

PRATTVILLE YMCA YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

General Definitions

Types of Abuse

1. Physical abuse is injury that is intentionally inflicted upon a youth.
2. Sexual abuse is any contact of a sexual nature that occurs between a youth and an adult or between two youths. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or the other youth.
3. Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the youth's growth, development, or psychological functioning.
4. Neglect is the failure to provide for a youth's basic needs or the failure to protect a youth from harm.

Policies

This organization has zero tolerance for abuse and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of consumers in its programs. Any mistreatment or abuse by an employee or volunteer will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service and cooperation with law enforcement.

The organization has zero tolerance for abuse, mistreatment, or sexual activity among consumers within the organization. This organization is committed to providing all consumers with a safe environment and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one consumer by another consumer. Conduct by consumers that rises to the level of abuse, mistreatment, or sexual activity will result in intervention or disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program.

In addition, our organization will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, the organization will take the necessary steps to eliminate such behavior.

While the YMCA does not discriminate against individuals, it does require that in the performance of their duties they abide by the standards of conduct set forth by the YMCA.

Screening and Selection

Staff Screening and Selection

- a. The Prattville YMCA requires all applicants to complete a standardized application.
- b. The Prattville YMCA requires all applicants to read and sign a Code of Conduct which includes appropriate and inappropriate behaviors with youth. A signed copy of the Code of Conduct is kept on file for each employee.
- c. The Prattville YMCA requires a standardized face-to-face interview with all applicants who are being considered for employment. Documentation of the

interview is kept on file for each employee. Under unique circumstances, the interview may be conducted on the telephone or over the Internet.

- d. The Prattville YMCA requires three reference checks on all applicants to be completed.
- e. The Prattville YMCA conducts criminal background checks, child abuse and neglect registry checks and national sex offender registry checks on all new hires. We complete checks every two years on continuously employed staff and at time of rehire for all returning or seasonal staff.
 - The Prattville YMCA has a review committee responsible for responding to convictions revealed through background checks or any other concerns raised during the hiring process.
- f. The Prattville YMCA requires staff and volunteers to immediately notify their supervisor if they are arrested or convicted of a crime while they are a volunteer or employed by the organization.
 - The Prattville YMCA has a review committee responsible for using this information to determine if the person remains suitable for a position at the Prattville YMCA.
- g. The Prattville YMCA conducts drug screening upon hiring, at random and for cause. Refusing to submit to a drug test will result in employment termination.
 - Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working or volunteering hours is prohibited.
 - Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited.

Volunteer Screening and Selection

- a. The Prattville YMCA classifies volunteers into two categories, high access and low access volunteers.
 - High-Access Volunteers typically interact often or over an extended period with consumers. Such volunteers may be readily known to consumers under their supervision and to other volunteers and employees in the program. They may also supervise consumers with or without an employee present. High-Access Volunteers may carry a substantial amount of responsibility in a program serving consumers and such volunteers may have opportunities to develop relationships with consumers over time. Examples of High-Access Volunteers include a volunteer program instructor, a regularly scheduled volunteer coach, or a mentor for a consumer.
 - Low Access Volunteers typically interact with consumers only in line-of-sight of an employee and only infrequently. Such volunteer might be a parent/guardian who is helping at a one-time event, or someone who only works with adults, not youth. Low Access/Occasional Volunteers have limited access to consumers and have few opportunities to develop relationships with consumers over time. Examples of Low Access Volunteers include a one-time event volunteer (such as for a fun run), parents/guardians who assist on rare occasion in a program where their child is a participant, a volunteer who works strictly with adults outside of the organization's property, a volunteer who helps with business activities

and does not interact with consumers, or a board member. Low Access Volunteers are to be monitored by a staff member when youth are around the individual.

- b. The Prattville YMCA requires high access volunteers to complete a standardized application.
- c. The Prattville YMCA requires high access volunteers to read and sign a Code of Conduct which includes appropriate and inappropriate behaviors with youth. A signed copy of the Code of Conduct is kept on file for each volunteer.
- d. The Prattville YMCA requires three reference checks on all high access volunteers to be completed.
- e. The Prattville YMCA conducts criminal background checks, child abuse and neglect registry checks and national sex offender registry checks on high access volunteers. These checks are completed every two years on continuous high access volunteers.
 - The Prattville YMCA has a review committee responsible for responding to convictions revealed through the criminal background checks or any other concerns raised during the process.

Physical Contact

- 1. Staff and volunteers shall not abuse children including:
 - physical abuse – strike, spank, shake, slap
 - verbal abuse – humiliate, degrade, threaten
 - sexual abuse – inappropriate touch or verbal exchange
 - mental abuse – shaming, cruelty, etc.
 - neglect – withholding food, water, basic care, etc.

Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.

- 2. Staff and volunteers will conduct a visible health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented.
- 3. Staff and volunteers will respect children’s rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and their right to say no. Other than diapering and physical training, children are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit. In cases of accidental contact staff and volunteers shall notify the child’s parent or guardian and their supervisor of the accidental contact.

