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TUSCARAWAS COUNTY YMCA



Child Abuse Prevention Plan for Staff & Volunteers

Approved by the
Board of Directors
April 27, 2026

The Tuscarawas County YMCA Staff & Volunteer Child Abuse Prevention Plan

The Tuscarawas County YMCA takes the prevention of child abuse very seriously. The YMCA understands that child abuse and inappropriate contact of children is a pervasive problem throughout the United States that must be managed in a pro-active manner if we are to protect those in our care. The YMCA's leadership and Board of Directors have enacted the following plan to manage our programs and minimize the potential for abuse incidents to occur. If an allegation does occur, we will proactively work with the authorities and the family to respond in a prompt and empathetic manner.

This organization has zero-tolerance for abuse and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of consumers in its programs. Any mistreatment or abuse by an employee or volunteer will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service and cooperation with law enforcement.

The Tuscarawas County YMCA believes the following policies are vital to the protection of children in our programs and thus they will be shared with and applied to all staff, including volunteers.

1.0 Hiring Practices and Screening

- 1.1 **Applications** – All prospective staff members will complete an association application to work or volunteer that includes questions in the following areas: criminal conviction, past work history, education. The application will include a statement that the YMCA has a zero-tolerance standard for abuse and inappropriate behavior by staff members. All applications will be signed by the individual and maintained in their personnel file.
- 1.2 **Interviews** – Prospective staff members will be interviewed by at least two separate staff members. All interviews will be documented on an association approved interview form that ensures consistency of questions asked. During all interviews the prospective staff members & volunteers will be asked to read the YMCA statement on abuse prevention (appendix 1) and verify that they are in agreement with its purpose and that they will abide by its standards if hired.
- 1.3 **Social Security checks** – This involves performing a social security address trace to identify all past addresses. A social security trace is a list from the social security administration of all addresses at which the individual has received a paycheck – it is not simply a verification of the social security number through various credit sources as is provided by many vendors.
- 1.4 **Criminal record checks** – The YMCA will conduct a search for criminal activity by any prospective staff member. This search may be through law

enforcement agencies or through entities that provide such service and may include examining local, county, state records throughout the entire country; and searching various registered sex offender lists. Applicants who are returning staff will receive a new check if they have been away from YMCA for more than one year.

The YMCA is strongly committed to protecting its members and the children in their care from all harm. However, a conviction does not automatically generate a rejection of the application – all cases are individually evaluated. Background checks will be conducted on all staff and program volunteers every other year after the initial check.

- 1.5 **Reference checks** – The YMCA will contact at least three references for all prospective staff. At least one reference must be a close family member to the applicant. Reference checks on volunteers are required, the number of checks completed should be dependent on the type of position being interviewed for. The reference responses will be documented on an association-approved form that specifies questions for uniformity of evaluation. Past employers will be asked if the person is eligible for rehire. Written references will be accepted only with verbal verification by the YMCA. If the written reference did not address the questions normally asked, those questions will be asked during the telephone contact. All reference forms must include the date and the printed name and signature of the staff member who completed it.
- 1.6 **File documentation** – All applications, reference checks, and Criminal Record Checks and interview notes will be kept in the individual's personnel file that is maintained in the association's corporate Human Resources department. If the original must be housed at an off-site location because of licensing requirements, a full duplicate copy will be maintained at the corporate HR office.
- 1.7 **Program volunteers** – Volunteers are staff members, even if they receive no remuneration. Program volunteers are those people that work with youth on an ongoing regular basis. Volunteers who assist with a special event on a one-time basis would not be required to adhere to 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.5. The procedures for program volunteers for ongoing program and activities would be the same for a paid staff member and points 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5 above (be sure these include a social security address trace) and 2.1 below must be followed. References will be checked and documented, with the number of references dictated by the volunteer's position. The application may be different and the reference questions vary from those asked of paid employees. Records (or copies thereof) should be kept in the corporate HR office.

