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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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PARENT HANDBOOK

Family YMCA of Black Hawk County
Montessori at the Y



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WELCOME

Welcome to Montessori at the Y (MATY)! We are honored that you have chosen to partner with us in the healthy development of your child. We commit to providing your child with opportunities to explore, and learn through enriching independently driven activities in a safe, nurturing environment.

Please use this handbook as a resource regarding Montessori at the Y policies and procedures.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Montessori at the Y
Family YMCA of Black Hawk County
669 S. Hackett Rd
Waterloo, IA 50701
319.233.3539

Hours of Operation:
Mon-Fri 7:00AM-5:00 PM
Director of Youth Development, MATY:
Bekah Sanders,
bsanders@blackhawkymca.org

YMCA Mission Statement

Our mission at the Family YMCA of Black Hawk County is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

Who Are We?

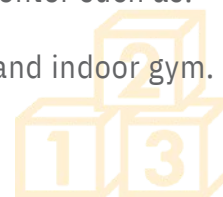
We are a family centered organization that aims to come alongside parents to nurture and guide children as they learn and grow.

Our Values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility

Our Hope is to leave a long lasting impact on all the children and families involved in our programming that encourages success measured by proper development, healthy living and social responsibility.

What We Offer:

- Enriching early learning for children 3–5 years of age using the Montessori Method
- Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack
- A fully functional YMCA facility that provides many opportunities for our center such as:
 - Swimming
 - Gross motor activities in our outdoor playground, indoor playground, and indoor gym.
 - Field trips for our preschoolers via the YMCA bus!
- A safe space to play, grow, explore, and discover



Enrollment

Enrollment is open without discrimination to any child age three to five years old (Preschool). Registration priority is given to those already attending and is then offered on a first come, first served basis. The Family YMCA of Black Hawk County retains the right to end enrollment for any child at any time.

Before Enrolling:

- Tour the facility
- Meet the staff
- Review parent handbook to ensure this facility is a fit for you and your family

Upon Enrollment:

- Attend a parent orientation meeting
- Complete online registration

Online Registration:

All Montessori at the Y registrations are done via our online registration system. This can be done from your home or come to the YMCA and register using our registration station located by the glass office.

Enrollment Documents:

- Current Physical
- Medication / Diet Forms (if applicable)**
- Official State of Iowa Immunization Record
- CACFP Enrollment Form
- CACFP Eligibility Application
- Handbook Acknowledgement

All paperwork and documentation is required at least 48 hours before the child's first day.

*Medication / Diet Forms:

Medical Administration Form: All medication, both prescription and over-the-counter, require a Medical Administration Form to be completed by your child's health care provider. Medical Administration Forms can be accessed on our website or at the YMCA.

Diet Modification Forms: If your child requires a diet modification, a Diet Modification Form is required to be completed by your child's health care provider. Diet Modification Forms can be accessed on our website or at the YMCA.

Enrollment

Waiting List:

When the Montessori program has reached its capacity, a waiting list will be established. Parents will be notified when there is an opening and will then be required to complete the registration form and pay registration fees before enrollment. Preference on the waiting list will be given to:

- 1) Children who are siblings of current children in our MATY Program
- 2) Children of YMCA employees

Enrolling a Child Midway Through the Year

If a family wishes to enroll their child midway through the year, they may as long as the following requirements are met:

- There is a spot available
- The child is 3 years old at or around the start of the school year
- The child is potty trained

Should a family wish to hold a spot for their child to begin midway through the year, the above requirements must be met, and the full rate will be charged each week to hold that spot. The only exception is if the spot is already being held by another child who will be in the spot up until the new child starts. Should there be a gap between when the old child leaves and the new child starts, the new family will be responsible for the full weekly rate for each week that the spot is empty and being held for the new child.

Inclusive Practices

We welcome all children at the YMCA. We partner with the Area Education Agency (AEA), Child Resource and Referral (CCR&R), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and consider all families to be partners in order to ensure that we are meeting each child's individual needs. We keep a copy of children's IFSP, IEP, and health needs plans on file and do our best to support all children by reaching out to other resources and obtaining extra trainings when possible. However, we unfortunately do not have the capacity to provide one-on-one staffing support and attention to any one child. We want to see all family's needs and expectations met through our programs; therefore, we do a parent orientation meeting with each family before the child's first day at our center to determine if our center is the best fit. During the parent orientation meeting, we will exchange information, discuss what support we have to offer, and discuss the needs of your family. At that time, we will determine if our center is the best fit.

The YMCA believes in equal opportunities for all. If you need special accommodations or language translation services to register for programs, the YMCA will make every effort to provide those services to you.

Payment Information

The Montessori at the Y program offers a class time, a before care option, an after care option or a full day option. Please note that a YMCA Family Membership is required for our full day and before and after care options.

Weekly Rates:	YMCA Members	YMCA Non-Members
Montessori at the Y Class (9am-1pm)	\$195/week	\$215/week
Montessori Full Day (7am-5pm)	\$235/week	NA
Before Care (7am-9am)	\$15/week	NA
After Care (1pm-5pm)	\$30/week	NA

Late Pickup Fee:

We respectfully ask that children be picked up on time. If a situation arises where you will be late, contact MATY as soon as possible. A late fee will be charged for all pickups that are late by 5 minutes or more at the following rate:

- \$5 for the first 5 minutes and \$1 for each additional minute. This will be charged per child.

Late pickup fees will be added to your account on the following Monday and charged to the payment method on file on Friday.

Fee Policy:

- The weekly rate will be charged to the payment method on file every Monday on the week of attendance.
 - Cash payments are not accepted; payment method options are credit card or electric funds transfer.
- There is no credit for absences including: illness, holidays, or snow days.
 - The only exception is in our vacation policy - see page 31
- Weekly fees are prorated only on weeks in which we have a planned closure for 3 or more days of the week.
- Failure to pay fees may result in loss of care.