Appropriate Physical Interactions	Inappropriate Physical Interactions
Contact initiated by the participant such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side hugs • Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple” hugs • Pats on the shoulder or back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-frontal hugs • Kisses • Showing affection in isolated areas or while one-on-one • Wrestling/Piggyback rides/Tickling • Allowing a participant, older than kindergarten, to

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handshakes • High-fives and hand slapping • Pats on the head when culturally appropriate • Touching hands, shoulders, and arms • Arms around shoulders • Holding hands (with young children in escorting situations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sit on an employee or volunteer’s lap or to cling to their volunteer’s leg. • Any type of massage given by or to a participant outside of accepted and documented medical treatment. • Any form of affection that is unwanted by the participant or the employee or volunteer. • Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas that is outside authorized and documented personal care assistance
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Youth Supervision

1. Staff or volunteers shall never leave a child unsupervised.
2. Restroom supervision: Staff or volunteers will ensure:
 - That staff and volunteer proceed in groups of three or more (e.g., 1 staff and 2 children or 2 staff and 1 child) when using the bathroom.
 - No child, regardless of age, enters a bathroom alone on a field trip prior to the staff or volunteer checking the restroom for safety.
 - If staff or volunteers are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open.
3. Staff and volunteers shall conduct or supervise private activities in pairs - diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. When this is not feasible, staff and volunteers shall be positioned so that they are visible to others.

Verbal Interactions

1. Staff and volunteers must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Staff and volunteers will have age-appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child, other children, or staff from harm) and is only administered in a prescribed manner and must be documented in writing.
2. Staff and volunteers respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, or culture.
3. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one’s personnel life and/or any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
4. Staff and volunteers will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.

Appropriate Verbal Interactions	Inappropriate Verbal Interactions
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Encouragement • Praise • Strength-based conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving participants in the personal problems or issues of employees and volunteers • Secrets • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming, belittling • Oversharing personal history • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate participants. • Derogatory remarks about the participant or his/her family • Be mindful of comments relating to physique or body development
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One-on-One Interactions

1. To protect YMCA staff, volunteers, and program participants – at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they shall space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.
2. Staff and volunteers will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.
3. Staff and volunteers are not to transport children in their own vehicles without approval from supervisor.
4. Staff and volunteers may not date program participants in their program under the age of 18 years of age.
5. In those situations where one-on-one interactions are authorized, employees and volunteers should observe the following guidelines to limit the risk of abuse or false allegations of abuse:
 - Meet consumers in a public place where you are in full view of others.
 - Avoid physical affection during one-on-one interactions. If unavoidable, ensure physical and verbal interactions align with this organization’s established policies and are limited to the task at hand.
 - If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by.
 - Inform other employees and volunteers that you are alone with a consumer and encourage them to randomly drop in or pass by the interaction.
 - To the extent possible, ensure one-on-one interactions occurring behind closed doors are scheduled in advance or are communicated with the supervisor.
 - Ensure one-on-one interactions are documented, especially if behind closed doors. Keep documentation of these meetings (such as in shared calendar, case notes, etc.).
 - Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

Off-site Contact

Staff and volunteers may not be alone with children they meet at the YMCA or in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes youth that are no longer involved in the YMCA or a program at the YMCA, but you met the child due to your employment or volunteer work at the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to your home. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to administrator approval. This approval is done through the completion of an "Unsanctioned Childcare Form".

Electronic and Online Communication /Social Media

Social media contact or interaction with youth that violates the Prattville YMCA's Code of Conduct is prohibited. Prattville YMCA staff and volunteers shall not post pictures or names of children met in YMCA programs to social media without supervisor approval. Staff and volunteers are prohibited from accessing, displaying, or possessing inappropriate information or pornography on the organization's property or equipment. Reference our Digital/On-Line Policy (Appendix 2) for more detailed information.

Gift Giving

Staff and volunteers shall not give excessive gifts to youth or receive excessive gifts from youth.

Training

1. Staff Training Requirements
 - a. Staff are required to complete abuse prevention training as a part of their hiring process. Training must be completed prior to an employee being hired.
 - b. Staff are required to complete abuse prevention training annually.
 - Annual child abuse prevention training will be available during the month of January.
 - Staff is required to complete the assigned training and a brief quiz to document mastery. Upon completion of the training, staff must present documentation of completion of training to your supervisor by January 31st of each year.
 - Staff who fail to meet training requirements are subject to our progressive discipline policy which may include probation or termination of employment.
 - c. Staff are required to sign a statement that they have read and agree to comply with the organization's Youth Protection policies annually.
 - Staff will read and sign this statement during the month of January.
 - Staff who fail to read and sign this statement are subject to our progressive discipline policy which may include probation or termination of employment.
 - d. Staff will regularly receive information about safety at our organization within their individual departments.

Supervisor Training Requirement

- a. Supervisors will be required to complete additional training in effective supervision practices related to abuse risk management.

- Supervisors will complete this training within 30 days of employment.
 - Supervisors who fail to meet training requirements are subject to our progressive discipline policy which may include probation or termination of employment.
- b. Supervisors will complete additional training in effective supervision practices related to abuse risk management annually.
- Supervisors will complete this each January.
 - Supervisors who fail to meet training requirements are subject to our progressive discipline policy which may include probation or termination of employment.

Volunteer Training Requirements

- a. All frequent volunteers with access to youth must complete abuse prevention training prior to unsupervised access with youth. This training must be completed annually.
- Volunteers who fail to meet training requirements are subject to removal of the volunteer from his or her area of service.
 - Volunteers are required to complete the assigned training and a brief quiz to document mastery. Upon completion of the training, volunteers must present documentation of completion of training to your supervisor.
- b. All frequent volunteers with access to youth are required to sign a statement that they have read and agree to comply with the organization's Youth Protection policies annually.