2.0 Training and Education

- 2.1 **Code of Conduct** – Staff members will sign and date a copy of the Tuscarawas County YMCA Code of Conduct prior to performing any work duties and annually thereafter. The code of conduct will be maintained in the personnel file. All new staff will have the code of conduct reviewed

with them at the time of signing; the signature line should state “I have read and understand the above as explained to me; I agree to abide by all of its conditions.”

All departments will review the Code of Conduct during November each year and will have all staff reconfirm that they understand their expectations as YMCA staff members and agree to abide by those expectations. See appendix 2 for a copy of the document.

- 2.2 **Child abuse prevention training** – All staff members and high-access volunteers will participate in a child abuse prevention training that includes training on sexual abusers from Praesidium Academy or another CAP training provider prior to access with consumers (Ex. Foundations: Preventing Abuse in Youth Serving Organizations by Praesidium). In addition, staff and high-access volunteers will complete child abuse prevention training annually. Anyone who does not complete the training as required will be suspended from duties until completed. Supervisors or any staff who help with hiring are required to take “Abuse Risk Management for Supervisors: Supervising for Safety” by Praesidium Academy within 60 days of hire.
- 2.3 **Electronic communication policy** – The YMCA has adopted the electronic communication policy attached as appendix 2. The policy will be reviewed with all staff before their regular duties begin and annually thereafter. The purpose of this policy is to eliminate the potential for outside contact with youthful program participants via electronic means. The YMCA understands that certain communication is needed as part of program operation; the policy addresses how and when it can occur.
- 2.4 **Follow-up training** – The YMCA requires that all staff working with children participate in a bi-annual review of the abuse prevention training. The YMCA may perform additional training with staff on identification and prevention of child abuse throughout the year.

3.0 Staff and Volunteer Expectations

- 3.1 **Reporting suspicious Red-Flag behavior and/or violations of YMCA Policies and Code of Conduct.** Our organization has zero tolerance for abuse. It is imperative that every employee or volunteer actively participates in the protection of consumers. YMCA staff are mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse to the jurisdiction having authority. YMCA staff will report to their supervisor any indication of, or warning signs concerning abuse involving a child and any instances of staff violating the Code of Conduct. YMCA staff who identify suspicious behavior or a violation of policy by a fellow staff person should report the event to their supervisor immediately. All reports of suspicious or inappropriate behavior with consumers will be taken seriously. Our procedures will be carefully followed to ensure that the rights of all those involved are protected.

Red Flag behaviors: It is important to watch for, and respond to, these

red flag behaviors in consumers.

Examples of Red Flag Behavior: Any violation of the organization's abuse prevention policies. Seeking unauthorized private time or one-on-one time with consumers. Seeing or visiting with a consumer outside of scheduled programming. Buying gifts for individual consumers. Sending unauthorized electronic communications through text messaging, social media, online gaming, etc. in violation of the organization's electronic communication policy. Making suggestive comments to consumers. Showing favoritism towards a consumer or type of consumer. Consumers disclosing that an employee or volunteer makes them feel uncomfortable. Inappropriate physical contact with other consumers (i.e. horseplay, "chicken fights," and dunking. Seeing consumers who appear to be uncomfortable with attention they are receiving from an adult or another consumer. Any inappropriate physical contact out of view (i.e. under water or on a slide).

If employees or volunteers witness suspicious or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations from a consumer or another employee or volunteer, the individual is instructed to do the following:

- Interrupt the behavior.
- Report the behavior to a supervisor, director, or other authority.
- If you are not comfortable making the report directly, make it anonymously by using the resources at <https://tuscymca.org/child-abuse-prevention>
- If the report is about a supervisor or administrator, contact the next level of management.
- Complete an internal report but do not conduct an investigation.
- Keep reporting until the appropriate action is taken.

3.2 Procedures for Employee and Volunteer Response to Allegations or Incidents of Abuse

- As required by mandated reporting laws, employees and volunteers must report any suspected abuse or neglect of a youth—whether on or off organization property to the state authorities. In addition to reporting to the state authorities, employees and volunteers are required to also report allegations directly to leadership so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of the alleged survivors and others who may be at risk. Reports of suspected or known abuse may be made confidentially to the following: Immediate supervisor, director, administrators or CEO.
- Additional Guidelines for responses to incidents or allegations of abuse:
 1. If you witness abuse, safely interrupt the behavior immediately.

