LOWE’S YMCA
YMCA Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

This handbook is a guide and reference to the Lowe’s YMCA preschool program. Within the handbook, you will find important information to provide a safe stay in our preschool program. Please refer to the document to answer questions that may arise; if subsequent questions still remain, please contact your site coordinator.

Please sign the back of this booklet and return the slip to your site coordinator.

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

Welcome to the Lowe’s YMCA Preschool! The Lowe’s YMCA offers a preschool program designed to meet your child’s needs with activities that include group playtime, Bible stories, music and movement, as well as fine and gross motor skill development. All of our classes are planned to develop each child’s self-esteem and create a strong image of self-worth through learning and sharing in a fun, structured environment. Children are encouraged to explore, ask questions, and solve problems in a warm Christian setting.

Our program is a combined system of thematic learning, physical activity, and Christian education. We believe that through play and other process-oriented experiences, children gain confidence in their ability to learn. We strive to provide an atmosphere where children can laugh, learn and play through different activities. Every day your child will be given the opportunity to grow intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

GOAL OF THE YMCA PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

The goal of the YMCA Preschool is to provide a safe, wholesome, Christian environment where children will grow in spirit, mind and body. Teachers focus on teaching your child the YMCA’s Five Building Blocks: socialization, fine and gross motor skills, education and healthy choices. YMCA Preschool strives to enhance each child’s self-esteem, helping them to reach their God-given potential.

PRESCHOOL STAFF

- **Coordinator**

  Jennifer McKnight, YMCA Preschool Coordinator, can be reached at 704 516 0663

- **Family Service Director**

  Danielle Crimi, YMCA Family Service Director, can be reached at 704 716 4043 or DcRimi@YMCACharlotte.org

- **Teachers**

  Our preschool is staffed with capable, trained teachers, who are eager to work with your child. After a rigorous screening process which includes background checks and drug testing, chosen teachers must complete training in areas including child development, blood borne pathogens, CPR, first aid, dealing with discipline and positive reinforcement, safety and emergency procedures, and YMCA policies. In addition, we require 5 additional hours of training to give them expertise in early child development. We look for leaders who exemplify outstanding character, compassion, and love for children. We take pride in the high expectations we set for our preschool staff each year and evaluate them on a regular basis.

  Communication between parents and teachers is strongly encouraged. Although parents are always welcome to observe and participate in the classroom, if you have specific questions about your child’s behavior or participation, you should schedule a conference outside of class time. This will ensure that classroom instruction will be uninterrupted for all participants and your concerns will be thoroughly addressed in a one-on-one setting.
ADMINISTRATIVE TOPICS

• Declaration of Inclusive Policy

All programs of the YMCA of Greater Charlotte are open to everyone within age parameters regardless of race, religion, national origin, or ability to pay.

• Registration

Each child must register by completing a registration form and providing a non-refundable registration fee. The supply and events fee of $60.00 per participant is also due upon registration. This fee is inclusive of supplies and any other event that may include a fee. Once registered, the parent must complete an information packet containing:

1. Tuition payment
2. Health history
3. Handbook acknowledgement form
4. Child’s personal information
5. Health and Wellness Guideline
6. Signed waiver

• Admission

Children will be enrolled into the program based on space available as determined by the registrar. A waiting list will be compiled in the event that additional space may become available as the school year progresses. All admissions are on a first come, first serve basis.

The Lowe’s YMCA reserves the right to deny preschool admission or continued participation if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The child’s information packet is not returned promptly
- The child is not participating or benefiting from the program
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for the child
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for other enrolled children due to the behaviors of the child
- Non payment of monthly fee

• Tuition

Tuition is due the fifteenth of each month prior to care beginning August 15th, ending April 15th. All fees must be paid at the membership desk at the Lowe’s YMCA or through a bank draft each month.

- A $25.00 bank fee will be charged if a check, draft, or charge is returned for insufficient funds.
- A $25.00 late fee will be charged on payments made after the 15th of each month.
- Removal from the program will occur if tuition and late fee payments are not made by the last day of the current month.
WITHDRAWAL

If you plan to withdraw your child from the program before the end of the school year, please give written notice to the site coordinator **30 days** in advance. Otherwise, tuition will be charged for the upcoming month. An exit interview to discuss your reason for withdrawal may be requested.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The YMCA is committed to providing quality programs regardless of one’s ability to pay the standard fees. Our financial assistance program is available for those who would otherwise be unable to enjoy the benefits of the YMCA programs. For more information and an application, please inquire at the Lowe’s YMCA Membership Desk at the branch located at 170 Joe V. Knox Ave. in Mooresville.