Mental Health

Staff and volunteers must be free of physical or psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert shall be consulted.

Monitoring and Supervision

Facility Monitoring

Prattville YMCA supervisors and administrators are required to use a variety of methods to monitor on-site and off-site programs. This should include random/unannounced observations.

Employee and Volunteer Identification

Every employee and volunteer of this organization is required to always wear a name tag or staff/volunteer shirt while present at the organization's facility unless the organization determines that identification presents a safety risk to the employee or volunteer, or to the consumer(s).

Checking Members into a Facility

The Prattville YMCA routinely checks members and guests into the facility for facility usage.

General Supervision

1. The Prattville YMCA conducts a national sex offender registry check on all members. Offenders will be contacted in writing regarding their membership termination effective immediately.
2. The Prattville YMCA administrators closely monitor staff computer and Internet use, and we use technological protections such as filtering, firewalls, encryption, etc. The Prattville YMCA has a detailed Social Networking Policy that describes the standards of behavior in electronic and virtual forums. All staff and volunteers are required to read, sign and abide by this policy.
3. Where applicable, all our programs have specific youth to employee/volunteer ratios. Staff/volunteers under the age of 18 may count in supervision ratio as long as they are working alongside an individual 18 years of age or older who is physically present and supervising the minor employee. A supervisor should be contacted immediately if the staffing ratio is not correct so that corrections can be made immediately.

Gymnastics:	Lil'Cricket and Cricket Classes: 5:1 Gymnastics Classes: 8:1 Tumble Classes: 10:1 Gymnastics Team: 14:1
Aquatics:	Swim Lessons: 2:1 Swim Team: 25:2 Lifeguard Training: 10:1
Childcare:	Ages 2.5-3: 11:1 Age 4: 17:1 Ages 4.5-5: 18:1
Ages 5-7: 15:1	Ages 8-9: 20:1 Ages 10-12: 25:1
Fitness:	Child Watch: 7:1 Youth Classes: 8:1
Bradford Branch:	Youth Sports: 14:1 Camp 2:22: 15:1 Camp ABLE: 4:1 Parents' Night Out: 10:1 Homeschool PE: 15:1

4. The Prattville YMCA conducts new hire drug screening, random drug screening, and probable cause drug screening on all staff. Please see the drug screening policy for more details.
5. The Prattville YMCA has the Child Abuse and Prevention Committee review all accident reports quarterly to identify programs that appear to have increased problems or need additional attention; to inform policies; or to highlight training needs.

Monitoring Youth in a Facility

1. Youth under the age of 10 must be in a scheduled activity to be in the facility without supervision and all youth 10 years or older must be in either a scheduled activity or in an authorized area of the building for youth.

2. A parent or legal guardian must complete a membership application which includes identifying information, the youth's date of birth, and emergency contact information. In addition, all youth are required to check-in at the Member Services desk at the Branch when they are not at the YMCA for a scheduled program/activity.
3. All staff and volunteers will be able to be identified by a name tag or identifying clothing, so that youth can easily identify staff and volunteers.
4. Unauthorized areas of buildings will be identified with signage and locked when possible.
5. Authorized programs, childcare areas, and general member usage areas will be routinely and systematically checked by employees.
6. The Prattville YMCA staff and volunteers formally take attendance by name at the beginning of scheduled programs.
7. Prattville YMCA staff and volunteers will ensure that they are aware of how a youth will be picked up at the end of the program and ensure that youth exit the program as planned.
8. Our organization requires that staff supervising youth:
 - a. Always ensure line-of-sight supervision.
 - b. Designate specific individuals to monitor specific children or specific areas (zone supervision) so no child is left unwatched.
 - c. Pay especially close attention during free time activities or when children are mixed with groups of children from other groups.
 - d. Remove or strategically position items such as toy playhouses that may obstruct line of sight supervision.
 - e. Restrict access to only places that allow line of sight supervision.
 - f. Regularly taking attendance at activities.
 - g. Conduct regular face and headcounts.

Monitoring Risky Behavior in Program Activities

1. Bathroom Activities
 - a. Staff and volunteers should have their parents or guardian take youth to the bathroom during a program if they are present.
 - b. Staff and volunteers that take children to the bathroom must go in at least groups of three. This can include 1 adult and 2 youth or 2 adults and one youth.
 - c. Minimize youth of different ages using the bathroom at the same time.
 - d. Staff and volunteers should avoid using the bathroom at the same time as youth.
 - e. If assisting young youth in the stalls, the staff or volunteer shall keep the door to the stall open.
 - f. No child, regardless of age, enters a bathroom alone on a field trip prior to the staff or volunteer checking the restroom for safety.
 - g. When possible, send in only one youth at a time. If not possible, send in only as many youths as there are stalls.
2. Diapering
 - a. Placing the changing table in an open area where adult actions can be observed by others.
 - b. Encouraging that diapers only be changed when at least two adults, or individuals, are present.