Payment Information

Refund Policy:

- Credits will first be applied to future or past fees accrued.
- Refunds of program fee will be given with proper notification of withdrawal from the program
- Membership fees are NOT REFUNDABLE

Financial Assistance:

Unfortunately, at this time, there is no financial assistance available for our Montessori program.

- To set up a payment plan or for any billing questions, please contact Danielle Shea at dshea@blackhawkmca.org

What to Expect

At Montessori at the Y, we use the Montessori Method to assist children in developing their own individualized interests

Classroom Age Range: 3 years -5 years old

Child to Adult Ratios:

To meet our licensing regulations and follow best practices, the following ratios will be met at all times. This is to ensure proper supervision of children and maintain a safe classroom environment. Ratios may be combined at the beginning and ends of the day, but will be determined by the age of the youngest child.

Classroom	Ratio	Capacity
Montessori	10:1	20:2

Family Participation / Open Door Policy:

Parents are considered partners and parent involvement is a goal of our program. Through this partnership, a carry-over of routines and learning experiences occur, which helps to develop a cooperative relationship between parents, staff and children. We welcome your presence in the classroom, on field trips, and on special days. Please keep in mind that open communication with your child's teacher is very important. Both the children and staff enjoy your participation. If you have time or talent to share, please let us know. The Y offers an open door policy to all of our parents.

Unlimited Access:

In accordance with The Department of Health and Human Services licensing procedure 109.5(1) "Unlimited Access", Parents shall be afforded unlimited access to their children and to the provider caring for their children during the center's hours of operation or whenever their children are in the care of a provider, unless parental contact is prohibited by court order. The provider shall inform all parents of this policy in writing at the time the child is admitted to the center.

What to Expect

Child's First Day:

If your child is experiencing separation anxiety on their first day, that is perfectly normal. Parents are encouraged to come in with your children before the first day to check out the space and meet the staff. However, you are also welcome to come to the room the first day to help with the adjustment and help calm emotions with settling into a new environment. We appreciate any feedback that we can do to help make the transition better for each child, too.

Clothing / What Your Child Should Wear:

Weather permitting, the children will go outside everyday. Please dress your child(ren) in weather appropriate clothing each day and plan for both indoor and outdoor play. **Label all belongings, including; shoes, boots, coats, hats, and gloves. If unlabeled, staff will label all belongings with a permanent marker.** Due to safety reasons **children may not wear flip flips** of any kind. All children must wear shoes appropriate to indoor and outdoor play, fully attached to the foot with at least a secure heel strap. Any children not wearing appropriate shoes will have a parent called to bring replacement and will not return to play until wearing appropriate shoes. All clothing worn must be family friendly without the display of violence, vulgar language or sexual innuendos.

What to Bring:

- **Extra Clothing / Swimsuit**

- It is requested that all children keep an extra set of clothing in their cubbies for any sort of accident. This back up set should include extra; long sleeve shirt, t-shirt, shorts, pants, socks, underwear (if applicable) and shoes. Any soiled clothing will be sent home in a grocery sack at pickup. We also ask that children bring a swimsuit for outdoor water play in the summer and swimming.
- NOTE: During the winter MATY will play outside. As the weather begins to cool, please send with your child a winter coat, hat and water proof gloves along with winter boots and snow pants. These will be kept in their cubbies and sent home upon request.

- **Water Bottle**

- It is requested that all children bring a water bottle with their name on it. There is a drinking fountain in the classroom and cups will be provided should a child forget. Water bottles will be taken outside when the class goes out to explore and play in nature.

What to Expect

- **Blanket / *Stuffed Animal**

- If your child will be with us over our rest period (12:30pm-2:30pm), we ask that you bring a blanket for your child. Children leaving at 1pm, do not need a blanket.
- *Stuffed toys may be brought but are not required. Stuffed toys will be kept in the child's cubby except for during rest time. The Y does not assume responsibility for personal stuffed animals.

- **Family Picture**

- Having a family picture can help children to transition better as they can still see their family even when they miss them.

- ***Food**

- It is NOT required that children bring their own breakfast, lunch or snack. Our program will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. However, should you wish to send your child with their own lunch, you may as long as you are conscientious of any allergies in the room and do not send food with those items.

DO NOT BRING:

- **Toys from Home**

- We respectfully ask that personal toys be kept at home. The Y does not assume responsibility for personal toys.

- **Any Inappropriate Materials**

- i.e. Candy cigarettes, toy weapons, any item with sexual innuendos, etc.

- **Candy**

- We respectfully ask that candy from home not be brought into the classroom as we wish to model healthy eating and do not want to cause a disruption amongst the kids.
- Note: On special occasions (i.e. birthdays), store bought prepackaged treats may be brought in to be shared with the class as long as they are still sealed.

What to Expect

Montessori Routine: Sample Day

- 7:00-8:30am: Before/Full Day Students ONLY - Free Choice
- 8:30-9:00am: Before/Full Day Students ONLY - Breakfast
- 8:50-9:00am: Welcome Students / Quiet Activities
- 9:00-9:15am: Circle Time
- 9:15-10:30am: Work Period
- 10:30-10:45am: Tidy Up/Transition
- 10:45-11:30am: Gross Motor Activity
 - Outside, Indoor Playground, Gym, etc.
- 11:30-11:45am: Transition
- 11:45am-12:15pm: Lunch
- 12:15-12:30pm: Closing Circle
- 12:30-1:00pm: Extended Learning / Leaving
- 12:30-2:30pm: After/Full Day Students ONLY - Rest Time
- 2:30-3:00pm: After/Full Day Students ONLY - Transition / Snack
- 3:00-3:30pm: After/Full Day Students ONLY - Music and Movement
- 3:30-4:30pm: After/Full Day Students ONLY - Gross Motor Activities
 - Outside, Indoor Playground, Gym, etc.
- 4:30-5:00pm: After/Full Day Students ONLY - Free Choice

*All children are diapered/toileted every two hours or as needed



What to Expect

It is required that you check in with a YMCA ELC staff member at drop-off and pick-up to fully acknowledge your child's entrance or exit.

