



**Transitional
Kindergarten Program
Parent Manual
2016.2017 School Year**

BUEHLER YMCA

1400 W. Northwest Highway

Palatine, IL 60067

847.359.2400

www.buehlerymca.org

LOCATION & HOURS OF OPERATION
Y-Link at Buehler YMCA—Licensed

1400 W. Northwest Highway
Palatine, IL 60067
Tel: 847.359.2400

Early Learning Director:
Jenn Stricker
847.410.5230
jstricker@ymcachicago.org

Transitional Kindergarten is for children who miss the district 15 cutoff and will be 5 years old by Oct 31, 2016. Those children whose birthdays fall after Sept. 1 will be evaluated to determine if transitional kindergarten is the best option or if Pre-K would be a better option. This class has a half-day option (9 a.m.–noon) or a full-day option (9 a.m.–4 p.m.). There is before care starting at 7 a.m. and after care until 6 p.m. available for the full-day option.

Transitional Kindergarten begins the first full day of school, Thursday, 8/18/16, and ends the last full day of school (in accordance with District 15 schedules). The program operates on days when school is in session the full day and does not operate on days when school is not in session or in session for half days. *This does not apply to the early dismissal/late start plans for this school year.

The program will be closed if District 15 is closed due to snow days. Other days the Transitional Kindergarten Program and the Kids' Day Out Program will not be available include:

Labor Day 9/5/2016

Thanksgiving and Friday after 11/24/16, 11/25/16

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 12/24/16, 12/25/16

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day 12/31/16, 1/1/17

Memorial Day 5/29/17

"Kid's Day Out" (KDO) programs are available on non-school days **except for above listed dates**. KDO programs operate from as early as 7:00 a.m. to as late as 6:00 p.m. Children must be registered for KDO programming at the Buehler YMCA front desk or online. Program information is available to program participants prior to being available to non-participants. However, enrollment is limited, and it is the parent's responsibility to secure alternate care if necessary on those days.

Emergency School Closings of any school apply to the YMCA after school programs. In the case of a late/delayed start, programs would run as usual. If a school were to close during the school day, after school programs would close as well. In rare occasions Metro YMCA of Chicago may deem it necessary to cancel programs for weather or emergency situations even if District 15 does not call off school. In such a case parents will be notified and information will be available on the website and Facebook. Look online for Emergency Kids Day Out (KDO) registration. This would run as a typical KDO.

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 Transitional Kindergarten Program include:

- Protect and promote the children's health
- Promote the children's social and emotional development through encouraging self-confidence, self expression, self-discipline, and curiosity.
- Provide children with 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 which nurtures children's desire to learn.
- Develop in the children and families a responsible attitude toward society and foster feelings of belonging to a community.

STAFF

Our staff meets or exceeds the requirements set by the State of Illinois and Department of Children and Family Services. Staff has also received the following

trainings: First Aid/CPR/AED, Child Abuse and Prevention, Customer Service, METRO Orientation, and OSHA. Staff attend scheduled staff meetings, and are involved in a minimum of 15 hours of school age related seminars, trainings or lectures yearly.

HIERARCHY OF COMMAND:

Center Executive:	Interim Directors (Andrea Tamillo and Jill Anderson)
Senior Program Director:	TBD
Senior Director of Youth Development:	LuAnn Wachsmuth
Early Learning Director:	Jenn Stricker
Youth Development Director:	Annie Yung
Interim Child Care Directors:	Sue Coyne and Karen Heck

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs and movies, which may include the children, are sometimes taken for use within the YMCA. Occasionally, these or other photos may be used for newspaper stories about the center or for marketing 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. Please advise us of any concerns. (Please refer to Talent Release portion of paperwork you fill out for your child's file).

FEES PAYMENTS AND PROCEDURES

In order for your child to attend the Transitional Kindergarten program, an initial \$50(member)/\$100(non-member) non-refundable registration fee must be paid at the Buehler YMCA front desk. **We ask that you set up automatic draft payments for the monthly fees.** The monthly fee is drafted on the 1st of each month beginning on Sept. 1 and with the last draft of May 1. If you are unable to draft monthly we ask that you work with our billing office to set up monthly payments. Kindergarten Counts billing will be handled in the following manner:

- 1. You will receive a statement for the upcoming month. The payment for that month is due no later than the 1st of the month of service.**
- 2. If payment is not received by the 1st a late charge of \$10 will be assessed.**
- 3. If your payment is 7 or more days late, your child will not be able to attend until payment has been made in full including late charges.**
- 4. Credits will be issued for medical reasons only. These need to be documented by a physician.**
- 5. If your child is gone from the program for an extended period other than a documented medical reason (i.e. vacation) you will need to continue to pay regularly or withdraw your child from the program and re-enroll when you return. However, there is no guarantee that your spot will be available when you return.**

Often, there is wait list and paying for the time your child is gone will keep his/her spot in the program.

Please note: There will be a \$25 service charge assessed to your account for any checks returned by the bank for insufficient funds. The monthly fee is \$475. There are nine equal payments of \$475 regardless of which month we are in. Total cost for the 2015/2016 school year is \$4,275.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial assistance may be available through Illinois Action for Children.