- c. Require written documentation of diaper changing.
 - d. Employee/Volunteer should notify supervisors if employees notice anything out of the ordinary or concerning while changing the participant's diaper.
3. Locker Room Activities
- a. Childcare staff shall stand within earshot of the locker room when in use by youth.
 - b. Staff and volunteers shall intermittently and briefly check inside the locker room, so youth know the locker room is monitored. Each Branch/Program area has a designated plan for administering intermittent locker room checks.
 - c. The use of locker rooms by programs for youth of different ages at the same time is discouraged.
 - d. Staff and volunteers shall prohibit locker room horseplay such as towel snapping.
 - e. All staff and volunteers are required to watch for suspicious or inappropriate locker room conduct.
4. Transportation Activities
- a. Written parent permission from all youth on a trip is required. Staff and volunteers shall take these permission forms and medical releases with them on the trip.
 - b. Staff and volunteers are not to transport children in their own vehicles without supervisor approval.
 - c. Staff and volunteers are required to transport in groups- following the "rule of three" or more.
 - d. Staff and volunteers transporting children are required to submit a copy of your driver's license and will have a Motor Vehicle Record check conducted.
 - e. Employees are to have a list of the participants being transported. The employees take roll when boarding the bus, when leaving the bus, periodically throughout the trip, and then again when boarding the bus.
 - f. Specify employee-to-participant ratios. When possible, do not count the driver in the supervision ratio.
 - g. Employees are to sit in seats that permit maximum supervision. If possible, employees should not share seats with youth.
 - h. Discourage mixed age groups or developmental levels from sitting together. When possible, high-risk consumers are seated by themselves or near an employee.
 - i. Prohibit drivers from making unauthorized stops.
 - j. Document any unusual occurrences.
5. Playgrounds/Recreational Spaces
- a. If the space is too large or has obstructions, such as a building corner or a tool shed, limit the play area to where you can see. Identify in advance any blind spots or equipment that obstructs line of sight supervision and designate them off limits or plan regular walk throughs of those areas; station employees and volunteers near playground equipment such as tunnels and slides to reduce the appearance of privacy.
 - b. If you are working with a colleague, make sure you each know the area or which consumer you are watching.
 - c. Maintain a proper youth and staff/volunteer ratio based on the age of the children, the types of structures/equipment and the number of distinct activities occurring simultaneously.
 - d. If mixed ages are using the space at the same time, delineate boundaries so that different groups do not intermix.

- e. Employees and volunteers assigned to specific areas to supervise, i.e., zone monitoring.
 - f. Active supervision: employees and volunteers should position themselves to be able to see and hear all youth to whom they are assigned; anticipate what youth will do and redirect when necessary; listen and notice changes in sound or absence of sound.
 - g. Review boundaries and rules with youth prior to the activity, including that they are to always remain in line of sight of employees and volunteers and how to report inappropriate behaviors.
 - h. Staff and volunteers should stay alert. Do not get distracted visiting each other or looking at your phone.
6. Secluded areas
- a. Lock doors to unused or seldom used rooms and spaces whenever practicable.
 - b. Use signage to deter consumers from trying to access secluded areas.
 - c. Ensure secluded areas like stairwells and hallways are frequently monitored.
7. Quiet Time, Transition time and Free Time Procedures for Programs and Childcare
- h. Require youth to always remain in line of sight of employees and volunteers.
 - i. Specify the employee-to-consumer ratio based on program area.
 - j. Specify narrow authorized areas in the program areas.
 - k. Ensure that all employees and volunteers are assigned specific areas or groups to supervise ("zone monitoring").
 - l. Follow established organization bathroom policies and procedures.
 - m. Require periodic attendance checks for each age group.
 - n. Supervisors are to conduct periodic check-ins and sweeps of the entire activity area.
9. Off-Site Activities/Field Trips/Outings
- a. Visit the destination in advance, when possible, to assist with planning.
 - b. Supervisor approval is required for all off-site activities.
 - c. Written parental/guardian approval is required.
 - d. Determine appropriate employee/volunteer-to-consumer ratios before the activity and schedule employees and volunteers accordingly. Considerations for ratios should include:
 - age and number of consumers involved
 - special or unique consumer needs
 - the nature of the activity
 - e. Employees, volunteers, and participants are to be easily identifiable when feasible (using lanyards, badges, shirts, etc.).
 - f. Review rules and boundaries with participants prior to the activity, including how to report concerns.
 - g. Assign each employee or volunteer to a specific group of participants to supervise. Groups should be separated according to age, gender, and/or behavior of participants.
 - h. Each employee or volunteer must maintain a roll sheet listing all the participants in his or her group. Name-to-face roll checks should be conducted routinely and whenever moving from one activity or space to another.

- i. Specific bathroom and locker room procedures for employees and volunteers to follow, as applicable to the outing, ensuring minimum ratios can always be maintained.
- j. Ensure that employees and volunteers have a means to communicate with each other while off-site.
- k. Employees and volunteers should not use cell phones for personal business while supervising participants.
- l. Communicate an emergency plan for responding to incidents.
- m. Consider specific recommendations based on the location and type of activity (for example, amusement parks, water parks, arcades, etc.). If the trip is to a location where consumers will be interacting in a large space and/or it is not possible to assign specific employees and volunteers to specific groups of consumers, then:
 - Set boundaries at the location. Tell consumers where they may and may not go. Then post employees and volunteers around the boundaries and at the entrance and exit points.
 - Assign remaining employees and volunteers to monitor specific areas. Post at least one employee or volunteer near the bathrooms.
 - Participants should check in at designated meeting points at least once every hour.

