

VENTURA FAMILY YMCA

CHILD CARE PROGRAM Parent Handbook 2008 – 2009

QUICK CONTACTS

Ventura Family YMCA
3760 Telegraph Rd.
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 642-2131
(805) 642-1137 FAX
www.ciymca.org

Poinsettia Elementary
Lic. #: 561708173
350 N. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 654-0620

Elmhurst Elementary
Lic. #: 566203831
5080 Elmhurst Ave.
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 654-0805

Loma Vista Elementary
Lic. #: 566207389
300 Lynn Rd.
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 901-1445

Rio Del Norte Elementary
Lic. #: 566208265
2500 Lobelia Ln.
Oxnard, CA 93036
(805) 218-6671



Fall 2008

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2008 - 2009 Childcare Program at the **Ventura Family YMCA**. Quality childcare is so important in today's society and we are pleased to have been chosen as the provider for your family. Safety is our number 1 priority and we pride ourselves in providing a safe learning environment for your child to grow and develop into a vital part of the community.

In our program, your child will have the opportunity to make new friends, learn new skills, participate in recreational activities, and create new memories to last a lifetime. Your child will have an awesome time building self confidence, creating art projects, developing good character, and living a healthy lifestyle.

This Parent Handbook has a lot of important information regarding our program. Please take time to read this entire handbook and review significant information with your child. If you have any questions regarding the information in this handbook please contact the Site Director at your location.

With your continued support we can continue to build strong kids, strong families, and a strong community.

Kristina Avila
Childcare Program
Ventura Family YMCA
3760 Telegraph Rd.
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 642-2131
kristina.avila@ciymca.org

Mission & Goals

YMCA Mission Statement

The Channel Islands YMCA is a charitable association providing programs based upon Christian principles to men, women and children of all races, religious beliefs and economic status to develop and enrich the spirit, mind and body.

Program Goals

The School Age Childcare Program is designed to provide a safe and fun experience for elementary age children. In particular, the program strives:

- To support and strengthen the family unit by: improving communication skills, increasing the ability to work and play together, helping families share their values, increasing a sense of community with other families.
- To help children develop to their fullest potential in: self-awareness, confidence, self-worth, interpersonal relationships, character development, academic achievement, health and nutrition, physical skills and creativity.
- To deliver a program in a positive YMCA environment of safety, support and care, focusing on: providing an emotionally and physically safe environment, establishing guidelines and principles acceptable to all participants and staff, and conducting the program in accordance with YMCA operating principals and philosophy.

Enrollment

Admissions Policy

The Ventura Family YMCA Childcare Program is designed for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Because the YMCA encourages diversity in all its programs, we refrain from religious instructions or worship and no child will be refused admission based on sex, religion, or ethnic background. Financial assistance is also available to families who qualify.

Registration

All registration forms must be fully completed prior to attendance. Forms include: Registration Information, Emergency Information, Personal Rights, Notification of Parents Rights, Permission for Walking Trips and Excursions, Consent to Treatment and Release, Liability Release, Health

Statement/Photographic Release/Insurance Disclaimer, and Payment Information. In addition, the current facility or program membership and first month payment are due at the time of enrollment. All children must have an emergency contact that can be at the program site within 45 minutes. Registration forms must be returned to the Ventura Family YMCA, 3760 Telegraph Rd. Space is limited and available on a first come, first serve basis. New registration forms are required, even if your child has been enrolled in previous summer camps or after school programs.

Providing updated information to the YMCA (change of address, telephone numbers, family information, emergency contacts, etc.) is the responsibility of the parent and must be made immediately at the time of change. A thirty-day written notice is required to withdraw your child from the program.

Program Plans

The *All Year* payment plan is a 12 month pay plan which pays for before and after school childcare, school breaks, minimum days, staff development days, holidays and summer day camps. This plan is designed for families that need 5 days of care the entire year. Payments are made from August 2008 through July 2009, and then you must enroll for the next year. Participants in the All Year Plan receive priority for summer camp enrollment and are enrolled upon receipt of summer registration paperwork. Registration for the All Year Plan is open through December 31, 2008.

