



**Preschool
Program Parent Manual
2017.2018 School Year**

BUEHLER YMCA

1400 W. Northwest Highway

Palatine, IL 60067

847.359.2400

www.buehlerymca.org

WELCOME TO THE BUEHLER YMCA PRESCHOOL PROGRAM.

We are a fully licensed facility with experienced staff offering a variety of age-appropriate activities in areas such as reading readiness, math skills, socialization, science, music, art, creative skills, and the development of motor skills. Special emphasis is placed on growth of confidence and the individual child. Parents are encouraged to be active partners to enhance their child's experience with us.

The YMCA will provide healthy snacks for the class each day. We encourage parent participation for field trips, class parties and parent meetings. Swimming is also a part of the program at an additional cost.

Location and Hours of Operation:

Preschool at Buehler YMCA

1400 W. Northwest Highway

Palatine, IL 60067

(847) 359.2400

Early Learning Director's direct line: 847.410.5230

istricker@ymcachicago.org

Programs operate Monday through Friday mornings for a 5 day/week program, a 3 day/week program or a 2 day/week program. **Preschool programs will be closed if District 15 is closed due to snow days. No refunds will be given.** The preschool program begins Monday, August 21, 2017. Days we will **not** be available include:

- September 4, 2017 (*Labor Day*)
- October 9, 2017 (*Columbus Day*)
- November 23 and 24, 2017 (*Thanksgiving Break*)
- Winter Vacation and Spring Vacation (*in accord with District 15 schools*)
- January 16, 2018 (*Martin Luther King Jr. Day*)
- February 20, 2018 (*President's Day*)
- April 14, 2018 (*Good Friday*)
- May 29, 2018 (*Memorial Day*)

A school-year long calendar and our weekly curriculum goals will be distributed at the parent orientation meeting.

Emergency closings of the Buehler YMCA facility apply to the YMCA Preschool Program. If the facility were to close during the school day, the program would close as well.

PRESCHOOL SWIMMING

Swimming lessons for our licensed preschool programs are offered for each class level one day a week. Each level has a specific day for their swimming lesson. On that day class will end at 12:00 pm. To participate in swim lessons, parents need to register their child at the front desk. It is an additional cost. If your child is not registered for swimming lessons, they need to be picked up by 12:00 pm on the day their class swims. Preschool teachers take the children to the locker room and help them get dressed for swimming class. The teachers then remain on deck while the children are in their lesson. Parents will pick up on the pool deck at 12:40 pm and help their children to change. If your child is registered for the extended program, teachers will help them change and bring them back to class. **Your child must be 3 years old and toilet trained in order to swim.** If your child turns 3 years old in the middle of a semester, your child must wait until the next semester to swim. Semesters run from September–December and January–May. **You may not register in the middle of a session. If you are to participate in swim lessons you must start at the beginning of the semester.**

OUR MISSION

We are a powerful association of men, women and children joined together by a shared commitment to nurturing the potential of kids, promoting healthy living and fostering a sense of social responsibility.

We believe that lasting personal and social change can only come about when we all work together to invest in our kids, our health and our neighbors. That's why, at the Y, strengthening community is our cause. Every day, we work side-by-side with our neighbors throughout Chicagoland to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

The mission of the YMCA of Metro Chicago is to develop strong children, families and communities across Metropolitan Chicago through academic readiness, character development, violence prevention, fitness and healthy living.

GOALS

The goals of the Buehler YMCA Preschool Program include:

- Protect and promote children's health.
- Promote the children's social and emotional development through encouraging self-confidence, self-expression, self-discipline, and curiosity.
- Provide children with wide and more varied experiences which will broaden their horizons,

increase their ease of conversation, and improve their understanding of the world in which they live.

- Provide children with frequent chances to succeed.
- Develop a climate of confidence that will make a child want to learn.
- Develop in children and families a responsible attitude toward society and foster feelings of belonging to a community.

