

YWCA School-Age childcare

School-Age Childcare & Summer Camp parent handbook

**Ministry Licensed
Before & After School Care,
Summer Camps,
P.A. Day, March Break,
& Holiday Camps!**



@ywcasthomaschildcare



YWCA School-Age Childcare & Summer Camp Program Handbook

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YWCA School Age Childcare Parent Handbook

Thank you for choosing the YWCA for your childcare needs. We hope that your child(ren) will enjoy what our Educators have planned, helping them to feel engaged, able to express themselves, have a sense of well-being, and know they belong here! It is our intent to ensure that your child receives the best quality childcare. Your input is important to us so please feel free to speak with Educators at your program site or contact the YWCA office at 519-631-9800.

Please take the time to read this handbook to ensure that you fully understand the guidelines for our programs.

SECTION 1: THE PROGRAM & THE PEOPLE

THE YWCA MANDATE

The YWCA of St. Thomas-Elgin is a registered not-for-profit organization whose Mission Statement is as follows: Providing leadership, advocacy, opportunities, and a voice - empowering women, gender diverse people, and their families every day! With this statement we affirm our commitment to St. Thomas and Elgin County. The YWCA offers childcare, settlement services, housing, poverty reduction programs, skills development and training, aquatics, and children's leadership programs.

EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN THE OPERATION OF CHILDCARE

The YWCA, both locally and nationally, has been committed to providing quality childcare for many years. Nationally, it is known that the YWCA provided childcare as early as the 1880's. In St. Thomas, children's programs have been part of our programming since 1903.

The YWCA of St. Thomas-Elgin's primary purpose is to empower women, gender diverse people, and children by providing quality, caring and innovative services. Many of our programs are geared specifically to meet the needs of women, children and families in our community.

LICENSING

A license must be obtained from the Ministry of Education to operate a school age childcare program. The Child Care and Early Years Act, and its accompanying regulations, form the basis of the licensing procedure. Upon successful completion of annual licensing inspections, a license is issued to each program by the Ministry of Education.

The YWCA has opted into the Canada Wide Early Learning & Childcare System (CWELCC). The goals of the CWELCC system are to lower childcare fees for families with children ages 0-6 and promoting a wage floor to recognize Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECES). Other focuses of the system include collaborating to increase program spaces for children.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Our Childcare Programs offer "hands-on" experiences for children within a warm, relaxed environment. The program is designed with flexibility and creativity that is responsive to complement each child's day. These programs offer opportunities for decision-making and growth towards increased independence and responsibility. We follow Ontario's provincial pedagogy called "How Does Learning Happen?" This philosophy prompts the Educators to incite curiosity and wonder, and encourage the four key foundations of Belonging, Well-being, Engagement, and Expression. We are recreation-based program that works to add in additional educational benefits to our School Age participants. **Most of all, we want to support them in feeling safe, seen, special, and supported.**

OUR PROGRAMS: WHAT TO EXPECT

YWCA School Age Childcare Programs and Summer Camps are thoughtfully designed around each child's interests and developmental needs. Educators observe children during play and use these observations to create engaging learning invitations that spark curiosity and build on emerging skills.

Our program environments are rich with open-ended play opportunities that encourage creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration. Children explore a variety of experiences including arts and crafts, music, drama, science, technology, and construction. We encourage programs to build in ways to create a sense of community within their sites, embracing our differences, celebrating special holidays, or learning about each others' families and cultures. You may see our Educators and programs participating in YWCA initiatives such as Orange Shirt Day, Pride Month, Black History Month, Diwali, Pink Shirt Day, National Week Without Violence, or other significant days of remembrance. We support age-appropriate discussions about diversity, inclusion, gender-expression, and being good humans and caretakers of our planet.

Outdoor play is a valued part of our daily routine. Children take part in both group and individual activities that promote physical development and a connection to the natural world. Please ensure your child is dressed for the weather, as outdoor play is included every day.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Before and After School Programs: 7:00 a.m. until school begins and after school until 6:00 p.m. Please understand that the transfer of care cannot take place prior to 7:00 a.m. for safety and insurance purposes.

Summer Camps: 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Please understand that the transfer of care cannot take place prior to 7:30 a.m. for safety and insurance purposes.

Contacting Programs: You will be provided your program's phone number at the start of each September and June for Summer Camp. **Families are encouraged to send a message via Digibot to contact their program.**

The program's designated School Age Childcare Manager will communicate which school entrance to use to access program. TVDSB has asked us to ensure that families do not access children's classrooms or areas of the school not utilized by program during pick up and drop off times.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAM EDUCATORS

Each program room will be staffed by a Registered Early Childhood Educator, Child and Youth Care Practitioner, Recreation and Leisure expert, Developmental Service Workers, staff with educational experience, or have alternative demonstrated experience working with children and/or transferable skills. Site Supervisors and Educators must provide a Criminal Reference & Vulnerable Sector Check, a valid certificate of training in First Aid and CPR Level C and a current Food Handlers certificate. All staff will be trained in YWCA policies and procedures and must participate in regular Professional Development.

VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENT PLACEMENTS

The YWCA welcomes volunteers and placement students to some programs periodically throughout the year. All staff and volunteers are aged 18+. No volunteers or students will be counted in program ratio or have unsupervised access to children. Occasionally, supervisory staff will attend programs to assess student or volunteer's progress. We believe in supporting volunteer or placement-based educational opportunities to support our college students in building their skills as they transition to employment. They are supervised by mentors and Childcare Managers.

FULL DAY SCHOOL AGE AND SUMMER PROGRAMS (P.A. DAYS/ WINTER HOLIDAYS/MARCH BREAK)

The YWCA offers full-day programs during some non-instructional days and school breaks. These programs offer a variety of activities that ignite children's creativity and social-emotional intelligence including dramatic play, sensory learning experiences, group games, community outings, and much more. Our full-day programs are typically held at Mitchell Hepburn Public School and McGregor Public School, operating from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Registration for these full-day programs occurs in September each school year. Registration is not guaranteed, and is subject to availability, location, enrollment, and resources to accommodate children. Space is first offered to the families presently utilizing our Before and After School Programs, before being offered to families who have accessed our full day programs.

The YWCA also offers an 8-week, full-day programs in the summer months of July and August. Our Summer Camps are typically held at Mitchell Hepburn Public School and McGregor Public School, operating from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Registration for Summer Camp begins in February of each year with space being offered to families presently utilizing our Before and After School Programs, before being offered to previous camp families, and then the public. Weekly themes serve as fun and flexible starting points to inspire programming. Educators follow the children's lead and adapt activities to reflect their interests—even if that means exploring flower crafts during Space Week! This approach keeps the experience dynamic, inclusive, and responsive to each group of Campers.