The *Before & Afterschool* payment plan is an 11 month pay plan which pays for before and after school childcare, minimum days, holidays, staff development days and school breaks. The Befor & After School part-time plan is only available three days a week or less. Children on this plan are only allowed to attend on pre-selected days; any changes to the selected schedule must be made two weeks in advance. Payments are made August 2008 through June 2009.

The *After School Only* plan is an 11 month pay plan which pays for after school childcare, minimum days, staff development days and holidays. The After School Only part-time plan is only available three days a week or less. Children on this plan are only allowed to attend on pre-selected

days; any changes to the selected schedule must be made two weeks in advance. School breaks are not included. Payments are made August 2008 through June 2009.

The *Fall/Winter/Spring Camp* plans are available when school is not in session. The payment for each break or session must be made in full prior to attendance. Participants must enroll for and pay the fee for the full week of breaks; partial session enrollment is not available.

Program Center Locations

Poinsettia Elementary

Lic. #: 561708173
350 N. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 654-0620

Elmhurst Elementary

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Arrival and Departure

Hours of Operation

Care ends promptly at 6:00 pm. In accordance with our late pick up policy parents will be charged at 6:15pm and \$1 for each additional minute. If children are left at the program until 7:00pm authorities will be contacted. Continual tardiness will result in dismissal from the program. On holidays and vacations children enrolled at Loma Vista will attend the Poinsettia Site. Site Directors will alert you to holiday care arrangements as early as possible.

Holiday Schedule

The Childcare Programs is closed on the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Christmas
- New Years Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

We will also be closed on the last 2 days of the school year in order to prepare for summer. In addition, we will be closed the last day of summer in order to prepare for the school year. An allowance for vacation is built into the fee structure; therefore, no refunds or credits are available for holidays.

Sign-in

State guidelines require that each child must be signed in and out each day by the parent with a full legal signature. Staff will sign in children who enter or exit the program from school. A phone call is required if your child will be absent or will arrive at the childcare site at a different time than usual. If your child does not arrive at the After School Care Program phone calls will be made to persons listed on the emergency sheet and the school office to determine the whereabouts of your child. If the child can not be located, missing child procedures will begin. An allowance for absences and vacations is built into the fee structure. Therefore, no refunds or credits are given for absences. If a child is absent from the program three consecutive days without notice they will be terminated without notice.

Sign-out

Children will only be released to those persons listed on the Emergency/Health Information form. No Exceptions. Only the registering legal guardian may make changes to this form. Any person who is listed but who is unfamiliar to the staff will be asked to show picture identification. Parents are required to supply all known information about an absent or divorced parent. For safety, please provide us with any legal documentation pertinent to your child's custody. Without this information we may not be able to prevent a non-custodial parent from removing a

child from the program. Once children are signed out, it is the parent's responsibility to watch and supervise their children. If a person should arrive to pick up a child under the influence of drugs or alcohol the child will not be released into their care and staff may have no recourse but to contact authorities, for the child's safety.

Absences

Please call your child's site prior to the expected time of arrival if your child will be absent or will arrive at the childcare site at a different time than usual. If you take your child early from school or if your child is sick please notify the YMCA. If a child does not show up at the expected time the missing child protocol will begin.

Health & Safety

Illness

The YMCA School Age Childcare Program includes all sorts of physical activities. Children must be able to participate in all activities. The YMCA is not equipped to care for children who are ill and program staff have the authority to ask parents to remove children from the program if that child's health is judged to be detrimental to the child, other children and/or staff. Children exhibiting the following symptoms may not attend the program: severe pain, temperature over 100 degrees, diarrhea, jaundiced skin, visibly enlarged lymph nodes, an episode of vomiting, rash, evidence of lice or nits, severe cough, runny nose with colored discharge, red or inflamed eyes and/or headache.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, a parent will be contacted and asked to pick the child up within 30-40 minutes. (In addition, children who wet themselves must be picked up or brought a change of clothes within a half an hour.) Ill children will be isolated, until a parent arrives. If the parent cannot be reached, the staff will phone the emergency contact person(s) listed on the child's Emergency Form. Children exhibiting any of the above symptoms must remain out of the program until symptoms are gone. Sick days are built into the fee structure; therefore, no credit is given for absences due to illness.

Medications

A Medication Authorization form must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian in order for any medication to be administered.