Drop-Off Procedure

- Children must be signed-in by guardian via the Procure App on their phone or tablet on the kiosk upon arrival. Children must be escorted by the parent/guardian into the classroom, and assisted in washing hands, and arrival routines. Unaccompanied children will not be allowed into the classroom. Make sure the classroom teacher is aware your child is being dropped off.
- We ask that any adult dropping off or picking up a child please refrain from talking on a cell phone. Staff uses this time to speak with parents about important issues and we need your full attention.
- Please do not allow your child to come into the center with any outside toys. If your child sleeps with a stuffed toy for comfort, one may be brought to be used at rest time only.

Pick-Up Procedure

- Parents/guardians picking up children are required to sign-out their children via the Procure App.
- Older siblings may pick up younger siblings, but they must be at least 18 years of age.
- Children will be released only to those persons authorized by parent/guardians listed on the approved pickup form (in writing).
- If the parent/guardian wants to change the pickup person, they must either do it at the center with a staff member, or they must call the center to tell of the change AND write an email or a note in the Procure App via the messaging function.
- Any new pickup people must show photo proof of identification upon pickup.
- If a parent/guardian or person authorized to pick up a child is believed to be intoxicated or substance impaired when they come to the center, they will be informed that the police will be called about an intoxicated or substance impaired driver leaving our premises. Additionally, Child Protective Services will be called.
- When dropping your child off or picking up, please utilize the YMCA parking lot accordingly; only park in designated spaces or the loading zone in front of the building.

What to Expect

Late Pick-Up Procedure (After 5pm)

We respectfully ask that children be picked up on time. If a situation arises where you will be late, contact the YMCA as soon as possible. The Y will attempt to reach you via telephone if you are late in excess of 5 minutes. A late fee of \$5 for the first 5 minutes and \$1 for each additional minute will be charged, per child, for late pickups. Late fees must be paid in full before the next week of attendance. If your child is not picked up 15 minutes after closing and no word has been received, the staff will begin calling emergency contacts to pick up your child. If the child has not been picked up after an hour and no contact has been made by the parents or emergency contacts to the YMCA, the local police department or Child Protective Services will be notified.

Swimming

Montessori at the Y provides children with the opportunity to gain confidence and swim skills through regularly scheduled swim time. In order to maintain safety of all children, children will wear floatation devices provided by the YMCA while in the care of the Montessori at the Y regardless of swimming ability. If your child is not able to swim due to illness or otherwise, please let us know ahead of time and they may sit on the bench or sit with leadership staff in their office during this time. Additionally, if a child arrives after their class is already prepared to leave the classroom for the pool, it is the parent/guardians responsibility to get their child ready and bring them to the pool.

On-Site Celebrations and Field Trips

- The Y believes field trips and celebrations greatly enrich our center.
 - When possible, the Y will bring in outside partners for a "center field trip" in which travelling is unnecessary.
 - Should any classroom leave the Y premises for a field trip, a written permission slip will be required for each child and for each field trip. All staff ratios will be maintained throughout field trips.
- If you choose to bring a snack to a celebration, treats need to be store bought, and nut and peanut-free.
- Please let us know if children cannot take part in a certain celebration so that we can prepare an alternative activity for him or her staffing permitted. Please note that if staffing should prohibit the provision of an alternate activity for your child, he or she may sit with a YMCA leadership staff members until the celebration is over.

What to Expect

Observance of Holidays

Montessori at the Y will be closed on major holidays, including but not limited to; Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and MLK Day. The ELC will also be closed throughout the year to allow for Professional Development days for staff. Be sure to check the MATY yearly calendar for exact dates we are closed.

Communication

As with all relationships, communication is the key. Please let us know what is happening in your family or child's life that may affect behavior, need to be celebrated, mourned, etc. For questions or concerns that require more than a few minutes, please schedule an appointment with the center director. Questions or concerns regarding curriculum, your child's participation, behavior, etc., are always welcome. In return, we will make every effort to give you regular feedback. Monthly newsletters and calendars will be sent home in each classroom to share upcoming events and reminders.

Parents and staff are expected to communicate on a regular basis. The appropriate times and ways to communicate are at drop-off and pick-up, through Procure, and via the YMCA phone. **The YMCA prohibits teachers to communicate with parents through personal social media platforms or personal text/phone lines regarding anything to do with MATY or the children while in our care.**

A parent information board is located inside of the classroom. This space will have a monthly MATY calendar, parent reminders, closure notices as well as other information pertaining to our Montessori program. Please check this space for notices and updated information.

Confidentiality Statement

All employees and parents are not to discuss internal matters in relation to MATY or the YMCA, of which they become aware of, in front of children or any outside parties. Staff will not to speak with parents about confidential matters unless instructed to do so by the director. Any questions may be directed to the director. Disclosure, provision and/or reproduction of employees' or children's files to unauthorized persons is strictly prohibited according to YMCA policy. Personal information about any affiliate will not be discussed with anyone, unless it directly affects the well-being of the child.

Curriculum/Assessments

As a Montessori program, we are different from traditional preschools in that we focus more on the each child's individual interest and let the child lead in their learning.

Montessori Method

The Montessori Method is unique in that it does not tell children what to learn or what to be interested in but rather encourages them to find their own interests. The Montessori Method taps into a child's innate curiosity and encourages them to explore the world for themselves to their hearts content. For example, children engage in a plethora of art activities like painting, drawing, cutting, and sewing. They are never instructed what to illustrate, or put to paper. Whatever they decide to create, comes from within. No one knows better than him/her, in his/her own imagination, which creative path they should follow. The Montessori teacher's job is to introduce opportunities to explore/engage and then step back and observe and follow each child's individual passion.

In a Montessori school, children are not encouraged to compete with each other, they only compete with themselves. They support one another, to help one another learn without judgement or snickering if someone makes a mistake. The children innately understand that mistakes are part of the process.