For more information regarding Summer Camp, [please turn to Section 7.](#)

2025-2026 Pre-Planned Closures (No B&A Programs or Camps will be offered on these days):

- Labour Day – Monday, September 1, 2025
- Thanksgiving Day – Monday October 13, 2025
- Winter Break – December 22, 2025-January 2, 2026
- Family Day – February 16, 2026
- Good Friday – Friday April 3, 2026
- Easter Monday – Monday April 6, 2026
- Victoria Day – Monday May 18, 2026
- Civic Holiday – Monday August 3, 2026

2025-2026 Non-Instructional Day Camps (operates out of Mitchell Hepburn PS and McGregor PS)

- September 2, 2025*
- October 10, 2025
- November 14, 2025
- January 30, 2026
- April 24, 2026
- May 29, 2026
- June 26, 2026*

***Please note:** We do not offer B&A or Full Day Camps on the last P.A. Day in June, prior to Canada Day, nor any prior to the official start of school. We do not offer camps on Holidays as mandated by TVDSB. Other exemptions may apply.

FIELD TRIPS (NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS & CAMPS)

Please note, as of this time (January 2026), no bus-required field trips will occur. There may be walking trips on Non-Instructional Days and during Camps.

MEDIA USE IN PROGRAM

We understand that technology is a growing part of children's lives, and we approach its use with intention and care. Our primary focus remains on hands-on, interactive experiences that foster social and emotional development.

When appropriate and approved by the School Age Childcare Managers, limited access to iPads or video may be offered and always under Educator guidance. Smart boards may also be used for interactive group activities, such as dance or games. Music or special movies played in programs is thoughtfully selected by Educators to support a positive and playful environment.

CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS

Please label all of your child(ren)'s belongings. Lunch bags and water bottles must be labelled with your child(ren)'s name on them. Please do not send toys, makeup, or special items from home, unless it is part of your child's plan for accommodation. While we do our best to protect items from being lost or damaged, we cannot take responsibility for personal belongings. No electronics will be permitted in program.

To support your child's comfort, and follow school required guidelines, we ask that one pair of indoor shoes be kept at the program. This is also to support in case of an emergency evacuation. Water shoes or waterproof sandals are optional in Summer for water play; otherwise, children will be barefoot when on grass.

CHILD ABSENCES

All absences and late arrivals must be reported to the Digibot portal prior to 8:30 a.m. each day. This helps us ensure your child's safety. There are no refunds for sick days. Fees reserve your child's spot in the program. For extended absences due to illness, a doctor's note is required to request a refund. As a non-profit, all fees directly support operating costs which are planned in advance.

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

We understand families may arrive after our program begins. Effective January 1, 2024, all licensed childcare programs must have a safe arrival and dismissal policy with steps in place when a child does not arrive to program as expected. We have a legal responsibility to confirm the whereabouts of each program child.

When a Child Does Not Arrive to Program as Expected (AM Program)

Educators will contact parent/guardian(s) by phone or text message for any child if the child hasn't arrived by 8:30am and prior notice of his/her absence has not been received. Then, Educators will contact the school office to see if an absence has been received by 8:40am. Finally, Educators will call parent/guardians AND contact all emergency contacts if the child hasn't arrived by 9:00am (or the start of school for later start schools such as New Sarum, Southwold, etc.)

When a Child Does Not Arrive to Program as Expected (PM Program)

Educators will contact parent/guardian(s) by phone or text message if a child has not arrived within 10 minutes of the program's start-time, and prior notice of his/her absence has not been received. Educators will contact emergency contacts by phone or text message if a child has not arrived within 10 minutes of the program's start-time, and prior notice of his/her absence has not been received. If a child cannot be located within 20 minutes and has not arrived at the program by the time parent/guardian(s) had expected, OR if there is no parental response, Educators will call the police.

When a Child Is Not Picked Up From Program As Expected (PM Program)

If you're going to be late to pick up, please call the program as soon as possible. At 6:05 p.m., Educators will contact listed parent/guardian(s) by phone or text message if a child is not picked up from program. If no contact is made, emergency contacts and approved pickups will be contacted by 6:20 p.m. At 7:00 p.m., Family and Children's Services will be notified. A late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged after 6:00 p.m., billed through Digibot.

During Summer and Non-Instructional Day Camps, this process begins at 5:35 p.m. Approved pick ups are contacted at 5:55 p.m. and at 6:30 p.m. Family and Children's Services are notified.

SAFE TRANSFER OF CARE

AM Program

To ensure a safe arrival, children must be dropped off directly to the program room and acknowledged verbally by an Educator. Hallway, front door, or parking lot drop offs are not permitted unless a Special Arrangement Form is in place. Yes, even when they're older kiddos! To help with a smooth transfer of care, please budget an additional 5-10 minutes during your child(ren)'s first week in program. Slower drop offs support children who may be feeling anxious about a new beginning.

In the morning, children are supported by Educators in moving from the Before School Program to school-supervised outdoor play. We work closely with families and schools to help each child feel secure and confident during transitions.

PM Program

In the afternoon, children in grades 1-6 are expected to go directly to the After School Program. Children in Kindergarten will be supported by a YWCA Educator and will personally walk with them from their classrooms to the After School Program to ensure they feel safe and guided.

Changes to Routine or Schedule

To support smooth communication between YWCA educators and TVDSB school staff, we send monthly B&A attendance rosters to TVDSB admin staff on the first of each month. Changes to your child's schedule must be requested *and* approved via Digibot prior to the requested date.

AUTHORIZED PICK-UPS

Safety counts. Only individuals age 14 or older and listed on your child's registration profile on Digibot are permitted to pick up your child. If an unauthorized person arrives to pick up, your child will not be released until Educators receive permission from a primary parent/guardian. Be prepared to provide identification to confirm your identity at pick up.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT FORMS

These forms are used for recurring extracurricular activities within the school or for special departure/arrival arrangements. Such situations could be attending the Breakfast club, sports practice, Bible Club, etc. A special arrangement form may also be used for children 10 or older who wish to sign themselves in/out of program on their own. Please connect with your child's program Educators if you wish to complete a Special Arrangement Form.

Special Arrangement Forms must be approved by the Childcare Manager before they can go into effect and is **not** guaranteed. Parents/Guardians may appeal denied requests with the Director of School Age Childcare. For *occasional* changes that are not routine, a written note should be provided to the Site Supervisor at least 24 hours in advance.

CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS

We know.... This isn't easy for anyone. The more information you can share comfortably, the better. We require legal custody documentation to enforce custody agreements. Without official documentation, we cannot deny access to a parent listed on registration. We will attempt to contact the primary parent and encourage the other parent not to proceed with pick-up if custody is unclear.

IMPAIRMENT POLICY

If a parent/guardian arrives impaired by drugs or alcohol, staff will take steps to ensure the child's safety. This may include calling a taxi, notifying another approved adult, or involving police, if necessary, as per YWCA policy.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION SITES

Your child's safety is our top priority. In the rare event that their school becomes unsafe during program hours, our Educators will follow our Emergency Management Policy and escort the children to a designated nearby location. Families will be contacted as soon as the group is safe and settled. Educators and our on-call School-Age Childcare Manager will call you to let you know exactly where and when to pick up your child. Attendance will be confirmed before children are released into your care.

Evacuation sites vary by school and include churches, community centers, and public buildings close to each school. Please reach out to your Site Supervisor if you'd like a copy of your school's designated evacuation site.