STAFF

Our preschool staff exceeds all the educational requirements set by Cook County and the State of Illinois. Additionally, the staff is First Aid and C.P.R. certified by the American Red Cross. All staff attends at least 15 hours of in-service training annually.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT REPORTING PROCEDURES

The Illinois 'Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act' states that: "Any child care worker or other staff having reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be an abused child or a neglected child shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Department of Children and Family Services Hotline (800) 252.2873."

HIERARCHY OF COMMAND

Executive Director: Nick Baird

Senior Program Director: TBD

Senior Director of Youth Development: LuAnn Wachsmuth

Early Learning Director: Jenn Stricker

Interim Child Care Directors: Karen Heck and Susan Coyne

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs, which may include the children, are sometimes taken for use within the YMCA. Occasionally, these or other photos may be used about the center for advertising purposes. Whenever possible, this use will be cleared with parents, but this is sometimes difficult or impossible in cases where photos contain large groups of children or are used several years after they are taken.

REGISTRATION

A registration form needs to be completed and returned with a \$50 non-refundable registration fee. It is important that your information on the enrollment forms is current. Please let us know in writing of any changes in the phone numbers, addresses or people

who may pick up your child. This information must be updated with your child's classroom teacher.

FEES AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Childcare staff cannot accept payments. We ask that you sign up for automatic draft. Your child's preschool payment will be drafted on the 1st of each month, September through May. If for some reason you are unable to automatic draft you will need to make arrangements with the billing office to make monthly payments. Billing will be handled in the following manner:

1. You will be sent an invoice the month prior to the month of service. Payment is due by the 1st of each month for that month of service.
2. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a late charge of \$10.00 will be assessed
3. If payment is not made by the end of the month of service your child may not return until payment is made in full.
4. Credits will be issued for extended (four weeks or longer) medical reasons only and need to be documented by a physician. For extended medical leaves a doctor's release is required before child can attend the program again.
5. **Credits or non-payment will not be given for extended vacations.** Payment needs to be made to keep your child's spot in the preschool. If you do not wish to pay, you will need to withdraw your child (**with a two weeks notice**) and attempt to re-enroll when you return. There will be no guarantee that your child's spot will still be vacant when you return.

Please Note: There will be a \$25.00 service charge assessed to your account for any checks returned by the bank for insufficient funds.

ADMISSION

The Buehler YMCA will not discriminate by race, color, sex, national origin, or creed.

Special needs are to be viewed on an individual basis.

Children are not required to be toilet-trained before starting the preschool. **No diapers or pull-ups will be allowed unless parent remains on call in the building to handle any diapering or other toileting needs.**

POLICY ON RELEASE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION/CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

It is the policy of the YMCA not to release any information about our children or their families without a signed release form. All medical and personal forms and information on the children are the property of the YMCA and will remain on file after the child leaves the

program.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

Only Authorized Persons may sign a child out of the program. This policy is designed to protect your child. The list is on your child's enrollment form and is kept on file in the preschool files. All authorized persons must be at least 18 years of age. Your child will not be released to any individual not listed as authorized to pick him or her up. We will ask to see a driver's license to confirm identification. For your family's protection, there are **no exceptions** to this policy!

Late Pick-Up: Any parent who is more than five minutes late in picking up their child will be charged \$10, and \$1 for every additional minute. If it becomes habitual, may need to discuss further with management staff.

Very Late Pick-Up: In the event a parent is exceptionally late, the following procedure will be followed: If a child has not been picked up and the time has reached 15 minutes past the stated end time, the teacher or other alternate will attempt to reach the parent using their provided telephone numbers. Messages will be left if possible. **If the time late has reached 30 minutes, the teacher or other alternate will attempt to reach the emergency contacts provided by the parents. Messages will be left if possible. If the time late has reached one hour, the teacher or other alternate will call the Palatine Police Department for assistance in locating a person to pick the child up or bring the child to a youth services agency.** The child will be held blameless for the parent's absence, and all efforts will be given to ease the child's discomfort and provide for any necessities.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

If your child becomes ill or seriously injured during preschool, a parent will be contacted and asked to take him/her home. Your child will be separated from the other children, within sight and hearing distance of an adult, until the parent arrives. If the parent cannot be reached, the staff will call the emergency contacts listed on your child's enrollment form until a pick-up is arranged.