Curriculum Includes:

Practical Life	Motor tasks involving practical real-life goals, such as cleaning a table
Sensorial	Tasks which involve the refinement of the child's senses
Language Arts	Assisting with basic concepts of language
Math	Experimental fun learning activities
Culture and Science	Learning the building blocks of culture, science, and how one fits into the world

Curriculum/Assessments

Developmental Screening / Monitoring Policy

At Montessori at the Y, we understand and encourage all children to develop individually and at their own rate. With that being said, we do conduct screenings on all children at least three times annually as a means to track their developmental growth. These screenings are done as non-intrusively as possible and mainly through observing the child. The first assessment is done within the first 45 days of the new school year or the child's first day of attendance. The second assessment is done midyear, and the third assessment is done at the end of the school year.

The teaching staff assesses each child in their classroom environment by documenting observations, collecting samples of work, creating portfolios and taking anecdotal notes. Through intentional observations the teaching staff is able to create a comprehensive picture to share with the families during parent-teacher conferences.

In the Montessori classroom, the following screenings will be done:

- ASQ, ASQ-SE, Brigance, and the Communication Checklist

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The teaching staff will conduct at least 2 conferences with families each school year to discuss the child's progress and create a plan, if needed, for a child's individual needs. Conferences can be held in the YMCA facility. Montessori at the Y may be closed during conference times to ensure each family appropriate time to discuss their child's growth and development. If the teaching staff and/or the parents feel there is a need for further formal assessment or assistance based on our evaluation, the Y will provide additional resources or refer the family to the appropriate agency. All results of the screenings are kept confidential unless a release is signed by the parent or guardian for us to share information with third party resources. Some resources regularly cited are AEA, CCR+R and HHS.

Supervision

At Montessori at the Y, child and staff safety is our number one priority. A huge part of maintaining child safety is through the active supervision of children at all times.

Active Supervision

Staff are trained on active supervision upon hire and during professional development days throughout the year. During all times while in our care, children are supervised through the following means:

Continuous Counting

Staff will always know how many children are signed into their classroom by checking Procure, counting the number of children signed in and counting the number of children they see in the class. Regardless of location, staff will count the children frequently to ensure that they can see all the children at all times. Staff will also count children through transitions in and out of the classroom by counting the children as they go through entryways and exits.

Zoning

Staff will maintain active supervision in all locations by observing separate areas or "zones" for each location the class is in. For instance, in the classroom, one staff may be in charge of the "zone" in the back half of the classroom while the other staff is in charge of the "zone" in the front half of the classroom. The staff will consistently scan their "zone" to ensure they can see all children in their "zone".

Name-to-Face

Staff will maintain active supervision through transitions by doing name-to-face on the Procure app. When doing name-to-face, staff read the name and see the picture of a child signed in and then look at the face of that child. Staff do this for each child, often saying the child's name as they do so to help with name recognition. Name-to-face is done right before the class leaves a location and right after they arrive at the new location. Name-to-face may also be done at the end of the day when the classes are combined and many children are being picked up.

Teacher Sandwich

Staff will maintain active supervision through transitions by creating a "teacher sandwich" in which one staff leads the children, all of the children come next, and then one staff brings up the rear of the group. If there is more than two staff in a classroom, the extra staff will be placed in the middle of the group.

Active Listening and Active Scanning

Staff will maintain active supervision through active listening and active scanning. Even while interacting with one specific child, staff will continuously listen to what else is going on in the classroom and frequently lift their eyes to scan the room.

Supervision

Supervision Around Water

At Montessori at the Y, children will be around water both during water play and during swimming times.

Water Play

Staff will maintain active supervision during water play by interacting with the children and staying within arms reach of the children while actively listening, scanning, and counting children. Water play at MATY includes: water in sensory tables or buckets, kiddie pools, and sprinklers.

Swimming

Staff will maintain active supervision while swimming in the YMCA indoor pool through the following means:

- Staff will do name-to-face before the children get in the water
- Staff in ratio will be in the pool with the children and within arms reach of them at all times
- One or more extra staff will go with the class and will be placed either in the pool or on the pool deck
- Staff will continuously count children and actively listen and scan the pool
- A certified lifeguard will be on duty whenever children are swimming
- All children will be in floatation devices regardless of swimming ability
- Staff will do name-to-face before leaving the pool area

Supervision Away From the Center

Staff will maintain active supervision while on walks or fieldtrips through the following means:

- Staff will do name-to-face at the following times:
 - Before leaving the center
 - On the bus (if one is used for transportation)
 - Upon arriving at the new location (if on a fieldtrip)
 - Before leaving the new location (if on a fieldtrip)
 - Upon arriving back at the center
- Staff will maintain a "teacher sandwich" with one staff at the front of the group and the other staff taking up the rear with the children in the middle
- Staff will continuously count the children
- Staff will maintain active listening and scanning
- Staff will zone (if on a fieldtrip)
- One or more extra staff will be sent any time children go on a fieldtrip

Policy/Procedures

Montessori at the Y has the following policies and procedures to ensure the safety and smooth functioning of the center.

Potty Training Policy

At Montessori at the Y, we ask that all children be potty trained before being registered for our program. We understand that accidents do occur from time to time, which is why we ask that families bring extra clothes. However, the Montessori classroom is not set up for children that are not potty trained.

Transition Meetings

When a child is moving on to a new school, MATY will do everything it reasonably can to ensure a smooth transition to the new school. This may include sharing, upon parental request, assessments, observations, etcetera.

Donations and "In Kinds"

We invite you to donate school supplies as well as gently used toys and books! All donations are gladly accepted and happily utilized.

In-Kind is donated time, space or services that are provided by parents and the community. Below are just some of the ways to earn In-Kind for our center.