GUIDING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

We believe in guiding children with kindness, patience, and respect. Every child is unique, and we consider each situation thoughtfully. Strategies we use include redirection, natural and logical consequences, modelling, and offering choices. We set reasonable, age-appropriate expectations and always strive to create a program environment that is caring, inclusive, and respectful. We will not tolerate bullying, harassment, or harmful behaviour. When a child purposefully harms another child or adult, the child will be sent home. Interventions possible include restorative justice, involving behavioural supports such as All Kids Belong, connecting with classroom Educators, send homes, and suspension. If a child's actions repeatedly jeopardize the safety or well-being of others, we may need to discuss alternate care options with families. We apply a trauma-informed lens and an equity-based approach when deciding next steps and consequences. Please know that we strive to work in partnership with families and aim to support children's growth in every way possible.

We have consent to speak with TVDSB school staff regarding program needs, behavioural communication, etc.

SUPERVISION AND ATTENDANCE

Our programs use consistent visual and verbal check-in systems to keep accurate records of who is present. Every child is actively supervised at all times by a YWCA Educator. While we provide warm, attentive care, we are not able to offer one-on-one supervision.

Important!

Sometimes, the transition between school and programs like ours can be confusing for children. There are some different rules. For example, children cannot be alone in the halls or left unattended at any time during program time. Regardless of the age of your child, please let them know they must take a buddy to the washroom, grab a water bottle from inside the school, or get their forgotten towel. Unsupervised children are not permitted and will result in us filing what is called a "Serious Occurrence" with the Ministry of Education, even if it's a just a child who was out of sight for a moment.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is part of our daily routine (weather permitting). Please ensure your child comes dressed for the conditions—warm coats, snow pants, and mitts in the winter, for example—and with two pairs of shoes (one for indoors, one for outdoors). All children spend a minimum of 30 minutes outdoors each morning and afternoon in our before and after school programs and two or more hours per day on Non-Instructional Days, Summer Camps, March Break, Etc. We will reduce/suspend outdoor play when temperatures are below -15°C (still air) or -17°C (wind chill). During hot weather, outdoor play is limited during midday heat, high UV (6+), or humidex of 30+.

During Summer Camp and warm weather in the Spring and early Summer, please send labelled sunblock, hats, sunglasses, and appropriate footwear. Mornings can be cool, so layering is encouraged. We require a minimum of 30 SPF for sun protection. Educators will support your child's application of sunscreen if needed. A consent to apply products like sunscreen is required in Digibot.

We believe children of this age grouping are able to determine if their body feels too hot, or too cold. Unless your program hears from you specifically, we allow children in our programs to remove their outwear when needed so

as to not overheat. We believe it helps encourage the child to pay attention to their body's messages and supports their autonomy. We know extenuating circumstances apply. We encourage you to speak with your program Educators if you have specific questions or needs.

WHAT IS RISKY PLAY?

At our organization, we believe that learning happens through doing, and sometimes that means taking age-appropriate risks. Risky play refers to exciting, challenging types of play that help children test their limits, explore their abilities, and gain confidence. It might include activities like climbing, balancing, rough-and-tumble play, or using real tools under supervision.

We always ensure that these experiences happen in a safe, supervised environment where Educators guide children in understanding how to manage risk thoughtfully and responsibly.

Why is Risky Play Important?

Risky play helps children:

- Build physical skills like balance, strength, and coordination.
- Develop problem-solving abilities and decision-making confidence.
- Learn about boundaries, safety, and consequences.
- Grow emotionally by facing fears and gaining independence.

We follow best practices and provincial guidelines to provide opportunities for safe, supportive exploration while prioritizing each child's well-being.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

The YWCA will ensure all children in the School Age Childcare Program are treated with dignity and care. The following practices are strictly prohibited:

- Corporal punishment of any kind.
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a chair, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking the exits of the childcare premises for the purpose of confining a child or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as an emergency procedure.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Any Educator or volunteer suspected of engaging in these practices will be immediately removed from contact with children pending investigation. Employment may be terminated based on the outcome. The Director of School Age Childcare will determine appropriate reporting required including Child and Family Services or the College of ECES. Failure to report a colleague or supervisor committing an act of the above may result in disciplinary measures up to and including termination

SECTION 2: REGISTRATION, WITHDRAWALS & ADMINISTRATION

HOW TO REGISTER- NEW FAMILIES

Registering for our programs is a two-step process, as mandated regionally.

- Step 1: Create an account and register your child via the OneHSN website <https://onehsn.com/stthomas>. Be sure to include Family Name, Child's Name, Full Contact Information, Date of Birth, Requested Start Date, and identify any special or unique medical, behavioural, or developmental needs your child may have to be successful in our programs.
- Step 2: You will be contacted by our Childcare Family Enrollment and Financial Administrator within one week of completing your registration on OneHSN to continue to the next step.

Digibot Parent Portal

When a spot is available, you will be required to begin a **Digibot Parent Portal Profile**. This software supports childcare registration, billing, and children's documentation pertaining to medical, behavioural, emotional, or developmental requirements. All required documentation needs to be completed in full at this time.

Unfortunately, due to the number of families needing childcare, failure to complete documentation in the required timeframe will result in your application being removed and placed at the bottom of the list. Regular email and phone correspondence is used during this time. We encourage you to use an auto-reply on your email if you are on vacation during the timeframe you are applying for care so this can be considered out of compassion when possible. There are no fees to apply or remove yourself from a waitlist.

Child Advocacy and Special Needs Support

At YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin, we are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all children. When registering, we ask families to share any special needs or supports their child may require to be safe and successful in a group setting. The more information we know, the better as it helps us ensure each child receives the care and attention they deserve. We believe in working together—with families and with community partners like *All Kids Belong*—to support every child in the way that best meets their individual needs.

A School Age Childcare Manager will contact you to discuss your child's needs and explore available resources. This early communication helps prevent enrollment delays while we arrange appropriate supports.

If needed, an **Individual Support Plan (ISP)** or **Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs** will be created *before* your child begins in our program. These plans must be completed, approved, and reviewed by staff in advance to ensure your child is fully supported. Please allow up to two weeks for this process. During this time, your child's registration will remain active on the waitlist queue. Unique consent forms are required for this process. Throughout your enrollment with us, regular updates to medical documents, authorizations, support plans, etc. will require your approvals, consent, and involvement. Please support us with a timely response to facilitate this process. Please note that ISPs are **NOT** attached to your child's school record.

Changes in Registration Information

To keep your child safe and ensure we can reach you in an emergency, it's important that we have accurate and up-to-date information. Please ensure your child's information is always up to date.

Examples of changes could include:

- Family contact details
- Guardianship arrangements
- Medical information or new medications
- Emergency contacts
- Parent/guardian workplace details

RE-REGISTRATION FOR EXISTING FAMILIES

In June, existing families are offered their spot in September, provided that they confirm their need for care via Digibot. An email will be sent by our Childcare Family Enrollment and Financial Administrator when it is time to confirm or surrender your spot(s). Please ensure all your family's information is kept up to date on your child's Digibot Profile. Children with Individualized Support Plans and Individualized Medical Plans will have their needs reassessed prior to the change over from program to program (i.e Summer Camp to B&A, etc.). No new registrations will occur between August 15- September 15 while we prepare our programs for the new school year, as well as June 15-July 15th for Summer Camp. Your family's space in program is always dependent upon enrollment, program resources, etc. Existing Before and After School families are granted advance registration in Summer Camp programming, but space is not guaranteed. We do our best to accommodate younger siblings of enrolled children.