2. If abuse is disclosed to you, assure the individual disclosing that he or she was correct to tell you.
 3. Protect the alleged survivor from intimidation, retribution, or further abuse to extent possible.
 4. Be sure to document the incident, disclosure, or any circumstances causing your suspicion of abuse. State only facts.
 5. Immediately report the allegation or incident to local authorities. Make sure to get a case number and the name and contact information of the person with whom you are speaking to at the agency. Document on your incident report.
 6. It is not your job to investigate the incident. You are required to report the incident immediately and to check back to make sure the appropriate steps are taken, if necessary, report again.
 7. **Supervisors:** If receiving a report from an employee or volunteer, be sure to verify they have followed mandated reporting requirements or will follow immediately after making an internal report. Be available to support the employee or volunteer making the report, including making the call to the appropriate authorities with them. Gather as much information about the allegation as you can (who made the report, who was the alleged abuser, the nature of the abuse, where and when it occurred.) State facts only. If the alleged abuser is an employee or volunteer, notify your management team and suspend the accused until the investigation is completed. Notify youth's parents/guardians of the boundary violation or abuse. If the abuse is about a parent/guardian, then it may not be appropriate to inform them. Seek counsel from external licensing or governing bodies. Contact CEO for a communication plan. Provide resources for survivors, families, and other stakeholders.
- 3.3 **Being alone with children** – At no time should YMCA staff be in a situation where they are alone with a child and cannot be observed by others. The YMCA will make every attempt to design and structure its programs to eliminate the potential for a staff member to be in a one-on-one situation. YMCA staff members are not to have children enter closets or storage areas to retrieve equipment.
- 3.4 **Hugging and touching of children** – Appropriate physical contact is important in the emotional development of all children and children at different developmental levels will need differing degrees of physical contact. Therefore, YMCA staff members should not perform frontal hugs of children – hugs should be from the side. The staff member should get

down to the child's physical level when possible. YMCA staff should not touch children in any body location that would be covered by bathing suit. Staff members should not pick up school-aged children (to reduce potential for both abuse allegations and physical injury) and should not allow children to sit on their lap.

The Tuscarawas County YMCA childcare and preschool programs have adopted specific guidance regarding physical contact for staff members. Please refer to the childcare staff manual for details of the plan.

3.5 Babysitting and outside contact – YMCA staff shall not provide care (babysit) or instruction or develop/maintain relationships with any children or families they meet through YMCA programs. If the staff member has a pre-existing relationship, e.g., for babysitting, the Branch Executive must be notified of the relationship and the relationship may continue. The family will be required to sign a form acknowledging the family's pre-existing relationship with the staff member and relieving the YMCA of any responsibility for the actions of the staff member with regard to that relationship. YMCA staff may not have contact, beyond incidental, with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes but is not limited to:

- extra practices, coaching, or tutoring
- transportation in a non-YMCA vehicle
- private special events such as movies, sporting events, or any other similar excursions
- visits to any residence

3.6 Diapering policy – When diapering a child, staff will have another staff member in the room and be in a visible area of the room. When assisting a young child with bathroom duties, staff members will not close doors to the bathroom or stall so they can be observed.

3.7 Supervision standards – All children who are registered in a childcare or camp program will be supervised by YMCA staff at all times. This includes bathrooms, locker rooms and changing areas during day camp or after school. At no time should one staff member have direct care of a single child. If a staff member becomes alone with a child, s/he should promptly move to a location where s/he can be observed by other YMCA staff members.