10. Overnight Activities

- a. All overnight activities must be documented and approved in writing by the Program Director or Supervisor. Include a written/structured schedule of events.
- b. The Program Director or Supervisor should appoint a "lead" employee to supervise the overnight activity. A meeting with all employees/volunteers should be conducted to discuss the unique risks of overnight trips, unique elements of the specific overnight trip, and to review the specific policies and procedures that apply to the overnight activity.
- c. Provide parents/guardians with written information about the overnight activity. Information should include the location, duration, and type of activities to take place during the overnight. All parents/guardians must sign a permission slip for their consumers to attend the overnight activity.
- d. Determine the appropriate employee/volunteer-to-consumer ratios before the event and schedule employees/volunteers accordingly.
- e. Meetings with the group should be hosted in open and observable areas; meetings should not be hosted in employee or consumer rooms.
- f. Authorized areas within the facility must be clearly defined and explained to the participants.
- g. Assign each employee/volunteer to a specific group of participants to supervise. Each employee/volunteer should then maintain a roll sheet that lists consumers in his or her group. Head counts and roll checks should be conducted routinely throughout the overnight activity.

- h. Assign employees/volunteers to high-risk areas in your organization's facility, such as the bathrooms, entrances and exits, hallways, etc. If it is not possible to assign specific employees to these areas, assign specific employees to conduct periodic facility "walk-throughs".
 - i. With regards to sleeping arrangements, separate the male and female consumer into separate rooms and post employees at the entrances and exits to these rooms. If this is not feasible, separate males and females by as much space as possible.
 - j. For overnight activities, where sleeping is not part of the activity (i.e., a lock-in), require at least three employees to stay awake overnight.
 - k. Overnight stays at private homes are prohibited unless approved by the administration.
 - l. Physical boundaries at the off-site location must be clearly defined and explained to the consumer.
 - m. Assign participants to rooms based on gender and age. Employees/volunteers should not share rooms with participants.
 - n. Employees/volunteers are to conduct room checks at night.
11. Consumer Education
- a. The Prattville YMCA provides parents/guardians with information about how to protect their youth from abuse.
 - b. The Prattville YMCA provides parents/guardians and youth with ways to report concerns or to report allegations of abuse.
12. Monitoring During Swim Lessons
- a. Ensure instructors teach swimming lessons are in open, viewable swim areas under the supervision of other employees.
 - b. Monitor that interactions with consumers are following the organization's guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions.
 - c. Require instructors, when possible, to keep their hands above water and visible to others.
 - d. Require instructors, when assisting a child during the lessons, to explain out loud where they will touch the child – "I am going to put my hand under your back to help you float."
 - e. When possible, encourage parents/guardians to observe swimming lessons.
13. Monitoring the pool deck and any lounge areas
- a. Ensure all entrances and exits to the pool deck are appropriately and regularly monitored.
 - b. Monitor consumers to ensure they are following the organization's guidelines for appropriate interactions (including physical interactions, verbal interactions, and electronic communications).
 - c. Have a plan of action for responding to any deck changing (individuals changing on the pool deck and not in the appropriate locker room or changing area).

Procedures for Supervisors and Administrators Monitoring Employees and Volunteers at On-Site and Off-Site Programs

Our supervisors and administrators use scheduled and random observations of all programs, program locations and buildings; engage in spontaneous and scheduled conversations with

employees, volunteers, and consumers; conduct group and individual supervision and training meetings; and review program documentation, to ensure that safety standards are always in place. Supervisors are required to complete at least one documented program monitoring visit a month. These documented monthly visits will be collected and reviewed by the HR Director and/or CEO. Concerns/issues will be addressed immediately by leadership. The 11th Standard Committee will review these documented visits quarterly.

Supervisors are required to send a Youth Protection Survey to parents/guardians at the end of a program or at least twice a year for year-round programs. These surveys will be collected and reviewed by the HR Director and/or CEO and shared with the supervisors for that department and program. Concerns/issues will be addressed immediately by leadership. The 11th Standard Committee will review these documented visits quarterly.

Keep a record. Document your supervision visits. Include information like your arrival and departure times, which consumers and parents/guardians were present, and a summary of the information collected. Provide employees and volunteers with feedback about visits. Documentation will be reviewed quarterly in our 11th Standard Committee Meetings.

Vary your observation times. Do not develop a predictable pattern of observation. Drop in at different times each day. Occasionally leave and come back immediately.

Arrive before employees and volunteers. Check punctuality and the routine that employees and volunteers follow to prepare for the consumers to arrive.

Survey the physical environment. Is this a suitable location for the activity (e.g., size of area for number of consumers, ability to supervise all areas used by consumers, landscaping that may inhibit supervision)?

Watch activities. Are they planned and organized? Are the employees and volunteers actively involved? Ask to see the schedule of activities and compare with what is happening at a given time.

Observe bathroom and locker room activities. Observe bathroom and locker room activities to ensure that the employees and volunteers are complying with the established policies and procedures.

Observe employees and volunteers' interaction with consumers.

- Do employees and volunteers use the proper voice tone with consumers?
- Do employees and volunteers give praise to consumers?
- Do employees and volunteers follow the physical affection guidelines?
- Do employees and volunteers know the consumers by their first and last name?
- Do employees and volunteers sound enthusiastic?
- Do employees and volunteers set limits and boundaries with consumers?
- Do employees and volunteers interact with all consumers?
- Do employees and volunteers pay undue attention to any consumers?

Observe employees and volunteers' interactions with each other.

- Do employees and volunteers pay more attention to the consumers than to each other?
- Are employees and volunteers spread out and monitoring the entire facility?