WAITLIST POLICY

At YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin, we understand that access to childcare is vital to family well-being. We are committed to processing registrations as efficiently as possible and minimizing wait times wherever we can. Program availability is based on our licensed capacity and Educator staffing levels. All families placed on a waiting list are contacted following our waitlist policies.

When Space is Not Immediately Available

- If space is unavailable, the Manager will first explore options within existing licensed capacity, such as shifting children between age groupings if appropriate.
- Priority is given to individuals in full time (either morning or afternoon) daily schedules.
- When a family wants full time care, any presently registered part-time families currently enrolled may be given "first right of refusal", and the option to:
 - Upgrade their schedule to full-time, or
 - Withdraw to open a full-time space for another family.
- This review process follows a chronological order based on registration date.

Waitlist Management

- Children are placed on a waitlist in order of registration date.
- Families will be contacted as soon as space becomes available.
- Parents/guardians may request information about their child's position on the waitlist. This will be shared in a way that protects the privacy of all families.

Special Considerations

In some situations, priority may be given:

- To existing families when adding a sibling to care.
- To YWCA Educators and Staff requiring care for their own children to maintain program staffing and operations.
- In exceptional ethical circumstances, as jointly determined by the YWCA and the local Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM).

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to support every family in accessing quality care.

WITHDRAWAL AND CHANGE POLICIES (EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2026)

Before and After School Programs

One month's notice is required for all B&A withdrawals, reduction of services, or changes. A \$50 administrative fee will apply per change/withdrawal/reduction, per child. No refunds will be issued if a child is dismissed for contravening program guidelines.

Summer Camp Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawals from registration until April 1:

- A \$50 administrative fee (non-base fee) will be charged for each change made per child. The spot will no longer be considered yours and will be offered to the next family on the waitlist.

Withdrawals after April 1:

- Registrations are locked in. Full fees for the selected week(s) will be charged. No administrative fee applies. Change requests (e.g., switching from Week 1 to Week 4): May be accommodated if space allows. Each change incurs a \$50 administrative fee per child. No refunds will be issued if a camper is withdrawn by the parent/guardian or dismissed for contravening camp guidelines.

P.A. Days, Holiday Camps, and March Break Camps

A minimum of one month's notice is required to withdraw from a P.A. Day Camp without being charged full fees.

Withdrawal requests submitted more than one month before the scheduled P.A. Day Camp:

- A \$50 administrative fee (non-base fee) per child will apply. Your child's spot will be released and offered to the next family on the waitlist. No additional camp fees will be charged.

Withdrawal requests submitted less than one month before the scheduled P.A. Day Camp:

- Registrations are considered final and locked in. Full camp fees will be charged for that day. No administrative fee will apply. The camp spot will remain reserved for your child, whether they attend or not. If your child will not attend, you must mark them absent in Digibot.

No refunds will be issued if a camper is dismissed due to a violation of camp guidelines. We appreciate your understanding as we work to ensure stable, high-quality programs for children and families in our community.

Clarifying Questions

What is the difference between a withdrawal, a change, and a dismissal?

A withdrawal is a full cancellation of care for a specific program (for Summer Camp, this means withdrawing from a full week). A change means adjusting your registration, such as switching to a mornings only, switching to part time, a different week or location. A dismissal occurs when the YWCA terminates care due to a specific reason, such as contravening program guidelines.

If I register for three weeks of Summer Camp and want to change them, is that one change or three?

It is considered one change if all adjustments are made at the same time. If more than one child is involved, the administrative fee applies to each child's registration.

If my child breaks their leg and can no longer attend, will I receive a refund?

With medical documentation from a qualifying professional, discretionary exceptions may be considered.

My work schedule has changed, and I no longer need care. What happens?

For Summer, if it is before April 1, you may withdraw and receive a refund minus the \$50 administrative fee per child. For before and after school care during the school year, you provide us with one month notice. The \$50 administration fee applies.

For Summer Camp, if we have already registered but later learn we will be away on vacation after the withdrawal

deadline, what happens?

Your child is welcome to attend if your plans change, but refunds are not available after April 1.

When do I pay?

Fees are charged on the first of the month. Camp fees are charged on July 1st for July weeks and on August 1st for August weeks. For registration that begins halfway through a month, speak with our Family Enrollment and Financial Administrator for billing date.

I want to switch from a licensed YWCA Summer Camp to GirlSPACE Camp. Is there a penalty?

Yes. A \$50 administrative fee applies, and families must pay any difference in program cost.

What about families receiving subsidized childcare?

Children's Services at the City of St. Thomas has its own rules regarding cancellations. These particular guidelines are still under review as of January 15, 2026

If you have questions regarding withdrawals or changes, please contact Danielle Montgomery at dmontgomery@ywcaste.ca.

PROGRAM FEES and PAYMENTS (Base Fees)

All payments are made through Digibot via credit card or direct bank withdrawal. Fees are charged on the 1st of each month (or next business day). No refunds are given for inclement weather. We have switched Registration for Non-Instructional Days (P.A. Days, Holiday Camps, March Break) is available in Digibot as dates are released, typically in September. Spaces are limited and subject to additional fees. Program fees may change without prior notice; however, families will be notified of any updates. All families, including those with full subsidy, must have a payment method on file prior to registration.

PART-TIME FAMILIES

Part-time care is available for families who need regularly scheduled part-time childcare, depending on space. A minimum of 10 days per month is required, and families must choose their scheduled days. Schedule changes must be submitted in Digibot by the 15th of the prior month (e.g., August 15th for changes in September). If another family requires full-time care and your child occupies a part-time space, you'll be offered the opportunity to switch to full-time. If you decline, two weeks' notice will be provided to make alternate arrangements. Missed days due to illness or weather are not eligible for refunds or rescheduling.

Please note: Part-time care is not available during camp programs. Full-week registration is required.

Refunds and Credits

- Refunds for school closures (e.g., labour action or government-mandated) will be issued as credits toward future childcare costs.
- Refunds for reductions or changes in care are applied as credits.
- If you are withdrawing completely from all programs, circumstantial refunds will be processed individually.
- Refunds are **not** provided for inclement weather closures.
- If the YWCA chooses to close a program due to internal circumstances, a credit would be provided.
- Consideration for medical-related refunds or credits may be granted with appropriate documentation.

SUBSIDIZED CARE

We support families in accessing subsidized childcare. You may be eligible for partial or full subsidy. Please contact St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services at 519-631-9350 (option 3) to apply.

PARTIALLY SUBSIDIZED PAYMENTS

Families with partial subsidy (as determined by St. Thomas Children's Services) will receive an invoice within the first

five days of the following month. Payment is processed on the 20th via automatic withdrawal or credit card.

NSF OR DECLINED PAYMENTS (Non-Base Fee)

A \$35 fee will be charged for NSF withdrawals. Declined credit card transactions will be automatically re-attempted by our fee processing system and NSF can (sometimes) be avoided. Fees must be paid within seven days to maintain enrollment. After two NSF occurrences in a school year, advance payment may be required to continue care. Communication with our Childcare Family Enrollment and Financial Administrator is always encouraged as we know a number of unique situations arise and we want to be as supportive as we can while maintaining standards.