- Help staff plan events at the center
- Volunteer in the classroom
- Read to your child's classroom
- Complete classroom take-home activities and return to the school
- Participate in parent-child activities and family events
- Go on field trips with your child's classroom

Attendance Policy

We ask that all children arrive no later than 9am as that is when we start our morning group time which is a strong educational component. We understand there may be times your child will need to be late or absent (i.e. vacation, holidays, appointments, etc.). Please let us know ahead of time if this is the case. Please also let us know by 9am if your child will be late for unexpected reasons. Should an extended drop off time be needed for extenuating circumstances, please set up a meeting with me!

Policy/Procedures

Vacation Policy

All MATY families have an opportunity to utilize a two week vacation allowance per calendar year in which parents may choose for children to be absent without payment. All families must be in good standing in order to use their vacation week. There are no rollovers. If a child is not utilizing vacation time, payment is due weekly. Payment ensures a child's spot in the program. Vacation time is granted annually after enrolled at least 6 months. Vacation time must be taken in one week increments and a two weeks written notice is required.

Babysitting Policy

YMCA employees are welcome to babysit for YMCA families outside of our working business hours provided you sign our Non-poaching and Non-liability Babysitting Waiver.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of a late start or the center being closed due to inclement weather, the YMCA will do it's best to make the decision timely, but want to make sure we don't jeopardize the safety of our staff or children. In this event, please check KWWL or your Procure app.

Willful Destruction of Property

The Y will make numerous types of equipment and supplies available to children for use during free play and group activities. Normal wear and tear is expected. We simply ask that the equipment and supplies be treated with respect. If a child willfully destroys Y property, the parent will assume financial responsibility for that property.

Withdrawal From the Program

Withdrawal from MATY requires one week advance notice of withdrawal to the Director. Re-admission to the program will be granted on a space available basis. Unpaid balances must be paid in full for a child to return.

Policy/Procedures

Missing Child Procedure

Preventative Measures

In order to ensure that a child never goes missing, staff will maintain active supervision at all times. This includes name-to-face, zoning, continuous counting, active listening, active scanning, and "teacher sandwich." While on the outdoor playground, staff will ensure that the gate to the playground is closed and latched at all times. While in the classroom, staff will ensure that all doors leaving Montessori at the Y are closed. All doors leading to classrooms are locked and require either a key or a keycode to enter to prevent the entrance of random or unwanted individuals. Front desk staff at the YMCA also watch for any child wandering alone.

Missing Child

In the event that a child is believed to be missing, the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will immediately contact supervisors for assistance
- Staff will search the location where the children are currently and the location where the child was last seen
- A supervisor will review camera footage and notify local authorities and the parents/guardians
- The HHS Child Abuse Hotline will be notified
- Incident reports will be written

Program Dismissal Policy

Program dismissal is always the last thing we turn to when working with families. However, there are instances in which we find that our center is not the best fit for a child or a family. In these instances, families may be asked to withdraw from the program. Reasons families may be asked to withdraw include but are not limited to:

- Delinquency in payment of fees
- The child is unable to follow the policies and procedures
- Parents have failed to provide required records or to meet the standards of the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services
- Parents/Guardians are consistently late in picking up the child
- Parents/Guardians fail to provide or meet scheduling requirements
- Child poses a threat to other children, staff, or self
- Parent behavior is out of line with our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility
- Child's needs cannot be met by our program

Policy/Procedures

Should any of the above instances occur, the Y will do it's best to work with the family before dismissal by:

- Communicating the policies and procedures
- Meeting with the family to create an action plan
- Recommending or referring other resources to families when applicable
- Following all steps notated in our "Challenging Behaviors Policy" on page 45

While the YMCA wishes to work with families to ensure that all needs are being met, we reserve the right to dismiss a child immediately should a drastic situation occur.

Safety

Safety is the number one priority in the Early Learning Center.

Mandatory Sign-in/Sign-out:

It is required that all children be signed in and out on Procure by the person dropping them off/picking them up. We keep an attendance record listing all arrival/departure times for each child including who picked them up and dropped them off. This record is kept via the Procure app. Should an approved pickup pick the child up and not know their pin for Procure, staff will sign the child out and make a note of who the approved pickup was. Please note, any individual signing the child out of the program must be prepared to show identification to any YMCA staff member.

Should a child not arrive within an hour of their scheduled drop off time with no prior notification of an absence, staff will notify the parent/guardian of the absence via Procure.

Authorized Pick-Ups

For safety reasons, the Y will never release a child to a person not authorized on the approved pick-up list form. Parents are able to add people to this list at any time via written authorization. It is your responsibility to inform the adult picking the child up that a picture ID will be required.

**** For your child's safety, calling to add a person to the pickup list is not acceptable.**

Separated Parents

Parents who are separated and have court ordered specific arrangements must have a copy of the court order on file at the Center. The Y cannot enforce court orders without these documents on file at the YMCA..

Parent Responsibility to Update Information

For the safety of the child, it is critical that parents update any and all changes in telephone numbers, emergency numbers, addresses, authorized pickups and other important information. Please notify the Y as soon as possible if changes occur. Changes must be made in writing.

Parent/Family Member Behavior

Any parent/guardian/family member who enters the YMCA will be respectful and courteous to all staff, children, and YMCA patrons. Any threats, unsafe behaviors or inappropriate language by a parent or guardian may be cause for the child's termination from our program. Law enforcement will be contacted when necessary. The YMCA reserves the right to discontinue child care services at any time.

Safety

Volunteers and Visitors

The YMCA requires all visitors to sign in at the front desk before being permitted into MATY. The sign-in includes date, time, reason for visit, and contact information.

Any person in the center who is not a staff member or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with children shall not have unrestricted access to children nor be counted in the staff to child ratio. "Unrestricted access" means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for a child. Persons who are not paid staff or approved volunteers will be under the direct supervision of paid staff members at all times and will not be allowed to assume any childcare responsibilities.