- Do employees and volunteers know who is supervising which consumers?
- Do employees and volunteers communicate with each other when one must leave the area?
- Do employees and volunteers use polite voice tones with one another?
- Do employees and volunteers share responsibilities around the program?

Observe employees and volunteers' interactions with parents/guardians.

- Do employees and volunteers greet the parents/guardians?
- Do employees and volunteers know the parents/guardians by name?
- Do employees and volunteers provide adequate information to the parents/guardians?
- Do employees and volunteers ask the parents if they have any questions?
- Do employees and volunteers spend too much time with any parent/guardian?

Ask parents/guardians questions, such as:

- Are you satisfied with the care your child is receiving here?
- What can we do to make it better?
- Does your child ever say anything about his or her (title of employees and volunteers)?
- Have employees and volunteers ever contacted you or your child about anything other than the program?
- Do you ever have a chance to observe your child during the program?
- What does your child say about the time he/she spends here?

Ask employees and volunteers how they would respond to "what if" situations that you describe, such as:

- A consumer is not picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the program
- A parent/guardian confides in you that he/she thinks one of the employees or volunteers does not have appropriate boundaries with consumers.

Appropriate Discipline Practices

To the extent that discipline of a youth is warranted, discipline will be administered in a professional, fair, and consistent manner. Employees or volunteers engaging in any discipline beyond verbal redirection should document the behavior and disciplinary method. This organization retains the option to exclude participants from future programs based on disciplinary issues.

In all cases, employees and volunteers are prohibited from using physical contact for disciplinary purposes. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate consumer behaviors.

Below are some examples of appropriate and inappropriate disciplinary practices:

Appropriate Disciplinary Actions:

- Develop rules and consistently reinforce them.
- Remain calm but firm.
- Remind youth of appropriate actions
- Address their behavior, not their character.
- Loss of privileges.
- Consider program or activity restrictions, such as sitting out or suspension.
-

Inappropriate Disciplinary Actions:

- Hitting, Spanking, Shaking, Slapping, Shoving, Biting, Pitching

- Using extreme or unreasonable (in length or time) physical exercise as a consequence.
- Withholding food, light, or medical care
- Name-Calling, Shaming, Derogatory Remarks
- Pulling hair or ears
- Ostracizing
- Mechanical tape or rope restraints
- Angry yelling directed at the participant.

Responding

Responding to Suspicious or Inappropriate Behavior or Policy Violators of Staff and Volunteers

Because our organization is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for abuse, it is imperative that every staff member and volunteer actively participate in the protection of youth (past and present). In the event that staff or volunteers observe any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations on the part of other staff or volunteers or in the event that a report is made to a staff or volunteer by a current or past program participant, member, staff, or volunteer regarding a current or past employee or volunteer, it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations or reported allegation. All adult staff and volunteers are mandated reporters under State Law and the Safe Sports Act of 2018. All staff (including minors) and volunteers are required by the Prattville YMCA to make reports to their supervisor and failure to do so may be grounds for termination.

This organization takes every allegation of abuse or misconduct seriously and will fully cooperate with the authorities to investigate all cases of alleged abuse or misconduct. Employees and volunteers shall cooperate with any external investigation by outside authorities or internal investigation conducted by the organization or persons given investigative authority by the organization.

Cooperation with investigations includes, but is not limited to:

- Promptly acknowledging and responding to requests for information;
- Making oneself available for meetings with investigating officials;
- Providing full, accurate, and truthful information;
- Keeping confidential information learned or transmitted during the investigation, unless directed by legal authorities, and
- Preserving relevant information and documents.

An employee or volunteer's failure to cooperate with an investigation will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the organization.

Staff and Volunteer Response

1. In the event of a visual observation, immediately interrupt the behavior.

2. In the event of a report alleging abuse by a past or present volunteer or staff member, assure the individual disclosing the information that he or she was correct to tell you.
3. Report the behavior to a supervisor or director immediately. If the report is about a supervisor or director, contact the next level of management. Reports and grievances can be made to the HR Director or CEO by contacting 365-8852. The Prattville YMCA is required to make reports to the appropriate authorities within 24 hours.
4. Document the report but do not investigate.
5. Keep reporting until the appropriate action is taken.

Supervisor and Director Response

1. Report to the next level of administration and determine the appropriate administrator to respond to the concern. This shall include the HR Director and/or CEO.
2. The HR Director and/or CEO will gather as much information about the allegation as you can. For example, who made the report, who was allegedly abused, who was the alleged abuser, what was the nature of the alleged abuse, where and when did the alleged abuse occur, were there any other witnesses, etc.
3. Determine the appropriate response based on the report.
4. Speak with the staff or volunteer who has been reported.
5. Review the file of the staff or volunteer to determine if similar complaints were reported.
6. Document the report on the appropriate form.
7. If at any point in gathering information about a report of suspicious or inappropriate behavior, a concern arises about possible abuse, contact the state authorities and file a report. This report is required to be made within 24 hours. The report must be made to the Department of Human Resources and possibly the Center for Safe Sports.
8. If appropriate, notify parents and/or guardians.
9. Advise the person who reported the behavior that the report is being taken seriously.
10. Ensure transparent, compassionate, and confidential communication on an ongoing basis with affected individuals.