BILLING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CO-PARENTS AND SHARED CUSTODY

Our Finance Department is able to make supportive billing arrangements with your family. We are able to separate both parents' billing by percentage paid or schedule-based options. The Finance Department cannot provide information regarding billing or schedule details to parents negotiating custody or make changes to established billing or scheduling arrangements without dual consent. If possible, please negotiate and pre-plan your registration, scheduling, and payment arrangements with your co-parent prior to enrollment in our programs for ease of service use.

LATE FEES and PICK-UP POLICY (Non-Base Fee)

A late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged after 6:00 p.m., billed through Digibot. Repeated late pickups will result in a follow-up by the Childcare Management Team. If you're going to be late, please call the program as soon as possible. At 6:05 p.m., staff will begin calling listed guardians. If no contact is made, emergency contacts and approved pickups will be contacted by 6:20 p.m. At 7:00 p.m., Family and Children's Services will be notified.

During Summer, this process begins at 5:35 p.m. Approved pick ups are contacted at 5:55 p.m. and at 6:30 p.m. Family and Children's Services are notified.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

When the schools are closed (system-wide) due to bad weather, we close our B&A School Programs. If the school closes during the day, it is the responsibility of the parent to make arrangements to have their children picked up. Please listen to your local radio station for school closure information.

When buses are delayed or cancelled, our B&A School Programs will still run as scheduled. Our staff make every effort on inclement weather days to be on time and ready to run program as scheduled. On inclement weather days, we truly appreciate your consideration for staff safety when they are traveling a distance to open program.

There are very rare circumstances when we cannot open programs in the morning due to extreme weather or staffing shortages. In these circumstances, we will make every effort to notify you as quickly as possible. This is facilitated over email through Digibot, so **please make a habit of checking email in the morning particularly during winter months**. If it is the YWCA's decision to close a program due to staffing shortage, or any other reason, you will be credited for this closure. If it is the decision of the school board, full fees will apply.

Section 3: PARENT & FAMILY COLLABORATION and FEEDBACK

COMMUNICATION and RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships between Educators, Children, Families, and Managers are very important to us. We believe it's the foundation of providing quality childcare. We think it starts with the relationship between Educators and Caregivers. Please, come into our programs! You are welcome and you belong. Get to know the activities your child is taking part in, the Educators, the environment, etc. Share about your child's morning, how they slept, or if there are any significant transitions or changes coming up for your child. If there is a time you are concerned about the care your child is receiving in our programs, please lean into those relationships and engage your program Educators in discussing your challenges. With a strong, communicative relationship, we can provide a better quality of care for you and your family. You should also be able to navigate any misunderstandings, concerns, or problems.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The more involved our families are, the better we can get to know the children and meet participant and family needs in the program. We also encourage participation through sharing talents or expertise with the children. We encourage all families to provide ongoing feedback and complete the annual program evaluation survey to support quality in our programs.

We value our parents' expertise when it comes to their child's care. There are times when families may disagree with strategies or policies of the YWCA. We ask all families to respect the learning environment and handle any disagreements kindly and out of earshot from all program children. If there are repeated or severe instances of disrespect, verbal abuse, derogatory comments etc. the Director of School Age Childcare may intervene with interventions such as requiring alternative pick-up or drop-off plans or discontinuing care.

Educators are not permitted to contact or "friend" families on social media. Instances where families and Educators may have an existing dual relationship will be documented as such.

DIGIBOT

Our use of Digibot Go allows us to document the highlights of our childcare programs in a new way for us. These updates or notifications are sent to your email. Currently, Digibot is **NOT** an app, it is a web link. While Digibot shared to us they are working on a Parent App, we encourage you to turn your email notifications on to be informed of new pictures, events, notices, newsletters, etc. that are sent from Digibot. If you would like tips on how to maximize and ease your use of Digibot, please contact your Program Educators or the School Age Childcare Manager supporting the program.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Please follow our [YWCA Childcare Instagram Account](#) and our [YWCA Childcare Tiktok](#) for fun updates, agency-wide highlights, local initiatives and more! We love it when families engage with us online and share our program excitement with their followers.

ADDRESSING MATTERS OF CONCERN

At YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin, we are committed to working in partnership with families, school boards, staff, and community partners to support the individual needs of each child. We believe that strong, respectful communication fosters a nurturing and inclusive childcare experience. Our approach is collaborative, open, and rooted in care for every child and their family.

OPEN COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

- Educators are the first point of contact for families and are encouraged to share daily updates and invite regular feedback to ensure each child's experience is positive and enriching.
- When situations arise during the program, the Educator involved will speak with the parent/guardian the same day whenever possible. These conversations will take place privately, out of earshot of the children.

- Families are invited to share their thoughts through our annual program surveys.
- To facilitate open communication, families are welcome to share concerns verbally or in writing first with program staff, then, the Site Supervisor. If problems persist, please reach out to the appropriate Childcare Manager. If issues are still left unresolved, please phone the Director of School Age Childcare. They will involve the Executive Director as necessary.
- Any care-related concerns shared with Educators will be documented using a “Supplemental Log” and stored with the child’s registration and incident reports.
- We encourage face to face or phone communication to resolve concerns whenever possible to lessen chance of misunderstandings via email.
- Posting negatively about childcare programs on social media, local “Chatter,” “Happenings,” or other Parent Groups, etc. can be upsetting for organizations to read because we care so much about the work we do. It can lead to Educators feeling hurt, embarrassed, or disconnected from families. Truly, if you have a concern, we want to help. We kindly request that you problem solve directly with Educators, Site Supervisors, Managers, or the Director. If you are still unsatisfied with the information provided, we are happy to provide you with other focused avenues you can use to advocate for your child’s needs. Protecting the trust between families and the YWCA is important to us.

Serious Concerns

- If a concern involves the safety, wellbeing, or unfair treatment of a child, the Educator must notify their Site Supervisor and Childcare Manager as soon as possible, or immediately after their shift. If the Manager is unavailable, they must contact the Director of School-Age Childcare or the designated On-Call contact.

Response Timelines

- Concerns brought to Educators will be acknowledged immediately and addressed within two business days.
- If a concern remains unresolved, families may contact our head office, where a Childcare Manager will be happy to assist. The Manager will follow up within two business days.
- If further support is needed, the Director of School-Age Childcare will contact the family within two business days of being notified. If necessary, the Director will escalate the matter to the Executive Director.

Handling and Documentation

- All concerns are treated with respect, care, and confidentiality.
- The staff member addressing the concern will keep detailed notes of the issue, follow-up steps, and resolution. These notes are stored in the child’s electronic file.
- Childcare Managers and the Director of School-Age Childcare reserve the right to protect the privacy of families who bring forward concerns.
- Managers may address issues using a variety of strategies such as general reminders, individual feedback, coaching, policy reviews, training, or resource sharing.