Strangulation Prevention

In order to prevent strangulation the following measures are taken:

- Strings and cords long enough to strangle a child will not be accessible to children
- Window blinds and draperies will not have looped cords
- Dramatic play items with handles or straps will be removed or shortened and ties, scarves, necklaces, etc. for children under the age of three years old will only be used when the child is directly supervised
- Pacifiers are only used when not attached to anything
- Parents will be asked to remove hood and neck strings from all children's clothing or not bring children in such clothing
- Any lanyards used will be the breakaway type

Incident/Accident/Illness Reporting

Any time there is an incident involving your child, whether it is a behavioral incident or physical incident, all occurrences will be documented and placed in your child's confidential file. When the center observes changes in a child's health, a child experiences accidents, injuries or incidents, or is too ill to remain in the group, parents will be notified via written report or phone call based on the circumstance. When an accident or injury occurs or there is a sudden change in your child's health, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified via written report or phone call based on the circumstance.

If it is a major incident, such as: head injury, broken bone, severe lacerations - parents will be notified immediately. If it is a minor incident, such as: scratch, bruise, bump - parents will receive a report via Procure.

Safety

Playground Safety

The YMCA ensures playground safety through the following means:

- All staff are trained in active supervision while on the playground
- Playground equipment is installed according to the manufacturer's instructions including anchoring
- The playground has a rubber fall surface that is inspected daily
- The playground is inspected daily for the following things:
 - Missing or broken parts
 - Protrusion of nuts and bolts
 - Rust and chipping or peeling paint
 - Sharp edges, splinters, and rough surfaces
 - Stability of handholds
 - Visible cracks
 - Stability of non-anchored large play equipment
 - Wear and deterioration
 - Safety hazards around the playground such as stinging insect nests, hurt animals, broken toys, etc.

Mandatory Reporting

All of our staff are mandated reporters by law. If any form of child abuse or neglect is suspected, by law our staff is required to report it verbally to The Department of Health and Human Services (1-800-362-2178) immediately. The staff who reports the incident must also submit a written report to HHS within 48 hours after the oral report.

Staff Certifications/Requirements

In accordance with our licensing and partnership standards, all staff are required to have the following:

- First Aid / CPR Certification
- Universal Precautions Certification
- Mandatory Reporting Certification
- Nationwide Background Check
- SING Iowa Background Check
- 8+ Hours of Professional Development / Year

Emergency Evacuation Plan

In the event the center is evacuated, please refer to our emergency procedures posted at each classroom exit.

Safety

Sex Offender Policy

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa Sex Offender Registry (Iowa Code 692A):

1. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
2. Will not have access to the YMCA premises nor facilities. If this individual has parental rights and are required to drop-off/pick-up their child, arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis with the CEO and the Center Director regarding precise time and place of the interaction. The CEO and Center Director are not obligated to approve the sex offender's pick-up/drop-off without prior discussion with their DHS licensing consultant. All interactions will be documented and filed.
 - a. The written permission shall be signed and dated by the CEO, Center Director, and sex offender. It will be kept on file for review by the center licensing consultant and other approved YMCA staff.
3. Will not be able to be an authorized pick-up unless have legal parental rights.

Tobacco-Free and Nicotine-Free

The YMCA of Black Hawk County is a tobacco-free and nicotine-free organization. Tobacco, nicotine, electronic cigarettes, and vaping are prohibited inside and on the grounds of the YMCA as well as in any vehicle used to transport children. Staff are prohibited from wearing clothing that smells of smoke when working.

Health

Healthy living is one of the core focuses at the YMCA of Black Hawk County and, therefore, in the YMCA Early Learning Center. We thank you for your cooperation in helping us keep the children and staff healthy!

Nutrition

Nutrition is an integral part of each person's overall well-being. Therefore, the YMCA partners with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to ensure that we are serving meals and snacks that meet nutritional guidelines and state licensing.

Meal Time

MATY provides breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack following the CACFP nutritional guidelines. Meal times are designated and posted in each classroom. Please ensure that your child arrives by the designated meal time as meals will not be served outside of that time.

What to Know About Our Meals

- Family Style Dining - sitting with the children and passing serving dishes around for children to scoop themselves
 - This is not always feasible with our table set up, but we try to introduce it and use it when possible
- Montessori at the Y does allow families to send children with their own food

Allergies

Montessori at the Y does everything we can to make reasonable accommodations for children with allergies.

Please let us know if your child has allergies or other dietary needs so we can make necessary arrangements. A Diet Modification form signed by a doctor is required for food allergies, intolerances or other dietary needs. If your child has food allergies, please be sure you have provided that information on the enrollment form. All known allergens are posted in each classroom.

Rest Time

The State of Iowa requires all children that are in care for more than five hours to have a quiet time to rest. During rest time, there is soft lighting and soft music. Quiet activities will be provided for children who are not asleep after 30 minutes of resting. Children are not required to sleep, but are required to stay on their cots for safety reasons. If a parent or guardian does not wish for their child to nap, they must pick up their child from 12PM-2:00PM; staff will not keep children awake.

Health

Oral Health Procedures

At the YMCA Early Learning Center, we do the following to promote healthy oral health practices:

- Maintain the contact information for each child's dentist and a resource list for those without a dentist
- Teach children over the age of 1 year how to brush their teeth and provide an opportunity every day to brush teeth
- Sippy cups and bottles are only used at meal times
- Water bottles or cups are made available to children while outside and in the classroom for when they indicate thirst, but water bottles and cups are not made available during nap time.
- Children over the age of 1 year are weaned off of pacifiers
- In partnership with the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), healthy foods are offered to the children at meal times
- Age appropriate oral health activities are made available to children

Dental Emergency

In the event of a dental emergency such as a knocked out or broken/chipped tooth, the child will be comforted. If the child's gum is bleeding, they will be instructed to swish water in their mouth and spit it out into a blood born pathogens bag (staff will demonstrate as needed). The child's parent/guardian will be contacted immediately and an incident report will be written.

