

the Y Ballarat – Parent and Student Code of Conduct Policy (Early Years)

Policy Number	Date Approved	Date Last Amended	Status
CP001-POPR	4/3/2020		Final

1. PURPOSE

This policy will outline how parents/guardians/students' access and involvement is to be provided.

2. SCOPE

The scope of this Policy applies to all Board members, Sub Committee members, staff and volunteers. This policy applies to The Young Men's Christian Association of Ballarat Inc and related entities and the Ballarat YMCA Youth Services. For the purposes of this document we refer to these as the YMCA. All Procedures must conform to this Policy.

This code of conduct applies to all adults, including parents/guardians, students, extended family, visitors and other Y association members while involved in any activities related to the Early Years' Service. This policy supports the staff and volunteer code of conduct policy as the primary code of conduct for anyone entering our Early Years' Service facility as per the child facing status definitions and contractors risk matrix within our safeguarding children policies and procedures. These sit outside of the terms "paid employment" and "volunteer".

3. POLICY

This service provides an open, welcoming and safe environment. We believe that all parents/guardians/ and students play a crucial and valuable role in the effective operation of the service and in enriching the children's program.

This code of conduct outlines the type of practice we require all adults who enter the service or participate as a helper to follow. It will assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, families and staff. It gives a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals. The approved provider has a legal responsibility to provide a safe and happy environment for all children and staff.

This service is committed to:

- Promoting and providing opportunities for parents/guardian's involvement in all components of the program delivery.
- Recognising parents/guardians are the first and continuing carers and educators of their children.
- Listening to parents/guardians' knowledge of their child to ensure the program provided is responsive to the individual needs of each child.

- Fostering a spirit of cooperation between the parents/guardians of the children attending the service, the staff and the parent advisory group (PAG).
- Compliance with all funding and legislative requirements.
- Supporting a culture which is sensitive to the cultural and social background of families attending the service.

While the service acknowledges parents/guardians/students access and involvement is an integral part of the operation of the service, duty of care to the children is of prime consideration and it will take precedence over parents/guardians participation in the program if this is deemed to place children or staff at risk.

4. Procedures

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all parents/guardians, students, extended family, visitors and other association members while involved in any activities related to the Early Years' Service, adhere to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interaction and communication with one another, with staff, and with children at the service.

5. General guidelines for interactions

- **Safety:** Comply with all policies and procedures of the service. These are displayed at the service. Be aware of emergency evacuation procedures.
- **Ethical conduct:** Always act in the best interests of children, their families and users of the service.
- **Support:** Work with staff in a cooperative and positive manner.
- **Communication:** Use courteous and acceptable verbal and nonverbal language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language.
- **Respect:** Value the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitute harassment or discrimination.
- **Confidentiality:** Comply with the services Privacy Policy. Respect the confidential nature of information gained, or behaviour observed, whilst participating in the program, in relation to other children and adults.
- **Children's program:** If participating in the program seek guidance and direction from staff. If unsure ask staff for further information. Behaviour guidance of the children is the responsibility of staff, immediately refer any issues or concerns related to managing children's behaviour to staff.

Procedure for dealing with; and the consequences relating to a breach in the code of conduct:

On notification of a potential breach of the code the Nominated Supervisor will activate the complaints Policy: The Nominated Supervisor will contact the area director/children's service manager who will recommend a course of action which may include, but is not limited to:

- A first and final warning meeting/letter being issued to inform the relevant person/s of the outcome of the investigation and that another breach of the code of conduct will not be tolerated
- A restraining order (via the legal system) being sought against the relevant person. Success in obtaining a restraining order will then prevent this person from attending the service to deliver or collect children or to participate in the program
- The withdrawal or suspension of a child's place in the program due to a serious breach of the code of conduct. This action will only be taken if no other alternatives are deemed appropriate by the approved provider.

Emergency situations

In an emergency situation, where it is believed that staff, children or other parents/guardians are at immediate risk (for example violence has been threatened or perpetrated) the staff members and/or approved provider involved need to be able to act quickly and decisively. The Nominated Supervisor and all staff are authorised to contact the local police to advise them of the current situation.

The approved provider is delegated the authority to determine suitable actions, which may include, but not be limited to:

- Applying immediately for a restraining order (via the legal system)
- Suspending the relevant person/s from attending the service until we have investigated and decided on an appropriate course of action. If required, notify the parents/guardians that alternate arrangements will need to be organised for the delivery/collection of their child to ensure that the suspended person does not attend the service.
- Suspension of a child's place in the program due to the suspended person still attending the service after they have been advised not to.