3.8 Locker rooms and changing areas supervision and monitoring – Locker rooms and changing areas are high-risk locations for sexual activity between consumers, and adult offenders can use the privacy afforded in locker rooms to abuse a consumer. Consequently, locker rooms require close and regular monitoring, and these practices must be carefully managed. Locker rooms also present increased risk, because consumers and adults may be nude or partially nude and consumers may engage in horseplay. Our locker room and changing areas procedures:

- We require employees and volunteers to stand within earshot of locker room when in use by consumers, and to intermittently and briefly check inside the locker room, so users know the locker room is being monitored.
- We encourage employees to provide consumers with a strict time limit of how long they can be in the locker room to limit opportunity for inappropriate interactions and activities. We discourage the use of locker rooms by consumers of different ages at the same time.
- Prohibit the use of locker room horseplay such as towel snapping. We require all employees (including maintenance) and volunteers to also watch for suspicious or inappropriate locker room conduct; One on One interactions between Employees, Volunteers, and Consumers.

4.0 Program Operation

Bathroom policy – Children who are participating in YMCA childcare or camp program are not to be sent to bathrooms without a YMCA staff member present. The buddy system or three children together are not acceptable practices and are not permitted at the YMCA. For single stall bathrooms the YMCA staff will be positioned outside of the bathroom to make sure no one else enters the restroom. At minimum, when multiple children are in the bathroom or locker room, YMCA staff members will be standing in the doorway so they can have at least auditory supervision of the children. Staff members can and are encouraged to be inside the facilities so they can be easily seen by the children and so they are able to immediately stop any inappropriate activity. This is best done with multiple staff members so individual staff are not subjected to unwarranted allegations. Protocols that address the variety of unusual circumstances possible during outdoor or off-site activities shall be established and made part of that program/activity’s operating guidelines. In the pool setting, youth will be taken to the family locker room for restroom breaks and after checking the common area, will direct the child to an open private dressing room and wait outside the room.

4.1 Ratio expectations – The YMCA has enacted the following age group ratios for programs:

Preschool: 12 – 1	Preschool Gymnastics: 8 – 1
Day Camp: 18– 1	School age Gymnastics: 8 – 1
Preschool Camp: 12 – 1	Other Preschool Programs: 12 – 1
Preschool Swim lesson: 6 – 1	Other School age Programs: 18 – 1
School Age Swim Lesson: 10 - 1	Youth Sports: 15 – 1
After school care: 18– 1	
Competitive Teams: 25 - 1	

The YMCA has established these ratios as minimums, not goals to achieve. Certain programs and activities require more stringent ratios, e.g. Preschool and day camp. Ratios alone do not equate to effective supervision, but if established ratios cannot be maintained the activity will be changed or additional staff members will be added. These ratios

do not apply to programs that include both the parent and child in the activity.

4.2 Program audits – Announced and unannounced audits will be conducted of all YMCA programs. These audits will look directly at abuse prevention practices. The audits will be performed by the association leadership with all programs audited by association leadership at least twice yearly.

4.3 Regular computer audits – The Employee Handbook should clearly outline the access that the YMCA will have to all messages, email, internet usage and the like. It should also clearly specify those internet sites that are unacceptable and let the employee know that they will be terminated if they are visiting those or similar sites. The YMCA should have systems in place to monitor and record all Internet usage and should audit this regularly to ensure compliance with the standards.

4.4 Transportation – YMCA ratios and supervision standards apply during transportation. Staff will spread themselves out in the vehicle and maintain their focus on the children while transportation is occurring. If the children being transported are of multiple age groups, they should be seated by age group, with older children positioned to the rear of the vehicle. Boys and girls generally should not be seated together; children with known relational challenges should also not be placed together. If larger capacity buses are used, staff should monitor behavior by walking through the aisle on a frequent but irregular basis.

4.5 Field trips – The risks to children change when they are off-site. In order to protect them from predators who may be at fieldtrip locations the following standards will be enacted

4.5.1 The ratio of students to staff will be reduced when programs go off-site. The appropriate ratio will be determined based on age of the children and the field trip activity and location.

4.5.2 Staff will check all bathrooms immediately prior to use by the children and will be in the restroom (if not single stall) when being used by a child.