Medication (including inhalers) needing to be administered must be brought directly to staff in its original, labeled prescription container. The label must clearly identify the child's name, doctor, date, prescription name and dosage. Children are not allowed to administer medications (even aspirin or cough drops) themselves. All unclaimed medication will be disposed of after five consecutive days of nonuse.

Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency situation staff will contact a parent immediately. Staff has emergency information on children at all times. Staff will contact the child's doctor or call 911 depending upon the urgency of the situation. In case a parent cannot be contacted, staff will notify other emergency contacts. It is the parent's responsibility to have current health information and contact people (that live within 45 minutes) listed on file.

The YMCA is prepared for emergency situation by having posted emergency plans, kits and routine drills. In case of a major emergency please contact the main YMCA for information regarding children. If children and staff are ordered to go elsewhere for safety, information on the children's location will be posted and the main YMCA can be called for information.

Snack

The YMCA will provide a morning snack for kindergartners and afternoon healthy snack for all participants. These snacks are not meals. Typically snacks include granola bars, fresh fruit, yogurt, crackers and cheese. An occasional dessert may be served as a special treat or celebration. The YMCA will do its best to provide children with a variety of snacks. Should your child have a food allergy, one of the following will occur: the YMCA may provide a substitute snack based on the current inventory or the child may bring a snack. Please make sure to disclose all food allergies at the time of registration. Snack schedules are posted each month. Snacks are usually served around 9:00am and 2:30pm.

Fieldtrips & Transportation

Fieldtrips

The YMCA program does include walking field trips and those that require transportation during breaks. A field trip permission form is part

of the registration packet and is on file at each program site. The YMCA has been successfully taking children on fieldtrips for many years. Fieldtrips are carefully planned out and at no time will children be left unsupervised. Fieldtrip schedules will be available the week prior. Fieldtrip transportation is provided by the Ventura Unified School District.

Family Involvement

Family Nights

Each childcare site will hold a Back-to-School Night within 30 days of the program start date. The Back-to-School Night is designed to disseminate program information and hold a question/answer session for parents. Each childcare site will hold two additional family nights. Typically these two family nights are held in winter and spring months. Parent participation at these events is highly encouraged. Finally, parents can set up a conference at anytime during the school year with program staff.

Parent Advisory Committee

Each site has a Parent Advisory Committee, which meets regularly. The Parent Advisory Committee is a group of volunteers who assist staff in program development, maintenance and evaluation. To join your sites advisory committee please talk to the site director. Volunteer opportunities are also available at the main YMCA in various aspects including our annual Campaign for Youth.

Responsibilities

Staff

The School Age Childcare program operates under direct supervision of the Program Director whose office is located at the main YMCA facility. Each site is staffed by a site director, who is responsible for the overall operation of the site including; supervision of children and staff, program planning and implementation, communication and parent relations. Teachers and Aides then support the site directors. The quality of our staff is an important determinate in maintaining our high program standards. Our program staff is experienced, qualified and trained thoroughly. All staff meets or exceeds the State Department of Social Service through Community Care Licensing requirements, which include: live-scan screening, college-level course work, CPR and First-

Aid certification. All child care staff are trained and mandated by state law, to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect. All Site Directors and Teachers meet Title XXII licensing regulations which means they hold units in child development and have had previous success working with children and have been trained by YMCA staff on how to maintain a safe, creative and fun environment for children. The YMCA also understands the role every staff member plays in the life of your children, and expects all staff to serve as positive role models.

Staff members shall not relate to children enrolled in YMCA programs outside of approved YMCA activities, including babysitting. The YMCA will take disciplinary action if staff violates this policy.

Parent

The YMCA recognizes that parents are the most important people in a child's life. Because of this, we welcome your advice, participation and support. The YMCA allows for parent visitation at any time. Parents are also encouraged to participate in our many volunteer opportunities

Communication is really the key. If parents have a problem, concern or question we encourage parents to ask program staff. If front line staff is unable to meet your needs, please contact the Program Director. It is through your input that we are better able to meet the needs of the community and enhance the quality of our program. We encourage parents to participate in our parent advisory committee. These groups give parents an opportunity to create and enhance their children's experiences.