Duty to Report

- All individuals, including staff and members of the public, are legally required to report suspected child abuse or neglect.
- If a parent/guardian shares concerns about possible abuse or neglect, they will be advised to contact the local Children’s Aid Society (CAS) directly.
- We understand that at times, our duty to report seems unnecessary in the eyes of a family. However, due to our legal obligations, we do have to fulfill these requirements. There are times when Family and Children’s Services instruct us not to inform the family that we have made a report of concern. We are obliged to follow their instructions. Please note that none of our staff want to risk the relationships between families and our teams, but because we believe in supporting children’s safety, we are required to report any concerns. These are including but not limited to: verbal reports, suspicious injuries, children’s expressions of fear, patterns of serious behaviours, inappropriate touching, sexually explicit artwork, stories, or play schemas, etc.

Section 4: HEALTH AND WELLNESS

ILLNESS

To help keep everyone healthy, please keep your child home if they're feeling unwell—especially if they have a fever, stomach flu, or contagious illness. We understand that minor colds can be common. For gastro related illnesses, we ask your child is symptom free for 24 hours, or 48 hours if there is an active outbreak. If your child's ability to participate during program changes, we will communicate as necessary. For illnesses, infections, and diseases, such as pink eye, Fifth's Disease, Hand-Foot-and Mouth, etc; we follow Southwestern Public Health's guide to exclusion and return requirements.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION

We're happy to support children who need prescribed medication during program time, provided we have the proper documentation. To bring medication into program, we require a completed Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs and an Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration via Digibot. This must be completed prior to the medication entering program.

Accepted Medications:

Medications must:

- Be prescribed by a healthcare provider **and** have a Drug Identification Number (DIN).
- Be brought to program in its original container. (*Pill boxes, loose pills, or syringes are not accepted.*)
- Have a clear and readable label that includes: Your child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage of the medication, the date of purchase and expiration, if applicable, and instructions for storage and administration. **Unclear or damaged labels will not be accepted.**
- Be brought daily to program and shown to the Educators upon arrival.

If the medication instructions are vague (i.e label for puffer states "2-6 puffs as needed"), we will ask for more specific instructions to safely administer this medication (i.e. administer 2 puffs; wait 15 minutes; if symptoms persist, repeat up to six puffs. Then call ambulance and parent.) Whenever possible, we ask that medications be administered at home.

Children who arrive without the required documentation or the medication itself will unfortunately not be able to enter program due to medical liability.

ASTHMA AND EMERGENCY MEDICATION

Children who use inhalers can keep their inhaler in their backpack in a labeled pouch. Those backpacks must be stored in the designated space in the child's program room. Any other medications are stored in the lockbox on site, and out of reach of children. During transitions or off-site activities, Educators will ensure the child has access to their medication at all times.

ANAPHYLACTIC PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

The YWCA follows Sabrina's Law and implements procedures to protect children with life-threatening allergies. EpiPens are always carried on the Educator's person.

Reduce Risk of Exposure:

- Parents must update their child's file on Digibot to record any allergies.
- Allergy warnings are posted prominently.
- Allergy lists are kept in food prep, eating, and program areas as well as the daily binder for use when outdoors or in case of emergency.
- Parents are notified about banned allergens from an email sent by the Program Manager when an anaphylactic allergy is declared.
- Foods and materials that may trigger life-threatening allergies are eliminated from programming.

- Lunches are checked daily for allergens; affected items are removed and replaced.

Communication Plan:

- Individualized plans are created at registration and reviewed by all staff.
- Parents are notified of allergens in the environment.
- New educators review and sign off on all anaphylaxis-related plans before working unsupervised.

Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures:

- Parents/guardians complete an Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan with medical information and authorization on Digibot.
- Plans are posted and stored securely; staff are trained on emergency response. Staff sign off on the review.
- Life-saving medications are kept accessible, out of reach of children, and worn by staff

Training:

- All educators, volunteers, and students are trained in First Aid CPR and follow instructions provided by family re: devices.
- All bi annual Trainings include recognizing symptoms (e.g., swelling, difficulty breathing, rash) and using EpiPens.

IMMUNIZATION

We encourage all families to follow the advice of [Southwestern Public Health](#) regarding suggested immunizations scheduled for your child. During cold and flu months, we encourage families to receive annual flu shots to help slow the spread of communicable illnesses. As your record of immunization is on-file with TVDSB, we do not require you to submit your immunization records. However, should there be an outbreak of a particular illness, we may need to contact you regarding your child's immunization status. If there is an outbreak (i.e. [measles](#)) and your child is not yet fully vaccinated or if you are following the medical exemption process with the school board, your child will need to follow the exclusion requirements as determined by Southwestern Public Health. No refunds are processed for these absences.

HEAD LICE

We know that head lice can happen to anyone. Please let us know right away if your child has head lice so we can take respectful, preventive steps to notify other families. We ask that children return to program only once they are completely free of lice and nits. If lice are discovered during program hours, we'll notify you privately at pickup.

EMERGENCY EXPENSES

Any emergency medical expenses (e.g., ambulance fees) are the responsibility of the parent or guardian. We understand this can be stressful and are here to support you in any way we can.

SNACKS AND NUTRITION

We provide a nutritious morning and afternoon snack in all our programs. We encourage children to participate in our group snack times. A rotating snack menu is posted and/or available on Digibot.

BAGGED LUNCHES FOR FULL-DAY PROGRAMS

On full program days (e.g., P.A. Days, breaks), please send your child with a nutritious, allergen-free lunch in an insulated bag. Please **label** the bag with their name.

To keep everyone safe:

- Please include an ice pack.
- Send hot foods in a thermos, if needed.
- Avoid all peanuts and tree nuts.
- We may advise you if there are additional allergens outside of nuts that needed to be avoided.
- Children are not permitted to share food.

Educators will check lunch bags to ensure safety. If an allergen is found, it will be bagged and sent home with a note, and a safe alternative will be offered. If a lunch is forgotten and we can't reach a parent or guardian, we will provide a healthy substitute, so your child doesn't go hungry.

SECTION 5: PROGRAM STATEMENT

YWCA CHILDCARE PROGRAM STATEMENT – January 2026

At the YWCA, we provide leadership, advocacy, opportunities, and a voice—empowering women, gender-diverse people, and their families every day. Through our childcare and education programs, we bring this Mission to life by delivering engaging, reliable, and inclusive care that supports every child’s well-being, belonging, and learning. We are committed to best practices, strength-based approaches, and continuous improvement as part of our Strategic Plan priority of Quality Programs and Services.

Access to high-quality, affordable childcare is both a social and an equity issue; it directly shapes who is able to work, learn, and fully participate in community life. When childcare is inaccessible due to cost, availability, or barriers faced by families experiencing poverty, disability, newcomer status, or systemic discrimination, it deepens existing inequalities. Equitable access to childcare strengthens family well-being, supports children’s development, and creates more inclusive communities where every family has a fair opportunity to thrive.

At the YWCA, we are dedicated to supporting every child’s learning, development, health, and social skills. Our Educators build caring, responsive relationships that foster a sense of belonging and promote active learning through play, exploration, and inquiry. We view all children and families as capable, curious, and competent partners in the program.