4.5.3 Children's changing of clothes should take place prior to leaving the YMCA facility and if possible, should wait until the group has returned to minimize the use of changing facilities in public locations

4.5.4 Picking up children while on field trips should only be allowed if prearranged and recipient should be required to show proof of ID and sign a receipt for the child.

4.6 Playgrounds/Recreational Spaces - Playgrounds and recreational activities which have mixed age groups can create increased opportunities for inappropriate interactions between participants. Employees and Volunteers may not get involved in conversations with each other or step away to tend to

personal business, such as phone calls. To reduce risk, procedures for playgrounds and recreational activities require:

- 4.6.1 Minimum employee/volunteer to consumer ratios, which should mirror other activity ratios and consider:
 - age and number of consumers present
 - special or unique consumer needs
- 4.6.2 Size and configuration of playground/recreation area, i.e. barriers to supervision, whether physical boundaries like fences exist, geography and location, whether other outside groups will also be present. Definition of specific authorized areas and boundaries, including:
 - if and how outside groups can be cleared from activity areas during programming.
 - if outside groups or mixed ages are using facilities at the same time, delineate boundaries so that different groups do not intermix.
- 4.6.3 Specific instructions on how to monitor barriers to supervision (such as storage sheds, playhouses, tunnels, and shrubs):
 - identify in advance any blind spots or equipment that obstruct line of sight supervision and designate them off limits or plan regular walk throughs of those areas.
 - station employees and volunteers near playground equipment such as tunnels and slides in order to reduce the appearance of privacy.
- 4.6.4 Employees and volunteers assigned to specific areas to supervise, i.e. zone monitoring:
 - ensures recreation supervisors are adequately spaced around the whole area; they should continuously move within their assigned zone; position them around the perimeter of the recreation area to ensure ample supervision and that consumers remain in approved spaces.
- 4.6.5 Active supervision:
 - employees and volunteers should position themselves to be able to see and hear all consumers to whom they are assigned; anticipate what consumers will do and redirect when necessary; listen and notice changes in sound or absence of sound; remain engaged with consumers rather than socializing with other employees or volunteers.
 - Supervisors conduct periodic check-ins and assessments of the activity period and of the entire activity area.
- 4.6.6 Reviewing boundaries and rules with consumers prior to the activity, including that they are to remain in line of sight of employees and volunteers at all times and how to report inappropriate behaviors.
- 4.6.7 Specific bathroom procedures are to be defined, ensuring there are enough recreation supervisors to maintain ratios at all times.
- 4.6.8 Employees and volunteers periodically scan and conduct name-to-face roll calls for each age group and whenever moving from

one activity or space to another.

- 4.6.9 Prohibit employees and volunteers from using cell phones except as a means of communicating with other recreation supervisors, including inside employees if possible, so they can get assistance when needed without exceeding ratios.

- 4.7 **Special needs participants** – Special needs program participants are, indeed, more at risk than others and need to be more closely supervised to prevent peer-to-peer abuse and the staff supervising them needs to be more closely supervised to prevent a predator from taking advantage of their impairment to abuse them.

Special needs volunteers or staff also need better supervision. While the staff member or volunteer may well appear to be an adult, their psychological state may have been arrested at the age of 13 or 14. If so, they will likely be attracted to children of that age, or less, and they will have the urges and impulse control of a child of that age.

- 4.8 **Member expectations around children** – Members are expected to use decent language and act in a positive manner. Members who talk in a sexual manner, perform sexual gestures, sexual acts, or attempt inappropriate contact with a child will have their membership suspended or terminated depending on the degree of the offense. The police may be contacted, if warranted. No use of cameras or cell phones is allowed by members in the locker room areas. As per the Reciprocity agreement, member records can be run automatically against child abuse and sex offender registries on a monthly basis.

- 4.9 **Special program expectations** – The following YMCA programs are recognized as needing specialized controls to reduce potential for abuse. While some of the already-recommended rules may not apply (you can't ban one-on-one contact in a mentoring program, for example), other rules (like feedback systems) need to be increased in intensity or frequency to balance the threats in these programs. Please refer to the abuse prevention strategies for these programs.