Organization Response

1. Increase monitoring or supervision of the staff, volunteers, or programs.
2. If policy violations with youth are confirmed, the staff or volunteer must be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and prosecution. Disciplinary action will follow the Progressive Disciplinary Process outlined in this manual.
3. If more information is needed, interview and/or survey other staff and volunteers or youth.
4. Offer resources to promote healing for affected individuals, which may include counseling;

5. The CEO is the only person who is allowed to speak to the media on behalf of the YMCA.
6. Alert others in the organization. The HR Director and CEO will work through the process of who, how, and when to alert others in the organization with legal guidance.

Responding to Suspected Abuse by an Adult

Staff and Volunteer Response to Abuse

1. If you witness abuse, immediately interrupt the behavior.
2. If abuse is disclosed to you, assure the individual disclosing that he or she was correct to tell you.
3. Protect the alleged victim from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse.
4. Immediately report the allegation or incident to your direct supervisor. Your supervisor will assist you in making the report to the proper authorities. This report is required to be made within 24 hours.
5. Be sure to document the incident, disclosure or any circumstances causing your suspicion of abuse. State only the facts.
6. It is not your job to investigate the incident, but it **IS** your job to report the incident to your supervisor in a timely manner.
7. Check back to make sure appropriate steps were taken. If not, report again to your supervisor or to the HR Director or CEO or proper state authorities.

Supervisor and Administrator Response to Abuse

1. First, determine if the youth is still in danger and if so, take immediate steps to prevent any further harm.
2. Contact the HR Director and/or CEO.
3. Gather as much information about the allegation as you can. For example, who made the report, who was allegedly abused, who was the alleged abuser, what was the nature of the alleged abuse, where and when did the alleged abuse occur, were there any other witnesses, etc.
4. Accurately record everything you learn in as much detail as you can. Remember your notes may be read by others. Stick to the facts.
5. Contact the appropriate local authorities. This includes the Department of Human Resources and possibly the Center for Safe Sports. Make sure you get the name and contact information of the person with whom you speak at the reporting agency. Follow up your phone call with a written report to the reporting agency. The report shall be delivered to the reporting agency in a format that ensures receipt of delivery.
6. If the alleged abuse involves a staff member or volunteer, suspend the accused staff or volunteer until the investigation is completed.
7. Ensure transparent, compassionate, and confidential communication on an ongoing basis with affected individuals.

Organization Response

Based on the information gathered, the following may be required:

1. Review the need for additional supervision.
2. Review the need for revised policies or procedures.
3. Review the need for additional training.
4. Offer resources to promote healing for affected individuals, which may include counseling.
5. Alert others in the organization. The HR Director and CEO will work through the process of who, how, and when to alert others in the organization with legal guidance.
6. In some cases, if the problem is recurring discipline may be required including not allowing one or both youths to return to the program.
7. The CEO is the only person who is allowed to speak to the media on behalf of the YMCA.

Youth-to-Youth Interactions

Youth-to-youth inappropriate behaviors can include inappropriate touching, exposing body parts, using sexualized language, making threats of sexual activity, engaging in sexual activity, aggressive physical contact, making threats of aggressive physical contact, cyber bullying, relational bullying (excluding or rumor spreading), name calling, and similar types of interactions. Bullying is determined by these three characteristics intentionality, repetition, and power imbalance.

Staff and Volunteer Response

1. If you observe inappropriate behaviors or inappropriate behaviors are reported between youth, you should immediately separate them.
2. If abuse is disclosed to you, assure the individual disclosing that he or she was correct to tell you.
3. Calmly explain that such interactions are not permitted and separate the youth.
4. If a youth shares you
5. Notify your direct supervisor.
6. Complete the necessary paperwork including what you observed and how you responded.

Supervisor and Administrator Response

1. The HR Director and/or the CEO will meet with the staff who reported the inappropriate behavior to gather information within 24 hours.
2. Based on the circumstance and if allowed by local governing authorities, the HR Director and/or CEO along with the program supervisor will provide opportunities to listen to affected youth and the parents/guardians.
3. Confirm that the youth involved have been separated or placed under increased supervision.
4. Review the steps taken by the staff on duty.
5. Review the incident report to confirm it is accurately and thoroughly completed.

6. Determine what actions should be taken to make sure there is no recurrence, including assessing the suitability of the program for the children involved.
7. Notify the proper authorities.
8. Ensure transparent, compassionate, and confidential communication on an ongoing basis with affected individuals.
9. Develop a written corrective action or follow-up plan in response to the incident.

Organization Response

Based on the information gathered, the following may be required:

Review the need for additional supervision.

1. Review the need for revised policies or procedures.
2. Review the need for additional training.
3. Offer resources to promote healing for affected individuals, which may include counseling.
4. Alert others in the organization. The HR Director and CEO will work through the process of who, how, and when to alert others in the organization with legal guidance.
5. In some cases, if the problem is recurring discipline may be required including not allowing one or both youths to return to the program.
6. The CEO is the only person who is allowed to speak to the media on behalf of the YMCA.

Youth with Specialized Needs in Programs

Supervisor Questions for Determining Whether a Program Fits a Youth's Specialized Needs

- Can my staff adequately supervise this youth without compromising the interactions with other participants?
- Has this participant previously posed a threat to others?
- Have we made a solid attempt to meet this participant's needs while ensuring the safety of others enrolled in the program?
- Does the child pose a risk to the safety and well-being of others?

If you and your staff answer these questions and conclude the program is not the right program for a particular participant, contact your Branch or Department Director. The Director and CEO will determine if a meeting should be scheduled with the participant's parents to discuss the conclusions and the youth's further participation in the program.

