been made to contact the parent/guardian and those listed on the emergency form, the Police Department will be contacted and further action will be taken. Please see "Conditions for Participation" and "Suspension Policies."

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

**When a child is ill:** If your child contracts a communicable disease or becomes exposed to one, please contact your Preschool Director. State licensing requires preschool centers to refuse admittance to any child who shows signs of illness (at the discretion of the Preschool Director). Your child will not be admitted to the Y Preschool if he/she has had the following conditions within the past 24 hours:

- fever over 100 degrees
- diarrhea or vomiting
- any communicable diseases (such as Chicken Pox or Lice)

**When a child becomes ill at the Y Preschool:** The Y Preschool staff will isolate the child and make every attempt to contact the parent/guardian. It is necessary that the child be picked-up by a designated adult within 30 minutes of parent/guardian notification in order to reduce the risk to other children and staff.

**When a child is injured Y Preschool:** The Y staff will administer standard first aid. If it is determined that further medical attention is necessary, every attempt will be made to notify the parent/guardian. If a designated adult cannot be reached in a reasonable time, the child will be taken to the nearest emergency room by ambulance. The parent/guardian will be held responsible for any and all expenses incurred.

**Medical Assessments, Immunizations & TB Requirements:** All children need to meet the CA School Immunization Records requirements prior to entering the Y Preschool. Along with your child's shot records, a TB screening and a physician signed medical assessment is necessary for participation in the program. If immunizations are contrary to your personal /religious beliefs or a physician provides a written statement that an immunization should not be given to the child and specifies how long this exemption is expected to be needed, please provide this in writing at the time of enrollment.

**Medications:** All oral and/or topical prescribed medications will be administered only with prior written consent of both parent/guardian and a physician.

- No child shall bring and/or self-administer medication
- All medications must be checked in with Y Preschool staff by a parent/guardian
- All medications must be in their original container with an unaltered label including the following information:
  - Child's name
  - Doctor's name
  - Name of drug
  - Dosage
  - Conditions under which to be administered
  - Expiration date

**Snack/Lunch:** All children are to bring their own nutritious morning snack to the Kinder Readiness program. Please inform the Preschool Director of any allergies or dietary restrictions your child may have.

**Emergency Information:** All parents are required to fill out an emergency card prior to the child's entry of the program. Emergency cards need to be updated regularly, as changes occur. Parents are also required to bring in food/drink items for the classroom emergency basket; items will be replaced at the beginning of each school year. If an emergency should occur, the Y Preschool program meeting point (where parents are to pick up their child) is located on the Paradise Valley Elementary School Campus: green field space on the east end of campus adjacent to Paradise park.

**Change of address and phone numbers:** It is extremely important for your child's safety and well-being that your Preschool Director is informed of changes in your address and phone numbers (work, cell, and home). Please notify your Preschool Director of changes within 24 hours.

Policies, schedule notices, and other important Y Preschool information are mailed to parents/guardians to ensure that they are received. The YMCA assumes no responsibility for problems or hardships arising from missed communication due to incorrect or non-current addresses or phone numbers (this includes missed billing notices, major changes in daily schedule, etc.).

## **BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE**

**Behavior Guidance Policies:** It is our belief that children need both clear and consistent guidelines, which serve to retain health, safety and respect for themselves and others. If the Y Preschool staff should experience problems with a child relating to specific expectations, the following procedures will be taken:

- Child will be redirected to another activity
- A reminder of the rules will be given
- A discussion of the problem and the consequences will take place
- If behavior escalates to an unsafe level, the child will be asked to sit quietly with a staff person until he/she calms down and is ready to return to the group
- A parent conference may be required

If the problem persists and the child continues to disrupt the program for others, the Y reserves the right to suspend the child. Suspension maybe temporary or permanent.

Please note that minor discrepancies in behavior are normal for your preschooler. If the behavior is deemed abnormal or destructive in nature, the parents will be informed and the Preschool Director may request a conference. The Y is a partner in your child's development. We are here to help you and your child in any way we can.