Our approach is grounded in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)* and guided by *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)*, which emphasizes four foundational conditions for learning: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression. These conditions inform all areas of our program and are reflected in the approaches described below.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

YWCA St. Thomas Elgin rests on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, Attiwonderonk, and Mississauga peoples, which are covered by the Upper Canada Treaties—specifically Treaty 2 (McKee Treaty, 1790) and Treaty 3 (Between the Lakes Purchase and Collins Purchase, 1792). This area is also covered by the Dish with One Spoon wampum, under which multiple nations came together in peace to care for the land and the resources of the Great Lakes. Today, Elgin County is also bordered by the communities of Munsee-Delaware First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Oneida Nation of the Thames. We are grateful to work on this land as we strive to build a more equitable and just community.

Promoting Health, Safety, Nutrition, and Well-Being

We prioritize children’s physical and emotional well-being as the foundation of learning.

Approach:

Educators provide a safe and clean environment, aligned with all health and safety requirements. Nutritious meals and snacks follow Canada’s Food Guide, and fresh drinking water is always available. Educators support each child’s emotional well-being through responsive care, promoting self-care and self-regulation. Mental health is supported through resources for staff and families, and community partnerships are leveraged when additional help is needed. The YWCA aims to provide care through a trauma-informed lens, supporting self-determination and agency. We support community development initiatives led by the YWCA and lend our voices to other areas of advocacy and need. Our teams work hard to enhance processes and systems while removing barriers to participation through attentive staffing, examining enrollment practices, adapting support plans, and enhancing Educator training.

Supporting Positive and Responsive Interactions

Strong, positive relationships are essential to healthy development. We believe in creating and supporting a sense of community.

Approach:

Educators foster meaningful, respectful, and responsive interactions with children and families. Using a gentle tone, role modelling, and a strength-based approach, Educators co-regulate with children, guiding them in expressing their feelings, recognizing others' emotions, and developing empathy. Interactions are grounded in care, and children are encouraged to take safe risks and explore their environment confidently.

Our Educators and programs often participate in YWCA initiatives that challenge social issues and norms. Some examples include housing and homelessness prevention initiatives, Orange Shirt Day, Pride Month, Black History Month, Diwali, Pink Shirt Day, National Week Without Violence, and other significant days of remembrance. We highlight the work we do as an agency with equity-deserving individuals and encourage families, Educators, and stakeholders to acknowledge and become involved in community social issues. We look for opportunities to listen to and elevate the voices of equity-deserving communities. We support age-appropriate discussions about diversity, inclusion, gender expression, and being good humans and caretakers of our planet.

Encouraging Exploration, Play, and Inquiry

We believe that play is the natural way children learn best.

Approach:

Educators design environments and experiences that reflect children's interests and encourage curiosity. Through active play and inquiry, children explore concepts in science, technology, art, music, construction, and physical activity. Environments are flexible and child-centred, promoting autonomy and engagement. Educators observe and document children's play to extend learning and provoke further exploration. We work to reduce barriers and increase opportunities for fulsome engagement for children with unique needs.

Providing Child-Initiated and Adult-Supported Experiences

We offer a balance of guided and self-directed learning.

Approach:

Programs include both child-initiated play and Educator-supported activities. Educators follow the lead of children, using observation and reflection to plan experiences that deepen learning. Open-ended questions, materials, and provocations are provided to support children's ideas and encourage critical thinking. Adult guidance enhances, but does not direct, the child's experience.

Fostering Self-Regulation and Independence

Self-regulation is nurtured through consistent support and understanding.

Approach:

Educators build strong relationships and understand each child's individual cues, stressors, and regulation needs. They model calm responses, provide choices, and use co-regulation techniques to help children develop emotional awareness and independence. Environments are designed to reduce stress (e.g., adjusting lighting, noise levels, and layout) and offer both active and restful opportunities daily. Educators look for opportunities to enrich self-determination in collaboration with children.

Fostering Engagement and Communication with Families

We value parents as partners in their child's care and learning.

Approach:

Educators build strong connections with families through respectful, open, and ongoing communication. Families are invited to participate in learning experiences and share insights about their child. We communicate regularly through various platforms, including face-to-face conversations, Digibot updates, emails, newsletters, social media, and documentation displays. Families are invited to provide input, offer feedback, and join in celebrations, field trips, and

events. Families provide formal feedback annually, which we reflect upon and consider to improve programming, operations, and services.

Community Engagement

We believe in the value of community connections.

Approach:

Children engage with the broader community through walks, field trips, and participation in local events. We collaborate with organizations like All Kids Belong, Family & Children's Services, and local schools to ensure inclusive, enriched learning experiences and practices. This includes building relationships with system managers, municipal and provincial partners, and funding bodies to advocate for quality, access, and workforce sustainability.

Volunteers and professionals are welcomed into our programs to share their knowledge and skills, and we participate in community networks to stay connected and informed. We accept placement students from Early Childhood Education programs, as well as Child and Youth Care practitioner placements and apprenticeships.

As a fee-for-service program, our approach to funding focuses on wage equity, sustainable operating models, and affordability initiatives, including working collaboratively with partners and system managers to strengthen access and quality. During acknowledgement days such as "ECE and Childcare Professional Appreciation Day," we take the opportunity to not only recognize the efforts of our Educators but also advocate for professional recognition as a workforce.

The YWCA works closely with stakeholders such as St. Thomas Children's Services, Southwestern Public Health, Thames Valley District School Board, provincial partners, and local childcare operators to align on best practices, quality assurance, and advocacy at the local and provincial levels regarding the needs of childcare providers and families.

Supporting Professional Learning and Growth

We engage a professional, caring, and dedicated workforce who continue to be lifelong learners.

Approach:

Educators receive regular training through YWCA professional development opportunities, community agencies, and team meetings. We support continuous learning with access to current research, reflective practices, and mentorship. All staff are trained on policies and encouraged to explore areas of professional interest related to child development and pedagogy. We look for unique ways to engage our professional workforce in their learning, as well as to celebrate accomplishments in the field. We participate in our Elgin Professional Learning Committee and advocate for opportunities to strengthen the School Age Childcare workforce.

Fostering Reflective Practice and Pedagogical Documentation

We learn by observing, reflecting, and planning together.

Approach:

Educators document children's learning and development using photos, artifacts, quotes, and narratives. Documentation is shared with families and used to reflect on children's interests and inform future planning. Children see themselves represented in the program and are encouraged to revisit and build on previous learning. Regular team reflection supports continual improvement. We work to develop unique responses to complex issues.

Ongoing Monitoring of Compliance and Addressing Contraventions

We are committed to quality and accountability.

Approach:

Site Supervisors support programs each day through mentorship, regular feedback, monitoring compliance, and encouraging reflection. School Age Childcare Managers conduct monthly site visits using a standardized checklist to

ensure all policies, procedures, and individualized plans (e.g., ISP/MSPs) are followed. Immediate coaching and mentoring are provided when necessary. Any contraventions are documented, and staff are required to review and acknowledge understanding. Repeat issues are addressed through the YWCA's Disciplinary Procedures, as outlined in our Personnel Manual.

We offer program evaluation for families annually. We continuously look for new ways to learn and utilize best practices and evidence to design, implement, evaluate, and improve programs and services.

Final Note:

This Program Statement is a living document that evolves as we reflect on our practices and respond to the needs of our children, families, and community. It is reviewed annually and updated as needed to remain in compliance with Ontario Regulation 137/15, and to reflect our ongoing commitment to high-quality, inclusive childcare.