The approved provider and staff have a duty of care to the children attending the service. Employers have a responsibility to provide, as far as practicable, a safe workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and/or harassment.

A code of conduct provides guidelines for desirable and appropriate behaviour of members and reflects the values and beliefs of the service. The code is designed to provide principles and practices to guide adult behaviour.

Standards of Conduct

Behavioural practices to follow in relation to children

- Be a positive role model at all times
- Always speak in an encouraging and positive manner

- Listen actively to children and offer empathy, support and guidance where needed
- Regard all children equally and with respect and dignity
- Physical contact with children other than your own should be avoided unless directed by staff or if the safety of a child is compromised (this should be reported immediately to staff)
- Inform children if physical contact is required for an activity and ask them if they are happy to proceed
- All interactions with children should be undertaken in full view of other adults
- Never do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do themselves, for example, assisting them in going to the toilet or changing their clothes.

In relation to other adults (including staff)

- Use respectful, encouraging and accepting language.
- Respect the rights of others as individuals.
- Give encouraging and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Accept staff decisions and follow their directions at all times. Speak with the staff member if you have a problem complying with any directions.
- Be aware of routines and guidelines for children's play within the service, abide by them and seek advice from staff when unsure.
- Be aware of emergency evacuation procedures.
- Refrain from public criticism of children and adults at the service.
- Any issues or grievances should be raised as outlined in the Complaints Policy.
- Under NO circumstance should a child, parents/guardians or member of staff be approached directly in a confrontational manner.
- Smoking is prohibited on the service property at all times.

In general

- The service and staff are responsible for the children that are enrolled and signed in, that is those children attending the children's program.
- Parents/guardians, and other persons attending with children not enrolled in the program, are responsible for supervision of their children at all times. This is particularly important, for example, during outdoor times as the climbing equipment may be set-up for older children and could be hazardous for younger siblings participating in the program.
- Adults are responsible for all children who accompany them, for example while participating in the program, drop off and pickup time, ensuring they do not inhibit or disrupt the program in any way.

- Parents/guardians must clean up after their children not enrolled and signed into the program and leave all areas as they were found.
- Staff may ask parents/guardians to remove children not enrolled and signed into the program if they are disturbing the program.
- Parents/guardians will also be responsible for their children's behaviour when attending other activities and the child is not signed into the program, for example working bees, family nights.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Department/Role	Responsibility
Approved provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring this policy remains up to date and adheres with any current legislation.
Nominated Supervisor Teacher in Charge Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all parents/guardians, students, extended family, visitors and other association members are provided with a copy of this policy upon orientation. • Collecting and filing the completed and signed agreements (Appendix 1). • Implementing the standards of conduct as set out in this policy. • Respecting the individual needs, cultural practices and beliefs of families in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal. • Working with colleagues, EYM, PAG and parents/guardians to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback. • Providing guidance to parents/guardians and students through positive role modelling and, when appropriate, clear and respectful directions. • Ensuring all students, parents, guardians and visitors at the Early Years' Service have a current working with children check or VIT card and have provided a copy to the Early Years' Service to place on file. (this excludes special persons events e.g grandparents where the event is contained within 1 room, all people are visible by staff and the event lasts no longer than 2hrs. If the event is not contained within one room you are required to include within your risk assessment an in depth detailed response of how staff will provide appropriate supervision and maintain a safe environment for all (To be emailed to area directors for prior approval) • Ensuring practices and procedures are in place to ensure that parents/guardians, students, extended family, visitors and other association members whilst at the service, are not placed in a situation where they are left alone with a child. For example, only staff are to attend to the toileting needs of children (other than direct parent/guardian). Parent helpers should remain in a visible location and ensure they are never one on one with children.

Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing the service with a copy of your working with children check (WWCC) card. • Abiding by the standards of conduct as set out in this policy • Ensuring that no photo/video will be taken of any children (other than their own) whilst at the service. • Reading the Code of Conduct Policy and signing the agreement letter (Appendix 1).
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7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Child Safe Environment Policy*
- *Staff and Volunteers Code of Conduct*
- *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: www.unicef.org/crc*

8. Approval and Review

Approved By: Executive Management Group
Meeting Name: Executive Management Meeting
Meeting Date: 04/03/2020
Effective Date: 04/03/2020
Review Date: 04/03/2021
Procedure Owner: Early Years Manager
Contact Details: carina.oneil@ymca.org.au

Amendments

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
2	25/02/20	Carina O'Neill	Updated Policy