Immunizations/Physicals

All children are required to have a copy of their up-to-date immunization records and current physicals in their files. If any changes occur to the child's immunization records, an updated copy must be filed with the Y. Please submit a copy of these immunization records with all registration materials. Children will be unable to attend child care programs without these records.

If a parent chooses not to have his/her child immunized, they must provide a signed and notarized waiver from the Iowa Department of Health. This waiver will be kept in the child's confidential file.

Topical Creams

All diaper creams, chap sticks, lotions, and other non-prescription topical ointments are to be brought in their original unopened container. A Medical Administration Form must be filled out and signed by the child's primary physician and parent/guardian.

Health

Medications

All medication, both prescription and over-the-counter, will only be administered to children with the presence of a Medical Administration Form that has been signed by the child's primary physician in the child's file. This Med Administration Form includes:

- Name of the Child
- Name of the Medication
- Time of Day and/or Frequency Med is to be Administered
- Dosage
- Duration of Med (Start date and Expiration Date)
- Physician Signature
- Parent Signature

All medication must be in the original container. Staff may only give the child the dosage as stated on the medication label and will document any medication administered. For all prescription medication, the dosage amounts and frequency must match that on the label of the bottle/container.

Staff will not administer medication to help a child sleep or to disguise symptoms of illness. Medications for teething discomfort will be handled on a case by case basis and only administered when there are clear and present symptoms of teething discomfort.

For safety reasons, do not send medication in a backpack or with your child. Medication must be handed to MATY teachers or Center Director by the responsible adult.

Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

For children 6 months or older, when the UV Index is 4 or higher, YMCA staff will wear gloves to apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher for outdoor play. The YMCA requires a sunscreen waiver form to be filled out at registration. Alternative skin protection plans can be noted on that form. Insect repellent requires written permission from a parent/guardian and label instructions must be followed. Insect repellent must be safe for children; EPA- registered, and contains no more than 30% DEET.

Health

Hand Washing

Children are to wash their hands upon entering a classroom, before and after meals, after toileting, before and after the use of sand, water or play-doh, and after wiping a nose, touching mouth, etc.

Hand Washing Procedures

1. Turn on water and wet hands
2. Soap for at least 20 seconds outside the stream of water (scrub backs of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails)
3. Rinse
4. Towel dry (or place hands under electric hands-free dryer)
5. Turn off faucet with paper towel (if faucet is not hands-free)

Is My Child Well Enough to Attend?

The most contagious time for many illnesses is just prior to the emergence of full-blown symptoms. Therefore, if a child is displaying symptoms and is not ready to fully participate in program activities, it is recommended that the child be kept home to ensure they get rest and are not contagious. Upon arrival, if a child seems too ill to be at the Y (determined by Center Director or person in charge), parents will be asked to take him or her home.

Children Should Stay Home If They:

- Are feverish or have had a fever in the last 24 hours
- Have a hacking cough or a sore throat
- Have vomited or had diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- Have been on antibiotics for strep or other contagious infections less than 24 hours
- Are too “out of sorts” to participate in class activities

Illness Policy

If a child becomes ill during the day, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child within 1 hour. Please understand that when the decision is made to send a child home for illness, it is with the intention of keeping all children and staff safe. **If a child is sent home, they may not return to the YMCA the next day, and must be 24 hours fever free, diarrhea free, and vomit free before coming back to care.**

Health

Conditions for Exclusion

For the safety of the children and to help prevent the spread of contagious diseases and infections, we send children home for the following symptoms of illness:

Condition	When Child/Staff May Return
Axillary or ear temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher	Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
Symptoms/signs of possible severe illness such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual lethargy • Uncontrolled coughing • Irritability • Persistent crying • Difficult breathing • Wheezing • Other unusual signs 	When a medical evaluation allows inclusion (doctor's written approval for return)
Abnormally loose / uncontrolled diarrhea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 loose BMs in a 1 hour time span • 3 loose BMs in a 24 hour time span 	Diarrhea free for 24 hours
Vomiting	Vomit free for 24 hours and able to eat solid foods
Red or blue in the face, or makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sounds after coughing	When a health care provider or health official determines the condition is noninfectious
Unusual spots or rash with fever or behavior change	When a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease

Health

Condition	When Child/Staff May Return
Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge)	24 hours after treatment has been initiated
Untreated scabies, head lice, or other infestation	After treatment and free of infestation, such as lice and nits
Known contagious diseases while still in the communicable stages	When a health care provider determines that the condition is non-communicable

Exceptions will be determined on a case by case basis and may include:

- Vomiting due to crying too hard or choking
- Symptoms related to teething
- Rashes due to diapering or nutrition

Parents will be notified via Procure of phone call for any of these instances

Montessori at the Y reserves the right to send home for any of the above stated illnesses or any other health concern.

Challenging Behaviors

Montessori at the Y strives to be a calm and consistent environment, in an effort to make children feel comfortable and safe. Our philosophy is to encourage and acknowledge positive behavior.

We use PBIS with the children to provide a comprehensive approach to self-awareness and social emotional regulation. This method empowers them with self-awareness, developmental knowledge and skills to navigate through social situations successfully.

Challenging Behavior Goals

At the YMCA, we understand that children are constantly learning and building their ability to self-regulate and cope with what is happening to them and around them. It is our goal to assist them in this and build independence by:

- Building child coping skills
- Treating all children with respect as a small person
- Assisting all children in understanding the consequences of their own behavior
- Searching for the cause of the behavior in order to determine how best to respond to the child (causes listed below)
- Providing kind, consistent treatment and effective interventions
- Consistently communicating with parents/guardians

By NOT:

- Using physical or verbal punishments
- Withholding food, rest or bathroom opportunities (anything related to their survival and care)
- Using abusive or profane language
- Any form of ostracism, including extended unattended time-outs
- Any form of public or private humiliation (this includes verbally shaming children)

Causes / Motivation of Behavior:

Access	To an item, to an activity, to an adult
Escape	From a task, a person, an environment
Attention	From an adult, a parent, a peer
Control	Over the situation; power struggle

Challenging Behaviors

Documenting Challenging Behaviors

Montessori staff will document and communicate all extreme challenging behaviors with the parent/guardian. If there are smaller challenging behaviors that staff notice throughout the day but are not extreme, staff will communicate those with the parent/guardian but may not document them unless the behavior(s) become concerning.