Injury Specifics: The Buehler YMCA will always try to provide a safe environment for your child(ren), but occasionally, children are hurt or injured. In the event of such an occurrence, the staff will follow this procedure:

- Paramedics will be called to handle any serious accidents.
- Parent will be called -- if a parent cannot be reached, emergency numbers will be called

until someone can be reached, or the list is exhausted.

Illness Specifics: The YMCA is not licensed to provide care for sick children.

Therefore, parents or emergency contact must come as soon as possible, preferably within one-half hour after being contacted by the staff. Examples of illness follow, but are not limited to: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye, lice, sleeping. This policy is not only for the protection of your child(ren), but extends to the other children in our care. Your child may not return to our program until they are fever/vomit free for 24 hours.

Any child absent from the program due to serious or contagious illness must notify the YMCA and have a doctor's note to return.

If your child(ren) has/have any insect or food allergies, **please notify us in person**, so that we can be prepared for any reactions. If your child needs to keep an Epi pen or inhaler on site, please notify your child's teacher or the director. We need to have the Epi pen or inhaler in the original prescription box and an additional allergy/medication form will need to be filled out. These will be kept in your child's classroom accessible only to adults. If any other medication needs to be administered, a written request must be made by the parent. Medication must be delivered to us daily in the original prescription bottle; we cannot store it for you. We will **not** let your child take any kind of medication without written authorizations being on file.

If you feel that your child(ren) is not well enough to go outside, play in the gym, and or go swimming, please keep him/her home a little longer as we do not maintain staff to care for children in this situation.

ANNUAL VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS

We are required by DCFS to provide an annual vision and hearing screening. You will be given notice when the screening will take place and there is a minimal charge for this screening. After the screening you will receive notice of the results and results will be kept in each child's folder.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children should leave all personal belongings at home or in their backpacks. This includes but is not limited to: toys, video games, radios, trading cards, pictures, reading or sun glasses, money, collectibles, clothing. The YMCA will not be responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items.

NUTRITION AND SNACKS

Under the guidelines provided by the Department of Children and Family Services, we serve a nutritious snack each day. The YMCA provides snacks each day. The following is a list of some of the snacks that may be served: Whole Grain Crackers, String Cheese, Crackers/Cheese, Fruit, Yogurt, Snack Bars, etc. Water, 100% fruit juice or milk will be served each day with the snack. The snack will be listed each day on the bulletin board outside the kitchen along with the ingredient list for the snack. Due to licensing restrictions and other children's allergies, we cannot allow parents to provide an individual snack for your child unless it is needed for medical and or allergy concerns. Any specific dietary restrictions, that we are not able to accommodate, need to be documented by a physician before we can allow outside food to be brought in by a parent. We do our best to accommodate dietary restrictions and allergies.

Parents may bring special snacks for your child's birthday. State licensing standards require that all foods served to children at preschool must be brought in original containers. Fresh fruit or vegetables must not be peeled or cut. Any preparation of food must be done at school. **We are unable to accept home baked or home prepared foods.** Our teachers must turn these items away at the door.

Please no peanut or peanut butter products. We have children with severe allergies. Our child care wing is a peanut free zone.

CURRICULUM AND ACTIVITIES

Buehler YMCA Preschool uses creative curriculum. Through the use of different activities in the classroom we incorporate reading readiness, math concepts, science and social science concepts, social skills and gross and fine motor development. Each week there are different activities based on set goals. Each level is unique in goals that are set for learning and experiencing within the classroom. Our teachers use the Illinois State Early Learning Standards as a guide when planning.