**Note: Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden in all Y programs.**

**Suspension:** The Y Preschool reserves the right to exclude a child from attendance due to the following:

- Parent/guardian and/or child do not obey the rules
- Child appears ill (readmitted after a 24-hour recovery)
- Parent/guardian is overdue on payments (may be readmitted after all fees are paid in full)

**Expulsion:** The Y Preschool is committed to working with children to correct behavior in a positive way that validates self-esteem. The steps outlined in the discipline policy will be employed to help children adjust to expected behavior. However, for the safety and well being of all participants, a child may be expelled from the Y Preschool immediately, without prior notice. To ensure space availability for that time period, regular fees will continue.

**Condition of Participation:** In order to ensure that the Y can provide high quality childcare in a safe, caring, and cost effective manner, the following conditions must be met by all Y Preschool participants. Failure to meet these conditions will result in termination of care.

- Prompt payment of fees in full
- Notification of absences
- Appropriate behavior by parent/guardian and/or child
- Pick-up on time

**Damage to equipment/destruction of property:** Responsible use of equipment and supplies is expected of all participants. Those willfully damaging equipment or destroying property will be held responsible for replacement.

## **MEMBERSHIP & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**Membership:** There are two kinds of YMCA Membership: Program and Facility. Each Y Preschool participant that is not a member of the Centennial Recreation Center must pay a \$25.00 annual fee, which enrolls them as a Program Member. A Program Membership also allows your child to enroll in many other programs throughout the year, such as Youth Sports.

A Program Membership does not allow your child to have access to the Y fitness facility or pool. The Y encourages families to take advantage of the many programs offered in addition to Kinder Readiness.

**Financial Assistance:** Financial assistance is available for all programs to those families who qualify. To apply, submit a completed application with required documentation along with your registration form. All applications are kept confidential.

How is Our Financial Assistance Program Funded?: The Y is able to provide financial assistance through the generous support it receives from **Community Support Campaign** donors. Each year volunteers (parents, members, etc.) raise over \$120,000.00 in the Community Support Campaign. Without this support the YMCA would not be able to provide assistance to those in need.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**Parent Involvement:** The Y recognizes the time and financial pressures on many parents/guardians. However, to work toward the goal of strengthening and supporting the family unit, parents/guardians are asked to volunteer a minimum of 2 hours during the school year. Listed below are several of the volunteer opportunities available:

- Volunteer with Holiday potlucks and parties
- Help Coach a Youth Sports team
- Help at the Healthy Kids' Day event in April
- Volunteer for our Community Support Campaign
- Serve on the Parent Advisory Committee
- Storytelling or lead other projects

Throughout the year, family gatherings will be held at one of the sites and/or the branch. These may be potluck dinners, holiday celebrations, guest speakers, presentations by the children, or other formats. Your involvement and suggestions for activities, events, etc. are always encouraged. Perhaps you have a special skill or talent that would enrich the program. Let us know how you can help in any way.

**Parent Information Center:** The site has established a Parent Information Center to keep you informed of center happenings, holiday programs, community events, other YMCA programs, etc. Each child also has a file used to distribute fliers, artwork, etc. Please check it daily to keep up to date on what's going on.

**Parent Advisory Committee (PAC):** Parents, along with the Preschool Directors, will meet monthly to provide advice on evaluations, standards, policies, and other relevant information. Your involvement is highly encouraged.

## **HOW TO REACH US**

Paradise Valley Kinder Readiness and Child Care:  
(408) 778-5711

Mt. Madonna YMCA branch office:  
(408) 762-6000

Your opinion is important to us, and therefore you are strongly encouraged to talk with your Y Preschool staff regarding your child's participation in the program. Should questions or concerns arise which cannot be addressed at your site, or you require additional information, please feel free to contact the Program Director at (408) 762-6017.