Challenging Behavior Language

“Let’s take a break” - When displaying challenging / disruptive behaviors, children are often encouraged to “take a break.” We encourage breaks as a way to assist children in calming down and coping with the emotion(s) they may be feeling. This provides children with the opportunity to reset and rejoin the class without being overstimulated or overwhelmed.

- Breaks will look a little different in every classroom, as they are set to what is developmentally appropriate for the children in that room.
- Often, staff will sit with or visit with the child while they are taking a break to assist with coping or communicating a plan of action for next time

Challenging Behavior Policy

If a pattern of aggressive or inappropriate behavior emerges in a particular child, the teacher, in consultation with their supervisor, will:

- Observe and document behaviors focusing on the environment, schedule, and teaching methods.
- After gathering more information center staff will meet with the child’s parents to discern how the Y and the parent can best improve the situation.
- Together, the MATY team and family will create a behavior plan to be implemented in the classroom utilizing the MATY Behavior Matrix, available below.
 - At the determined time, center staff and the family will meet to discuss any changes in behavior. If positive changes are seen then the plan will be continued. If no changes are seen, we will reevaluate and rework the behavior plan.
 - Center staff may seek additional support from the family and local child agencies (AEA, CCR&R, and the child’s physician) with parent permission as necessary.

Challenging Behaviors

- If through observation and evaluation, a more suitable environment is determined to be in the child's best interest or behavior is beyond the scope of the MATY program, we will move towards program dismissal or transitioning the child to another school.
- The plan will be reviewed after a determined amount of time.

Behavior Matrix:

<p>Behavior:</p>	<p>Center Policy: Multiple occurrences of a behavior in the same day are numbered by the bullet points.</p>
<p>Running - Running away from staff or out of the program area.</p>	<p>Running from Teacher:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2 Minute Break 1-2 Minute Break and Courtesy Message to Parents Call Home for Pickup <p>Running out of Program Area: Running out of the space that the class is in and/or running out of the building</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Call Home for Pickup
<p>Defiance - Telling teachers “no,” not following directions, all leading to disruption of the class</p>	<p>Teaching an unknown skill - if a child is unable to perform a skill, then staff will teach the child using hand over hand prompting and encouraging independence</p> <p>Redirection</p> <p>“Take a break” - in an area away from peers, until the child has a calm body and is ready and able to rejoin the group.</p> <p>If the child continues to disrupt the class and is requiring one on one attention for extended periods, a call will be made home for pickup.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Behavior:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Center Policy:</p> <p>Multiple occurrences of a behavior in the same day are numbered by the bullet points.</p>
<p>Biting Policy: Children bite for many reasons. Some of them include experimental biting, teething discomfort, becoming independent, learning to play with others and frustration related to ability to communicate, changes in home life, sharing or feeling threatened. MATY recognizes that biting can be age appropriate and we do our best to help prevent / teach children appropriate responses.</p> <p>Aggressive Biting - Biting motivated by attention or control; can be motivated by access to a preferred item</p> <p>Frustrated Biting - Biting motivated by access or escape</p>	<p>Staff respond to biting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separating the children • Taking the child who was bitten to wash the bite with water, apply an ice pack, and give lots of love. • Removing the child who bit to take a break and talk about their actions "we don't bite our friends, biting hurts." • Parents of both children will be notified with an incident/accident report. • Parents will be notified via phone call if a child is bit and the bite broke the skin. <p>Biting that occurs multiple times throughout the day will be handled in the following manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 Minute Break in the Classroom: "Let's take a break" - The child will be encouraged to take a break for 1-2 minutes(depending on age) in an area of the room away from peers. During this break, a staff may sit with the child and encourage appropriate communication and play. The staff will then help the child reintegrate into appropriate play with other children. • 1-2 Minute Break Outside of the Classroom: "Let's take a walk" - the child will go on a walk with a staff member away from peers to change the child's environment and help them to reset. • Courtesy Call Home: "Let's go work" - the child will take another break outside of the classroom with staff working on appropriate communication and play skills. Parents will be given a courtesy call. • Call Home for Pickup: "Come with me" - call parent for pickup and wait with child outside of classroom for parent to pick up.

<p style="text-align: center;">Behavior:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Center Policy:</p> <p>Multiple occurrences of a behavior in the same day are numbered by the bullet points.</p>
<p>General Aggression and Inability to be Redirected - Hitting, kicking, pinching, screaming, tantrums, climbing shelves, etc.</p>	<p>Redirection</p> <p>“Take a break” - in an area away from peers, until the child has a calm body and is ready and able to rejoin the group.</p> <p>If the child continues to disrupt the class and is requiring one on one attention for extended periods, a call will be made home for pickup.</p>
<p>Classroom Disruption - 5 or more minutes of continuously needing to be redirected back to what the class is doing.</p>	<p>Redirection</p> <p>“Take a break” - until the child has a calm body and is ready and able to rejoin the group.</p> <p>If the child continues to disrupt the class and is requiring one on one attention for extended periods, a call will be made home for pickup.</p>
<p>Property Destruction - Throwing items, kicking or throwing tables and/or chairs, knocking contents off of shelves and/or tables, intentionally ruining classroom materials</p>	<p>Immediate call home for pick up</p>

*If challenging behaviors are increasing, a call home for pick up has been made for the first time, or staff have other concerns, the MATY director may require a meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to establish a behavior plan before the child may return.

*MATY does reserve the right to send home for any other disrupting behavior that may not be listed above.

Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

**Thank You for Choosing the
Montessori at the Y!**