INSURANCE

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte provides liability insurance to all programs. It is the participant’s responsibility to provide his or her own accident insurance coverage. Parents should include their personal health insurance information on the child’s health form. The information will only be used to facilitate medical treatment if required.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

- **What to wear**

  Clothing for your preschooler should be simple, comfortable, washable, and easy for your child to manage. Rubber-soled shoes are essential for running and outdoor play. **Please, send appropriate outerwear for the morning’s weather activities, including close-toed shoes and jackets.**

  Please be mindful that at school we play and discover new things; as a result your child’s clothing may become soiled. We ask that you do not dress your child in their best clothing expecting them to remain spotless. Please keep an extra set of clothes in your child’s backpack. If an accident occurs, your child will be dressed in their extra set of clothes and the soiled clothes returned to you in your child’s backpack. Please place another set of clothing in the backpack for the next day if an accident does happen.

- **What to bring every day**

  In your child’s backpack please bring:
  - Minimum of three diapers and wipes (if your child is in diapers)
  - Change of clothes (including socks), we do recommend placing a pair of flip flops in as well for those new to potty training
  - Nutritious and peanut free snack and a drink in a lunch box or bag

  Please monitor these supplies daily and replenish as needed.

  Since toys from home can be lost or cause friction among children, please do not let your child bring them to school. A young child may bring something for security, such as a
pacifier or blanket. These will be placed in your child’s backpack at the first available opportunity.

- **Supplies for the first day**

Please send the following items to school as a donation to the program if possible.

  - Hand Sanitizer
  - Baby wipes and or paper towels
  - Facial tissues
  - Clorox Wipes

They will be distributed and used throughout the year wherever they are needed.

- **Labeling**

It is very important that all items that belong to your child are labeled. Please write your child’s first name and last initial clearly on all items such as coats, umbrellas, backpacks, drink cups, jackets and lunch boxes/bags.

- **Missing Items**

We will make every effort to return lost items while your child is in preschool. If you discover that something is missing, please check the lost and found immediately. The Lowe’s YMCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged clothing or equipment.

- **Snacks**

All classes have a scheduled snack time daily. Please send a small nutritious snack for your child to enjoy during this time. Water bottles are a great beverage selection for small children. If your child uses a spill-proof cup, please label and supply a beverage in that cup everyday.

  **Bottles:**
  Infants: ALL BOTTLES MUST BE PRE-MEASURED AND PRE-MIXED

**PARENTAL VISITATION**

Parents are always welcome at the Lowe’s preschool. Please feel free to observe or assist us with the day’s activities.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Calendars will be made available to parents. This item will inform you of activities planned for your child and keep you abreast of topics related to the preschool operations. Calendars will be handed out in the children’s folders at the beginning of every month.

**SOLICITING**

Soliciting is prohibited on YMCA premises. No printed material may be distributed without the approval and consent of the marketing department and the Family Services director.
Daily Routines

Site specific routines will be given at the scheduled open house. Example activities that the children will participate in are listed below.

- **Morning message** focuses on calendar, weather, and pledge of allegiance.
- **Activity Time** refers to a lesson developed by the teachers encompassing literacy, phonemic awareness and mathematical thinking.
- **Learning centers** provides opportunities for the children to participate in teacher-created productive play areas. Centers are used as a tool to reach developmental milestones.
- **Read Aloud** time is devoted to children’s literature and story comprehension.
- Manners and self-help skills are incorporated throughout the day.
- **Playground** a time of physical activity, development of social skills and team work.
- **We do not have screen time during preschool.**

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- **Illness**

  It is our sincere desire to provide quality care for your children while you take advantage of various services at the Lowe’s YMCA. It is absolutely imperative that we work together to make this happen. Please be advised that staff **will not** exclude your child from care **unless** one or more of the following conditions exist:

  1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in preschool activities
  2. The illness results in a greater care need than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
  3. The child has any of the following conditions:
     a. **Fever**-a child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to the program. A fever reduced by medicine does not qualify as fever free. We require 24 hours without the use of medicine.
     b. **Signs of Possible Severe Illness**: Examples include lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs – until medical evaluation allows inclusion.
     c. **Uncontrolled Diarrhea**: Examples include one or more watery stools which cannot be contained by a diaper or more than two loose stools in a 24-hour period.
     d. **Vomiting**- Have vomited within the past 24 hours.
     e. **Nasal Drainage**- any discolored drainage must be confirmed as allergy related with a current doctors note however drainage combined with other symptoms will be questioned or require additional doctor’s documentation.