Applications for assistance through Action for Children may be picked up through Cheryl Gruchot and or management, including instructions for completion. You may also contact AFC directly at 312.823.1100 or by visiting www.daycareaction.org. If you do not qualify or have been denied assistance through Action for Children you may qualify for a partial scholarship through the YMCA. Paperwork for scholarship assistance can be obtained at our website www.buehlerymca.org.

REGISTRATION

Registration request forms need to be completed and returned with a \$50M/\$100NM registration fee. Confirmation of admission into the program will begin once we have received medical/immunization documentation with the remainder of the enrollment packet required by our licensing agency. Information on file must be current.

Please let us know in writing of any changes in phone numbers, addresses or people approved to pick your child up. This information must be updated at the Buehler YMCA.

POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF PERSON 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 regarding children are the property of the YMCA and will remain on file after the child leaves the program.

REPORTING ABSENCES

If your child is absent, you must call the numbers listed; 847.410.5230 or 847.410.5220 or email teachers. Please provide student's full name, school, reason for absence, and YMCA teacher's name. No refunds or credits will be given for absences unless it is for a long-term medical reason, and documentation will need to be provided.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Pick-Up

Only authorized persons may sign your child out of the program. This policy is designed to protect your child. Approved persons are on your child's enrollment form, kept on file. All authorized persons must be at least 18 years of age. Your child will not be released to any individual not listed as an authorized person. We will ask to see a driver's license to confirm identification. For your family's protection, there are **no exceptions** to this policy!

An authorized person must sign your child out on the sign-out log each day. Children cannot be picked up without being signed out. In addition, a child may not walk home from the center, or sign themselves out. Child care staff has the right to withhold release of a child if the pick-up person appears to be incapable of transporting the child safely due to intoxication or other altered mental status.

Pick-Up

Very Late Pick-Up:

The following procedure will be followed in the event of exceptionally late pick-up: If the time has reached 15 minutes past the stated end time, a teacher or alternate will attempt to reach a parent using provided telephone numbers. Messages will be left if possible. After 30 minutes past, the teacher or alternate will attempt to reach the emergency contacts provided by parents. Messages will be left if possible. If the time has reached one hour, the Palatine Police Department will be called to assist 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 AND INJURY

If a child becomes ill or injured during the program, parents will be contacted and asked to pick child up. If the parent cannot be reached, the staff will call the emergency contacts listed on child's enrollment form until a pick-up is arranged. **Your child must be picked up within 30 minutes of being called as we do not have a nurse on site.**

Injury Specifics

The Buehler YMCA provides a safe environment for your child. Occasionally, children do get hurt or injured. Staff is trained in First Aid and will treat minor injuries. In the event of a more serious injury, staff follows this procedure:

- Paramedics will be called to handle serious accidents.

- Parent will be called. If a parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts 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 contacts must come within one-half hour after being contacted by staff.** While others apply, the following are examples of illness: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye, lice, ticks, excessive sleeping. Your child needs to be free of symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to school and if required, should provide a physician's note stating they are safe to return.

This policy is not only for the protection of your child, but extends to the other children in our care. 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 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.

MEDICATION

If your child has any insect or food allergies, **please notify us in person**, so we can be prepared for any reactions. If your child's physician has diagnosed an allergy requiring an Epi-pen prescription, we must have an Epi-pen on site while your child is in attendance. Epi-pens and/or inhalers must be in their original box with the prescription labeled on the box. If any medication needs to be administered during YMCA program hours, you must have a completed Medication Permission Form. All medications must be in original bottles including prescription information (corresponding to permission form). We will not permit your child to take any kind of medication without written authorizations being on file.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children should leave all personal belongings at home. This includes but is not limited to: toys, video games, video game players, cell phones, ipods, mp3 players, trading cards, pictures, money, collectibles, and clothing. **The YMCA will not be responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items. No replacement of objects or monetary compensation will be provided for lost or stolen objects.**

NUTRITION/SNACKS

Under the guidelines provided by the Department of Children and Family Services, we serve a hot lunch and a nutritious snack which are prepared on-site each day. Menus will be provided monthly and will be posted on the parent information board.

Water and milk are served with meals each day. We will provide alternative options for children with restricted diets due to medical conditions or religious practices (for example; vegetarian, Gluten, dairy). Written documentation must be provided and on file for accommodations to be made. Food allergies should be noted by a physician. Our licensing does not allow food to be brought from home. The only exception will be if we are unable to sufficiently provide meals in accordance with restrictions and will be handled on an individual basis. Children are expected to wash hands before eating in our program. Meals are served family style (self-serve), contain foods from all food groups, and are intended to be a social time for children and teachers to enjoy together. Children may also be making their own snacks, participating in a nutrition education cooking project. **Please make us aware of any food allergies and/or restrictions your child may have.** **We are unable to accept home baked and or home prepared foods. Please no peanut or peanut butter products. We have children with severe allergies.** Our childcare center is a peanut free zone.