Exploration Centers

Each classroom is equipped with various play/learning centers including art, block play, housekeeping, science, puzzles/books, drama, writing, music and large motor.

Music

Each week children will have music incorporated into the classroom daily and will have special music activities on a regular basis.

Literacy

There are books, puzzles, writing materials available in the classroom. Each day books are

read to the children, they are given opportunity to look at books on their own as well as encouraged to participate in many different literacy and reading/writing readiness skills.

Arts and Crafts

A large medium of art materials is offered to children during their programming with the preschool program. Each day a new art or craft experience awaits them, which is related to the theme of the day. Additionally, art materials are always available for students who are looking for a creative outlet at any time of the day.

Large Motor Activities

Children are encouraged on a daily basis through structured games, and free choice time to interact in large motor activities to enhance physical fitness, encourage sportsmanship and promote cooperative learning. Additionally, children may elect to take our swimming and or gymnastics (Tiny Tykes) program that coincides with our class.

Small Motor Activities

Children are assisted in developing particular skills such as cutting, balancing, and hand-eye coordination. A large number of small motor manipulative items are readily available to children, and teachers lead activities that practice multiple skills as well.

Socialization

Children are encouraged to develop socialization skills, i.e. playing together, sharing, participating in group games, learning to resolve conflicts, etc. throughout the day in preschool. We believe this is a very important part of their preschool experience. We emphasize the 4 character values of the YMCA, caring, responsibility, respect and honesty, in developmentally appropriate ways.

Nutrition

Children are always expected to wash hands before and after eating in the preschool program. Snack time is intended as a social time for children and teachers to enjoy together. Food and nutrition experiences are offered once a month. Children may be making their own snacks, or take part in a nutrition education project.

Field Trips

In the case that your child's class goes on a field trip, parents are required to provide transportation for the field trip. The YMCA does not provide transportation. Any entrance fees for both the preschooler and any siblings will be the responsibility of the parent. This information will be available from your classroom teacher in advance of the field trip.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Key goals of our center are to help children develop positive self-esteem, build trust in the world around them, and develop autonomy and pride in their work. To attain these goals a positive guidance approach is used. A supportive, nurturing environment with adults who

model a caring demeanor is the first steps for helping children learn inner controls and appropriate behavior.

Punitive measures such as time-out chairs, withdrawal of privileges or deprivation of food will not be used. All actions are taken to help a child learn positive social conduct and develop self-discipline. In general, teachers work to help children see alternatives to 'acting out' behaviors by helping them solve conflicts with problem solving techniques. The sophistication of the teaching will depend on the child's age and developmental level.

Discipline Procedures

Discipline is carried out in such a way that it helps your child(ren) develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own behavior. It is kind and gentle, yet firm. It is based on three overall rules:

- A child may not disturb or hurt others; verbally or physically.
- A child may not damage equipment.
- A child may not place him/herself in dangerous situations.

Choices or redirection will be administered first to the child who is having a behavioral problem. If this method does not work, we will remove a child from the problem situation: fighting, hitting, etc. and talk to him/her. Removal gives the child time to calm down and also gives the staff time to discuss with the child what has happened. If the child's behavior continues to be disruptive, the parent, child and teacher will have a private conference. If a behavioral change has not been made, an automatic suspension will be incurred upon the next incident. **There will be no reimbursement of fees paid due to a suspension.** If the behavior continues, we will remove your child from the program. Our goal is to have all children enjoy a safe and recreational time.