  If an illness, such as lice, Fifth disease or Chicken Pox has been reported to us, all parents will be notified.

- **Emergencies**

  Our preschool staff will treat minor cuts, scrapes, and bumps. In the case of serious illness or an accident involving your child, the preschool site coordinator will contact you. If you cannot be reached, treatment will be prompted as secured by your signature on your child’s health form. In order to make sure that a child’s safety is taken care of, some
medication may need to be administered in case of an emergency due to an allergic reaction. To give the preschool permission to administer emergency medication, please fill out the emergency medication release form, available through your site coordinator. We do not administer other medications, including medication for diaper rash.

- **Inclement Weather**

For inclement weather, the Lowe’s YMCA Preschool follows the Iredell Statesville School System’s (ISS) lead. If ISS schools are closed, then preschool will be closed as well. If ISS schools are delayed for one or two hours, then preschool will open at regular time. The Lowe’s YMCA Preschool program will offer a limited amount of preschool make-up days that are marked with an (*) on the preschool calendar. Due to the length of our preschool year, there are only a limited number of make-up days that can be offered. There are no refunds for weather cancellations.

**DISCIPLINE**

The philosophy of our program is deeply rooted in respect. Good manners and personal empathy are traits we will foster. Encouraging good behavior helps to discourage unacceptable behavior. Using the principle of positive reinforcement, each child will be praised for good work and made to feel successful. Negative behavior will be confronted and redirected towards positive behavior.

If a child is continuously disruptive and refuses to be redirected to positive behavior, he or she will be removed from the classroom for a short time. During this time the child will have a chance to think about the misbehavior leading to his or her removal from the group. When the child returns to the group, he or she will be welcomed back into the group and the day will continue on.

Our teachers are committed to working with parents regarding disciplinary matters; however, should these processes fail and behavioral problems are not corrected, the site coordinator reserves the right to dismiss the child from the program.

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Preschool begins daily at 9:00am and ends at 12:00pm. Preschool arrival and dismissal procedures will require time and patience. Please be understanding that during the first few weeks of school everyone is adjusting to a new routine. The drop off and pick up procedures occur differently at each site. Specific information will be given at open house. Please do not talk on your cell phone while in line to pick up your child. This is both a safety issue and a beneficial time to talk about your child’s day at school.

Each parent will be asked to show a personal identification card that presents a picture and name. If an alternate person will be providing transportation for your child they will be verified on the personal information sheet and asked for identification.

Please be sure to have the proper seat in your car for preschoolers being picked up. Child safety seats are required by law.
• **Late Pick Up**

Preschool ends at 12:00pm. A ten minute grace period will be granted for late pick-ups. After the grace period is over a $1.00 per minute toll will be charged. Payment is expected prior to future attendance. Chronic late pick-ups may be grounds for dismissal from preschool. If a child is not picked up after one hour nor a phone call is received, local authorities will be called.

• **Field Trips**

A school-wide field trip or special event is planned each year. Parents will be responsible for transportation to and from this event.

• **Birthday Celebrations**

You may celebrate your child’s birthday by making advanced arrangements with your child’s teacher. If you are distributing goody bags, please be mindful of the children’s ages, choking hazards and our peanut free policy.

**LOGISTICS**

• YMCA preschools are not licensed and regulated by the State Department of Child Development. The YMCA of Greater Charlotte preschools adhere to YMCA Quality Standards.

• Children may not participate in the following programs or a combination of the following programs for more than four hours in a 24-hour period (calendar day) in a Charlotte YMCA or a combination of Charlotte YMCAs: Children’s Enrichment Programs, unlicensed preschools, drop-in care and unlicensed after school programs.

• All programs of the YMCA of Greater Charlotte are open to everyone within age parameters, regardless or race, religion, national origin or ability to pay.

**Contact List:**

Lowe’s YMCA 704 716 4000

Lowe’s YMCA Fax 704 716 4001

Jennifer McKnight, Onsite Coordinator 704 516 0663

Drop-In Childcare 704 716 4006

Danielle Crimi, Family Services Director 704 716 4043 or dcrimi@ymcacharlotte.org
PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Please sign and return this form at your child’s open house.

I have read and I understand the policies and procedures outlined in the Lowe’s YMCA preschool booklet.

My child’s name is________________________________________

X_________________________________ ________________________

(Parent/Guardian Signature) (Date)