Internal Feedback Systems

This organization believes employees/volunteers/parents/consumers have valuable thoughts and insights to share regarding the workplace and our operations. Accordingly, this organization encourages employees/volunteers/parents/consumers to share opinions, suggestions, concerns, questions and/or grievances about our policies, personnel issues, and/or other workplace matters and the organization.

In general, the best person initially to bring opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to is the supervisor over the program/branch. However, to the extent the concerns relate to the direct supervisor, or to the extent an a person believes the direct supervisor did not fully address a matter, employees/volunteers/parents/consumers may direct their opinions, suggestions, concerns,

and/or questions to the next level of management or directly to the HR Director or CEO at 365-8852. The Prattville YMCA also has an online grievance process. The process can be anonymous if desired by the employee/volunteer. The link is: <https://forms.gle/Up2WNME2ULAE8SG28> . A report can also be made on our website at prattvilleymca.org under "Our Y".

To remedy concerns that appear to have been ignored or unresolved after initial reporting, utilize this formal grievance procedure. This procedure provides for a timely, thorough, and objective investigation of the following concerns:

1. Wages, hours, and/or conditions of employment/volunteer work (as applies);
2. Harassment or discrimination;
3. Other violations of law or policy;
4. Retaliation; and/or
5. Whistleblower complaints.
6. Youth Protection concerns.
7. Facility concerns, etc.

Investigation

The direct supervisor, HR Director and/or CEO will thoroughly investigate the issues raised in the grievance and will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties involved to the extent possible by law. All employees must cooperate with the investigation.

If the organization determines a violation of policy or law has occurred, the organization will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Retaliation

This organization strictly prohibits retaliation against employees/volunteers for reporting, filing, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by the organization or a federal or state law enforcement agency or court.

Employees/volunteers should report any suspected retaliation to their direct supervisor or another supervisory level employee immediately after becoming aware of it. Any report of retaliatory conduct will be objectively, timely and thoroughly investigated. If a report of retaliation is found to be valid, the organization will take appropriate remedial action, up to and including discharging the employee/volunteer(s) responsible. This organization will not retaliate against any employee for raising a complaint and will not knowingly permit retaliation by management or other employees/volunteers.

Administrative Processes

New Program Approval

To protect our employees, volunteers, and our consumers, we want to be sure that we are making informed and thoughtful decisions about new programs, services, and activities. To that end, an employee or volunteer who wishes to start a new program or service must follow the process of submitting the following information to the Director of that Branch/Department. The information will then be shared with the CEO for final approval.

- General Program/Activity Information
 - o Name of the program.
 - o Brief description of the program.
 - o Purpose/goals of program.

- o New or returning program.
- o Ages of consumers served.
- o Estimated number of consumers to be served.
- o Individuals responsible for the program, and who will serve as the director or supervisor.
- o Start and end date of the program.
- o Location of the program and program schedule (where and when).
- o Estimated number of employees, volunteers, and/or third parties needed [insert ratio description].
- ◇ Is the organization responsible for screening and selection?
- ◇ Is the organization responsible for training?
 - Appropriateness
- o Does the program fit within the goals of the organization?
- o Has background research been completed?
- o Has a needs assessment been completed?
- o What is the approximate annual budget needed for the operation of the program?
- Program Procedures

Provide a monitoring and supervision plan for the program. Include specific risks and how they will be addressed, based on the following questions:

- o Will transportation be provided? If so, what are the transportation guidelines?
- o What are the bathroom procedures?
- o Does the program involve overnight stays? If so, submit a plan for lodging arrangements, sleeping assignments, and a monitoring and supervision plan.
- o Does the program include aquatics? If so, what are the procedures for monitoring locker rooms and changing areas? If the aquatic program is off-site, has the off-site checklist been completed?
- o What are the procedures for managing additional high-risk activities during the program?

Working with Third-Parties

Third-party and external organizations or individuals providing services to the Prattville YMCA's consumers or using the Prattville YMCA's facilities fall within the scope of the organization's abuse prevention policies. Third parties are expected to adhere to all applicable abuse risk management policies including notifying the Prattville YMCA of any reports or suspicion of adult to youth or youth on youth abuse.

No Access Third-Party

A no access third party utilizes or rents our facilities during a time that YMCA youth are not in the facility. No access third-parties will be given the Prattville YMCA Code of Conduct and a representative of that organization/group/company will sign an Acknowledgement Form. This documentation will be kept on file by the HR Director.

Low Access Third-Party

A low access third-party utilizes or rents our facilities during a time that YMCA youth are in the facility, but the third-party individuals do not have unsupervised access to these youth. A low access third-party will be given the Prattville YMCA Code of Conduct and a representative of the third-party will sign an Acknowledgement Form and ensure that all individuals who will have supervised access to youth have reviewed the Code of Conduct. This documentation will be kept on

file by the HR Director. YMCA staff will maintain awareness and supervision of the third-party while they are in our facilities.

High Access Third-Party

A high access third-party has unsupervised access to youth in our facility. A high-access third-party training and the Prattville YMCA Code of Conduct and a representative of the third-party will sign an Acknowledgement Form that ensures that all individuals who will have unsupervised access to youth have reviewed the Code of Conduct, received youth protection training, and have had a background check that includes a sex offender registry check. This documentation will be kept on file by the HR Director.