Parents need to adhere to all policies outlined in this handbook. This includes completing registration and payments prior to the start of the program, keeping all forms up to date, signing children in and out every day, being on time for drop-off and pick-up, reading parent information boards, helping staff enforce safety, health, and behavioral standards, equipping children for each day of childcare and reviewing program rules with their children.

Children

It is the goal of our YMCA to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for all participants. Here at the YMCA we cannot allow behavioral problems to interfere with this objective. Children are expected

to exhibit Character Counts values, follow basic behavior guidelines and interact appropriately in group settings. In addition, the YMCA strictly enforces all rules and regulations set by off-site field trip locations

Our staff view discipline as a teaching opportunity. Redirection is the most common step used in behavior management. In addition, verbal warnings, "breaks", and removal from activities may be necessary. In the event that concerns arise which are beyond the normal range of day-to-day concern of a child, staff will communicate and document the problem with parents. We hope to work with parents to create a plan in which to encourage the child to participate in a more positive manner. In the case the behavior cannot be corrected dismissal from the program may be necessary. Suspension and/or expulsion from the program is always a last resort.

In some circumstances a single action (such as violence toward another child or staff) may warrant a parent to pick up a child immediately. Pick up must result in 45 minutes or less. If suspension and/or expulsion from the program becomes necessary no refund, transfer or credit will be given for that month. The following behaviors are unacceptable and may result in the immediate suspension of a child for the remainder of the day and/or further time period: endangering the health and safety of self or others, stealing or damaging property, leaving program boundaries, continuous disruption of the program, refusal to follow rules, using profanity or gang signs, acting in a lewd manner, possession of illegal substances or weapons. In addition, at no time will swearing, abusive language or physical violence be allowed by staff, children or parents. Please discuss the behavioral expectations of our program with your child.

Finally, the YMCA program is designed to meet a wide variety of children's needs. However, our program may not be appropriate for all children. The YMCA reserves the right to terminate or suspend a child from the program for any reason.

Licensing

Our programs are licensed by the Community Care Licensing Division of the State of California, Department of Social Services. To be licensed, our programs must comply with the Manual of Policies and Procedures for Childcare Centers. The regulations cover such areas as: physical

environment and safety, staff qualifications, supervision and staff/child ratios, program activities and equipment, food and nutrition, parent/community participation, administrative and record keeping requirements and others.

The Licensing agency may, upon presentation of proper identification, enter and inspect the YMCA program at any time, without prior notice, to secure compliance with or to prevent a violation of any provision of child day care licensing requirements. The YMCA shall make provisions for private interviews with clients, including children or any staff members and for the examination of any records relating to the operation of the facility.

Personal Belongings

All children's personal belongings should be labeled with their first and last names. Because activities include sports and arts/crafts, children should wear clothing that is appropriate for movement and messy work. Children need to have a regular size backpack that is able to fit in a cubby. Children also need to bring all materials necessary to complete homework. We prefer closed toe shoes and shorts under dresses. We also strongly suggest that cell phones, mp3 players, hand held video game systems, etc. be left at home. The staff is not responsible for lost, stained, or soiled clothing or any other personal belongings that are lost or damaged.

Program Activities

Daily Activities

Attendance & Snack: Site Staff verifies that all children are at the program. Calls will be made to parents and other emergency contacts if a child does not arrive by the scheduled time.

Homework & Quiet Time: Time is set aside each day (except Friday) to allow children to work on homework if his/her parent wishes. It is important that parents let their child know of their wishes. Site staff will supervise homework time and offer occasional assistance as needed. They cannot, however provide constant one-on-one tutoring. Staff will not check backpacks for homework. It is up to the child to get their homework, however much encouragement will be given. YMCA staff cannot be held responsible for homework not completed during childcare.

Our staff understands the need to have children do their homework during the afternoon, but also recognize the need for children to have a change of pace from their schoolwork.

Group Activities: the children participate daily in a staff directed activity ranging from active group games to groups quiet games to crafts and other special activities. Fitness and nutrition are incorporated into group activities several times per week. A calendar is provided to parent's monthly outlining each day's group activity.

Free Play & Choice Time: After six hours or more of school, it is very important to have some time for children to choose activities of their own. Activities during free time range from playing outside, crafts, drawing, puzzles, board games, toys, etc.