- 4.9.1 Leaders Club
- 4.9.2 Youth In Government

5.0 PARENTAL EDUCATION

- 5.1 **YMCA child protection policy** – At the start of every program the YMCA will provide its child protection policy to parents (appendix 4). The child protection policy provides parents with the babysitting policy, outside contact policy, electronic communication policy, and information on child abuse. Staff contact information will be on the document in case a parent has questions, concerns, or observes a violation.

- 5.2 **Contact information for violation of policies** – The association will provide both the Program Leadership Team as staff contacts that parents can call in case of concern. Staff will receive training on responding to an allegation,

child abuse warning signs, and YMCA policies so they can effectively respond to concerns and questions. Staff will provide parents with important questions to ask children on a regular basis in order to detect abuse concerns, e.g.,

- Is anyone scaring or threatening you?
- Is anyone asking you to keep secrets?
- Has anyone said anything to you that made you feel bad?
- Is anyone touching you in a way that you don't like?

5.3 **Child education** – Children participating in camp, after school, and teen programs will be informed of the policies staff have agreed to follow regarding physical contact, gift giving and outside contact.

6.0 Responding to an allegation

6.1 **Reporting suspicious behavior to a supervisor** – All staff members have received specific training concerning the requirement to report violations of YMCA policies immediately to their supervisor. If the supervisor does not effectively respond, the staff members have been trained to notify the next level supervisor. YMCA staff are expected to observe other staff members' behaviors, including that of supervisors, and to report any suspicions to a supervisor.

In the event that a supervisor or an administrator receives a report of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors, abuse allegations or incidents of abuse, or policy violations from an employee, volunteer, consumer, or parent/guardian, the supervisor is instructed to do the following:

- Report to the next level supervisor or administrator.
- Speak with the employee or volunteer who has been reported.
- Review the file of the employee or volunteer to determine if similar complaints were reported.
- Determine the appropriate response based on the report.
 - Take into consideration factors such as:
 - Context of red flag or inappropriate behavior or policy violation
 - Severity of red flag or inappropriate behavior or policy violation
 - History of red-flag or inappropriate behaviors or policy violations; and
 - Trainability of employee or volunteer.
- Document the report on the appropriate form (Incident Report).
- If at any point in gathering information about a report of red flag or inappropriate behavior, a concern arises about possible abuse, contact the state authorities and file a report.
- If appropriate, notify parents/guardians.
- Advise the person who reported the behavior that the report is being taken seriously.

Based on the information gathered, the following may be required: Increase monitoring or supervision of the employee, volunteer, and/or program. If policy violations with consumer(s) are confirmed, the employee or volunteer must be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination and prosecution. Disciplinary action will follow the Progressive Disciplinary Process outlined by the organization. If more information is needed, interview and/or survey other employees and volunteers or consumers. After the internal review of the red-flag or inappropriate behaviors, incident/allegation of abuse or policy violations, the YMCA Leadership (CEO and Directors) will determine if system changes are necessary, such as reviewing the need for increased supervision, revised policies or procedures and the need for additional training. If needed the YMCA CEO will consult with HR or a lawyer.

- 6.2 **Mandated reporter** – All YMCA staff members are mandated reporters with regard to child abuse. Any evidence of potential child abuse or observation of inappropriate contact by a parent, staff member or other child will be reported to the [Ohio Department of Job and Family Services at 855-OHCHILD or 855-642-4453.](#)
- 6.3 **Suspension of staff or youthful offender** – Any YMCA staff member who is alleged to have abused a child will be suspended with pay pending the outcome of an investigation by the YMCA and appropriate authorities. If the allegation is substantiated, the staff member will be terminated. If the allegation is against a program participant, s/he will be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation. Depending on the severity of the incident, the participant may be terminated from the program.
- 6.4 **Incident investigation** – The YMCA will perform an investigation following any allegation of child abuse by a staff member, participant or member. The YMCA may utilize its insurance company, The Cincinnati Insurance Company, or other agencies to interview staff, witnesses and/or children.
- 6.5 **Insurance company contact** – Immediately after an allegation of abuse the YMCA will notify its insurance company, The Cincinnati Insurance Company through Miller & Miller Insurance Company. They will be asked to assist in the investigation. The following individuals are approved to contact the CEO or Program Leadership Team member on duty. Only in the absence of all of the above identified staff members should initial contact be made by any other YMCA staff member. The phone number for Miller & Miller Insurance is 330-364-6641.
- 6.6 **Record retention** – Following an allegation against a staff member, their personnel file will be sealed and locked in the Business Manager’s office. The file will have no items removed or added. It will only be moved from the locked location at the direction of the CEO.
- 6.7 **Working with the media** – The YMCA has enacted the media plan outlined in Appendix 5. When the plan is enacted, only the individuals identified in the plan should speak with members of the media. The YMCA will develop a media statement.
- 6.8 **YMCA of the USA** – As soon as is practical, or no later than immediately