REASONS FOR DISMISSAL

There are several reasons why it might be necessary to dismiss a child from services:

- aggressive behavior toward staff or children
- destruction of property
- use of obscene language
- non-payment of fees
- refusal to follow rules
- repeated wetting or soiling accidents without a parent or guardian present

If our system of choice and removal do not work to solve a behavior problem, the following will occur:

1. For a first offense, the parent will receive a write-up describing the child's behavior. This will also be placed in the child's folder.
2. If a second offense occurs, a second write-up will be issued to the parent and placed in the child's folder. At this time, a warning will be given and a conference with director, teacher, parent, and child will be arranged to discuss the child's ability to stay in the program. Child may be suspended for a day.
3. Upon a third offense, the child will be dismissed from the program. If this occurs, we will give one week's notice of termination of services.

WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT

If you need to remove your child from our services, for any reason, **please notify the Director and Billing Office two (2) weeks prior to your child's last day of attendance** so that we can arrange to fill the vacancy. This is a paid two weeks whether your child attends or not.

DISCHARGE POLICY

The following situations will result in your child being discharged from the YMCA Program.

1. Habitual disregard of the center's policies and procedures as stated in the Parent Handbook.
2. Habitual disregard of the arrival and/or departure times agreed upon by parent during initial enrollment.
3. Verbal or physical threats made to any child or member of staff, while on the grounds of the YMCA facility.
4. Child continuously causes physical harm to self, other children or staff.
5. State of Illinois Licensing Standards also calls for the discharge of any child who, after attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs, demonstrated the inability to benefit from the type of care offered, or whose presence is detrimental to the group.

PARENT PACKET

A General Participant Emergency Packet file is kept on each child in the preschool program. Each document in the folder must be read and signed by a parent or guardian, as it pertains to your child's care. **Because our program is licensed, these documents need to be on file before your child can attend our program, and we reserve the right to terminate your child's services if the parent and or guardian will not comply with the documentation we need.** The following need to be read and returned to us before your child can begin:

Registration Form

Copy of Child's Birth Certificate

*Health Exam (*on DCFS form*)

Lead Questionnaire

Participant Emergency Information Packet

Parent Withdrawal Agreement

Parent Manual

Transfer Permission/Pest Management Form

YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago Facility User Agreement

DCFS guidelines booklet

**Parents must keep a copy of child's Medical Form for their own use.*

EMERGENCY OPERATING PROCEDURES

In case of a fire, or when the fire alarm is sounded, children and teachers will exit the nearest exit and remain in a group away from the building. Fire drills are practiced monthly so children and teachers will be familiar with our procedures.

In case of a tornado, or when a tornado announcement is made over our public announcement system, children and teachers move to the basement per the closest stairwell. Tornado drills are also practiced twice a year.

In case of a power outage, teachers gather children and prepare to exit building if necessary. Decisions to evacuate facility, or terminate programming for the day will be made. Parent will be called using cell phones if a 'terminate' decision is made. Teachers remain with children until all are picked up. The YMCA does own and use battery operated lighting, and emergency generators in case of emergencies.

The YMCA will also practice lock-out (threat from the outside) drills and lock down (threat on the inside of the building) drills with staff and children. Parents will receive notification of these drills before we practice them with children.

Regulations are subject to change. Parent information letters will be sent to communicate any and all changes to the policies and procedures.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are essential to the YMCA! You are encouraged to become involved in any or all of the following:

- Program Volunteers: those who help in the classroom and assist with special family events throughout the year.
- Fund-Raising Volunteers: those who help us with our Annual Giving Campaign, which

raises funds for those unable to afford our services.

- Support Volunteers: the people who help in the office, classrooms, or at special events.
- Parent Committee Volunteers: to establish and maintain formal mechanisms to ensure that parents share ideas, exchange information, plan and interact with child care administrators and program staff.

Volunteering benefits the volunteer as much as the community and the YMCA. It helps individuals grow personally, professionally or both. It is a chance to make new friends and can be a lot of fun. Sign up today! You can make a difference.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Jenn Stricker	847.410.5230
YMCA Main	847.359.2400
Cheryl Gruchot (billing)	847.410.5218
Fax	847.359.5098
Child Care Kitchen	847.410.5220