Typical Daily Schedule

The following is a typical daily schedule for the childcare sites; however each site runs on a slightly different time frame and schedule.

7:00am –8:00am	Open, check-in and free play
8:00am-8: 15am	School Dismissal and kindergarten walk to class
8:15am-9:00am	Kindergarten program activity
9:00am-9: 15am	Kindergarten snack
9:15am-10:00am	Outdoor Activities
10:00am-11:00am	Story time and inside activities
11:00am-11: 30 am	Kindergarten pick-up and drop-off
11:30am-12:15 pm	Lunch and free play
12:15 pm-1:00 pm	Kindergarten program activity
1:00 pm- 1:45pm	Outdoor Activities
1:45pm- 2:20 pm	Story time and inside activities
2:20 pm- 3:15 pm	Kindergarten pick-up, grades 1-5 check in, snack, and outside free play
3:15 pm- 4:30 pm	Homework and outside activities
4:30pm-5:30 pm	Inside and outside activity rotations
5:30pm-6:00pm	Free Choice and Clean up

Character Counts!

At the YMCA we believe that character counts in everything we say and do. We emphasize six core values through our program. We hope that all of our staff, children and parents will join us in teaching each other about what it means to be a person of character. The six core values are:

Trustworthiness: *Being honest, dependable and loyal*

Citizenship: *Respecting authority, obeying rules, protecting the environment*

Respect: *Living the golden rule, showing courtesy and manners*

Caring: *Being kind, compassionate and understating, showing love and charity to others*

Fairness: *Playing by the rules, treating others fair and equal*

Responsibility: *Being accountable, doing your best*

Payment Information

Fees

A non-refundable, non-transferable program membership of \$30 is required to participate in any of our programs. Payment options include: Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or Credit Card Charge. When using EFT or Credit Card a monthly amount will be debited from the bank account or credit card on the 6th or 20th of the month when childcare services are rendered. When using EFT, the first month payment must be submitted by check or money order and a voided check or deposit slip must be submitted to initialize draft prior to attendance. A \$20 fee will automatically be assessed on returned payments. Continued non-drafts on a account will result in cancellation of the EFT/credit card account and your child will then be dropped from the program. A photocopy of the charge card to be debited must be included. To cancel EFT or credit card charge a thirty-day written notice is required prior to your last withdrawal date. A personal check or money order in the amount of the total annual fee may be submitted at time of registration, if you choose.

Financial Assistance

Need-based financial assistance is available on a first come, first serve basis. Financial assistance or subsidy has been granted with the following agencies: Child Development Resources (CDR), Children's Home Society (CHS) and YMCA scholarship. Arrangements must be verified with the YMCA billing office prior to first day of attendance. Participants are responsible for fees incurred exceeding authorized assistance.

Participants must agree to all terms and conditions associated with financial assistance, directed by the YMCA and as required by the assisting agency. YMCA Open Doors Applications are available at the YMCA Welcome Center & online. Please allow at least 30 days for paperwork to be processed. All paperwork needs to be submitted to be considered for assistance, an application for financial assistance is not a guarantee that financial assistance will be granted. Notification of changes that affect a family's income or childcare hours should be given to our office within two weeks. Financial aid recipients are required to notify the YMCA billing office with changes to parent's employment within five days of schedule change. Financial aid recipients must accurately report children's attendance and report any and all absences on scheduled days of attendance.

Late Pick-up

The YMCA School Age Childcare program closes at 6:00 p.m. A late fee of \$15 at 6:15 and an additional \$1 per minute will be charged for each child picked up after 6:15 p.m. Payment is due at the time of pick-up and made payable to the YMCA. Failure to pay may result in dismissal from the program. Additionally, three late pickups are cause for dismissal from the program. If your child is not picked up by 7:00 p.m. and emergency contacts cannot be reached, we reserve the right to call authorities.

Administrative Contact

For any questions regarding payments, billing or financial assistance please contact Kate Bucey, Administrative Services Director, at (805) 642-2131 ext. 27 or kate.bucey@ciymca.org. For any questions regarding the program, licensing, or activities please contact the Kristina Avila, Program Director at (805) 642-2131 ext. 16 or kristina.avila@ciymca.org.



YMCA

We build strong kids,
strong families, strong communities.