SECTION 6: PROGRAM FEES

Rates Effective April 1, 2026

The YWCA School Age Childcare Department is part of a non-profit organization, which operates under the guidance of a volunteer Board of Directors. Each year in compliance with the Canada Wide Early Learning and Childcare framework, the Board of Directors approves the fees at an amount that will cover the operating costs of the program.

ELGIN COURT, SUMMERS' CORNERS, STRAFFORDVILLE, SPRINGFIELD UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$12.00 per day per child

ELGIN COURT, SUMMERS' CORNERS, STRAFFORDVILLE, SPRINGFIELD & DAVENPORT AGES 6+

Before School only\$12.10 per day per child
After School only\$13.42 per day per child
Before and After School\$25.53 per day per child

ÉVA CIRCÉ CÔTÉ FRENCH IMMERSION UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$12.00 per day per child

ÉVA CIRCÉ CÔTÉ FRENCH IMMERSION AGES 6+

Before School only\$12.76 per day per child
After School only\$12.76 per day per child
Before and After School\$25.53 per day per child

NEW SARUM & SOUTHWOLD UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$12.28 per day per child

NEW SARUM & SOUTHWOLD AGES 6+

Before School only\$13.42 per day per child
After School only\$12.10 per day per child
Before and After School\$25.53 per day per child

MCGREGOR & MITCHELL HEPBURN UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$12.28 per day per child

MCGREGOR & MITCHELL HEPBURN AGES 6+

Before School only\$12.10 per day per child
After School only\$13.42 per day per child
Before and After School\$25.53 per day per child

PART TIME RATES (MINIMUM 10 DAYS)

ELGIN COURT, SUMMERS' CORNERS, STRAFFORDVILLE, SPRINGFIELD UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only.....\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$13.41 per day per child

ELGIN COURT, SUMMERS' CORNERS, STRAFFORDVILLE, SPRINGFIELD & DAVENPORT AGES 6+

Before School only\$15.21 per day per child
After School only.....\$17.05 per day per child
Before and After School\$32.25 per day per child

ÉVA CIRCÉ CÔTÉ FRENCH IMMERSION UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only.....\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$13.02 per day per child

ÉVA CIRCÉ CÔTÉ FRENCH IMMERSION AGES 6+

Before School only\$16.13 per day per child
After School only.....\$16.13 per day per child
Before and After School\$32.25 per day per child

NEW SARUM & SOUTHWOLD UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only.....\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$15.13 per day per child

NEW SARUM & SOUTHWOLD AGES 6+

Before School only\$17.05 per day per child
After School only.....\$15.21 per day per child
Before and After School\$32.26 per day per child

MCGREGOR & MITCHELL HEPBURN UNDER AGE 6

Before School only\$12.00 per day per child
After School only.....\$12.00 per day per child
Before and After School..... \$15.13 per day per child

MCGREGOR & MITCHELL HEPBURN AGES 6+

Before School only\$15.21 per day per child
After School only.....\$17.05 per day per child
Before and After School\$32.25 per day per child

SPECIAL “NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS”

P.A. DAYS CAMPS AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS (Under age 6)

Daily rate: \$22.00

P.A. DAYS CAMPS AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS (Over age 6)

Daily rate: \$48.08

March Break Camp (Under age 6)

Daily rate: \$22.00 (Full week only, \$110.00 per week)

March Break Camp (Over age 6)

Daily rate: \$48.08 (Full week only, \$240.40 per week)

Winter Break (Under age 6)

Daily rate: \$22.00

Winter Break (Over age 6)

Daily rate: \$48.08

Summer Camp – McGregor and MHPS (Under age 6)

Daily rate: \$22.00 (Full week only, \$110.00 per week)

Summer Camp – McGregor and MHPS (Over age 6)

Daily rate: \$48.08 (Full week only, \$240.40 per week)

NOTES:

- Typically, Non-Instructional Days such as P.A Day Camps etc. are held at Mitchell Hepburn Public School and McGregor Public School. All programs are dependent upon sufficient enrollment, and resources such as space, staffing, etc.
- A 50% reduction in fees applies for the third and subsequent child in the family.

RECEIPTS: Official receipts for tax purposes will be available to parents through their Digibot account.

WITHDRAWALS, CHANGES & REDUCTIONS: Please see Withdrawal & Changes policy within the Registration and Administration Section

UNDER AGE SIX: When a child turns 6 between September and December, their rate changes to the 6+ bracket at the end of their birthday day. If a child turns 6 between January and June, their rate will change effective June 30.

Non-Base Fees (CWELCC discounts not applicable)

- Withdrawals or reductions in care: \$50.00/child
- Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF): \$35.00
- Summer Camp Sunblock Program: \$20.00/child
- Late Fees: \$1 per minute. Charged automatically via Digibot.
- Special guest or trip costs: Families will be advised at the time of registration or planning

Summer Camp Guide 2026

Thank you for joining us for Summer Camp! We are so glad to support your family through July and August. There are few additional unique notes that apply to Summer Camp. Please ensure you are familiar with the rest of this handbook as well.

Location

Mitchell Hepburn PS – 95 Raven Ave, St. Thomas ONT

McGregor PS – 204 John St, Aylmer ONT

Hours of Operation

7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Drop-Off and Pick-Ups

Please utilize the front doors of the school for all drop-offs between 7:30-9:30 a.m. When you arrive, follow the posted signage to get to the program room. Pick-ups may occur between 3:30-5:30 p.m. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the Camp Educators if drop-offs or pick-ups will occur outside of these timeframes.

Please arrive by 9:30 am or notify us via Digibot if your child will be absent. If your child will be late, or picked up early, please message us on Digibot or contact our program cellphone. Please make a habit of popping into our camp rooms, introducing yourself to our Educators, and sharing any special information that would help your child have the best day/week/time at camp!

Each day, please ensure your child has the following items:

- Indoor and outdoor shoes.
- A nutritious lunch for your child free from peanuts/tree-nuts. We may inform you of additional allergens that may need to be avoided. **Please label your child's lunch bag with their name.**
- A refillable water bottle. **Please label your child's water bottle with their name.**
- An extra change of clothes.
- A swimsuit and a towel.
- Sunblock with an SPF of 30+ and a hat with a brim
- Sunglasses are recommended.
- A positive attitude!

We follow a “balanced day” schedule for meals to keep scheduling consistent for our Campers. See attached schedule for timeline.

If toys are brought from home, there is a chance that they may be lost, stolen, damaged, or traded. The YWCA is not responsible. There are no electronics in summer camp. Please note that special guests are subject to change.

Ensuring your parent profile on Digibot has all the required information for yourself and your child supports us greatly. If your child has an emergency and an ambulance is called, **the information from Digibot is what is provided to the paramedics.**

CANCELLING OR REDUCTION OF CAMP: Please see Page 11 of this Family Handbook.

Camp Phone Numbers:

McGregor Explorers (Kinder): 519-280-5082

McGregor Adventurers & Trailblazers (Gr. 1-6): 226-376-6824

MHPS Explorers (Kinder): 519-281-4371

MHPS Adventures (Grade 1-3): 226-927-5829

MHPS Trailblazers (Gr. 3-6): 226-374-5714