ACTIVITIES/CURRICULUM

Learning Enrichment:

Each day, you may review posted lesson plans. Teachers follow Illinois Common Core Learning Standards in planning, targeting specific benchmarks and goals corresponding to content areas in literacy, math, science, social studies, and art through Creative Curriculum Guided Learning Centers.

Arts & Crafts:

A large variety of art materials are offered to children during programming for free exploration each day.

Large Motor Activities:

Children are encouraged daily to participate in in large motor activities to enhance physical fitness, encourage sportsmanship and promote cooperative learning. This is also built in during weekly special activities.

Small Motor Activities:

Children are assisted in developing specific skills such as cutting, writing/drawing, hand/eye coordination, and one-to-one correspondence. Manipulative items are readily available in the classroom.

DAILY SCHEDULE

A copy of the daily schedule is posted along with lesson plans. Our program has structured activities, set up with specific boundaries and experiential goals in mind. "Choice Time" is also built into the day, where students make their own decisions in exploration with clear limits to guide them. This enables children to be interested

and engaged in activities. Active parent input helps children, along with the teachers; make sure that program time is spent in a fun and constructive way.

Daily

When children arrive, they participate in exploration activities and centers in classrooms, the gym, or playground. Lunch is served at approximately 12:00 (am class) following lunch children continue their day in Transitional Kindergarten with guided reading, whole group instruction, small group activities, and learning centers. Multiple "special" activities are also scheduled (which may include music and or YOGA). Times and days of activities are determined at the beginning of the school year and provided at Parent Orientation.

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. 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 behaviors that are not positive in nature by helping them resolve conflict with problem solving techniques. Age and developmental levels are considered in the complexity of teaching such concepts.

Discipline Procedures

Discipline is carried out in such a way that it helps your children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their behavior. It is kind and respectful, yet firm and redirection will be used with children not following guidelines and expectations. If this method does not work, the child will be removed from the situation and will discuss choices with his/her teacher. This gives the child time to calm him/herself and develops self-reflection. This time of reflection between student and teacher is essentially a "warning," and the teacher will remind the student that if this behavior should continue, he/she may receive a card change.

If negative behavior becomes consistent, a child may receive a write-up, which will be sent to parents and also placed in child's permanent file. A mandatory parent conference will be requested and an individualized behavior management plan may be a result should behavior continue. If parents do not respond to conference request, or behavior patterns do not change in accordance with resulted plan from

conference, automatic suspension may be incurred. **There will be no reimbursement for fees paid due to a suspension.** No more than 2 one-day suspensions will be allowed per child per school year. If behavior continues thereafter, your child may be removed from the program.

Examples of Reasons for Conference &/or Dismissal:

- Aggressive behavior or disrespect toward staff or children
- Destruction of property
- Use of obscene language
- Inappropriate behavior on our van or bus
- Refusal to follow rules

Reasons for Automatic Removal

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 staff member, while on the grounds of the YMCA facility.
4. Child continuously causing harm to self, other children, or staff
5. Non-payment of fees

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, demonstrates the inability to benefit from the type of care offered, or whose presence is detrimental to the group.

EARLY WITHDRAWAL

Please notify the Early Learning Director two (2) weeks prior to your child's last day of attendance so arrangements can be made to fill vacancy if necessary. You will be asked to fill out a withdrawal form. **In lieu of a two week notice you will be required to pay two weeks.**

PARENT PACKET

A confidential informational file is kept on each child in the program. Each document must be read and signed by a parent or guardian, as it pertains to the child's care. Since our program is licensed, **these documents must 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 do not comply with the documentation needed. **The following need to be read and returned before your child may begin class:**

- Registration Form
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Health Exam (Doctors must complete TB and Lead Risk portions)
- Emergency Information, Approved/unapproved pick-up, Talent Release, and User Agreement
- Transfer Permission and Transportation Permission
- Receipt of DCFS Licensing Standards
- Notification of DCFS Pest Management Plan
- Receipt of Parent Manual and Withdrawal Agreement
- Payment Agreement

EMERGENCY OPERATING PROCEDURES

In case of a fire, or when the fire alarm is sounded, children and teacher will exit the nearest exit and remain in a group away from the building. Fire drills are practiced monthly to become familiar with procedures. In case of a tornado, or when a tornado announcement is made over our public announcement system, children and teacher move to the basement per the closest stairwell. Teachers assist children in getting into the appropriate safety position and wait for an 'all clear' to be given. Tornado drills are practiced seasonally (twice per school year).

In case of a power outage, teachers gather children and prepare to exit the building if necessary. Decisions to evacuate facility or terminate programming for the day will be made by Executive Director and/or our Metropolitan office. Parents will be called using cell phones if such decisions are made. The YMCA does own and uses 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 made to 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 classrooms and assist with special family events throughout the year.
- Fund Raising Volunteers: those who help with Annual Giving Campaign, which

funds those unable to afford services.

- Support Volunteers: the people who help in the office, classrooms, or at special events.
- Parent Committee Volunteers: 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's a chance to make new friends and is fun too! Sign up today! You can make a difference.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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