

YMCA OF YOUNGSTOWN REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

The YMCA promotes a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention, and the development of self-discipline. At no time will the following disciplinary techniques be tolerated: physical punishment, striking, biting, kicking, squeezing, shaming, withholding food or rest room privileges, confining children in small, locked rooms, or verbal or emotional abuse.

Affectionate touch and the warm feelings it brings are important factors in helping a child grow into a loving and caring adult. YMCA staff and volunteers, however, need to be sensitive to each person's need for personal space (i.e., not everyone wants to be hugged). The YMCA encourages appropriate touch; at the same time, however, it prohibits inappropriate touch or other means of sexually exploiting children. In the event of an accusation of child abuse, the YMCA will take prompt and immediate action as follows:

1. At the first report or allegation that child abuse has occurred, the employed staff person it has been reported to will notify the program director, who will then review the incident with the YMCA Executive Director or the Chief Operating Officer. If the program director is not immediately available, this review by the supervisor cannot in any way deter the reporting of child abuse by the mandated reporters. The State of Ohio and Pennsylvania mandate that all staff who work in youth serving organizations, teachers and child-care providers report information they have learned in their professional roles regarding suspected child abuse.

To report child abuse, contact **Mahoning County Children Services** 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by calling **330-941-8888**. If you are calling during business hours (Mon-Fri 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM) please ask for an Intake Screener. During non-business hours you will be automatically forwarded to the Help Hotline. A report can also be made in person by visiting Mahoning County Children Services at 222 Federal Plaza West (fourth floor), Youngstown, OH 44503.

Staff may also call the Praesidium Hot Line at **855-347-0751 (Camp Fitch)**

To report child abuse of a child who is a PA resident, call ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313 (PA Department of Human Services). Trained Specialists are available 24/7.

2. The YMCA will make a report in accordance with relevant state or local child abuse reporting requirements, the YMCA of the USA, and will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved.

3. In the event the reported incident involves a program volunteer, employed staff, or YMCA member, the executive director will immediately, without exception, suspend the volunteer or staff person from the YMCA until an investigation is complete. Accused should be suspended immediately and removed from the program in which the allegation occurred.
4. The parents or legal guardian of the child or children involved in the alleged incident will be promptly notified in accordance with the directions of the relevant state or local agency. If more than one set of parents is involved (e.g., child-on-child abuse), the YMCA's responsibility is to keep the names and contact information of those involved confidential. People may learn that information some other way, such as through other children, but YMCA staff and volunteers should not provide it. The YMCA needs to protect itself from disclosing information on a minor.
5. Whether the incident or alleged offense takes place on or off YMCA premises, it will be considered job related (because of the youth-involved nature of the YMCA).
6. Reinstatement of the program volunteer, employed staff person, or YMCA member will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the Executive Director or the Chief Operating Officer.
7. All YMCA staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of this information and therefore should discuss the incident only with the Executive Director or the Chief Operating Officer.
8. All employees and program volunteers must read and sign this policy.

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Updated: 4.1.2021