after the initial investigation, the CEO will contact YMCA of USA to apprise them of the situation and next steps in the investigation.

- 6.9 **Counseling** – After an event the YMCA will engage the firm Chrysalis Counseling Center or other appropriate counseling center, to provide consulting services to staff and affected children. This firm or a psychologist of the victim’s family’s choice will be provided as well. The YMCA, in consultation with The Cincinnati Insurance Company, may offer to cover the expense of counseling in an effort to start the healing process for the victim.

7.0 **Grievance Policy Employee/Volunteer/Parent/Guardians and Consumers**

This organization believes employees, volunteers and consumers have valuable thoughts and insights to share regarding the workplace and our operations. We encourage everyone to share opinions, suggestions, concerns, questions and/or grievances about our programs, policies, personnel issues, and/or other workplace matters and the organization. In general, the best person initially to bring opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to is the Director on Duty.

However, to the extent the concerns relate to that individual or to the extent a consumer or parent/guardian believes the person at the organization did not fully address a matter, consumers and parents/guardians may direct their opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to the next level of management or directly to the CEO, in person, by phone or email. To remedy concerns that appear to have been ignored or unresolved after initial reporting, utilize this formal grievance procedure.

This procedure provides for a timely, thorough and objective investigation of the following concerns:

1. Inappropriate Behavior by Employees/Volunteers
2. Inappropriate Behavior by Consumers
3. Retaliation; and/or
4. Whistleblower complaints
5. Written Complaint Required

Verbal complaints are encouraged, particularly for issues that may be easily and expeditiously resolved, but a written complaint is required to initiate this grievance process.

To ensure a timely and effective response, complaints should include the following information to the extent possible:

1. The name(s) of employee(s) involved
2. The date(s) the behavior occurred
3. The name(s) of any known witness(es)
4. A summary of the conduct meriting the grievance including:
 - a. The behavior complained of and/or the alleged policy or legal violation(s)
 - b. Direct quotes when relevant and available; and
 - c. Any relevant documentation.
5. The remedy sought by the employee making the complaint.

Anonymous method of reporting a grievance is also available. If you are not comfortable making the report directly, reports can be made anonymously by using the grievance qr code or link at <https://tuscymca.org/child-abuse-prevention>

Timeline for work-place grievances:

Employees who themselves have a complaint against another employee who are aware of employee behavior meriting a complaint, must provide the above described written complaint via email to their direct supervisor or CEO within 5-10 business days as the purpose of this policy is to timely and objectively resolve complaints. The direct supervisor or CEO will meet with the employee to hear their concern and attempt to resolve the complaint within 10 business days.

Following that meeting, the direct supervisor or CEO will provide a written response to the consumer who brought the complaint no later than 10 business days.

If a complaint is not resolved through the previous steps, you may request the matter be taken to the YMCA Board of Directors who will work to resolve the matter. The decision of this board regarding the resolution of the complaint is final and cannot be appealed.

Appendix 1



Statement of Abuse Prevention (Share this with the candidate)

The YMCA has a policy that we explain to each of our candidates. The YMCA is aware that there may be people who want to work or volunteer here for the wrong reasons. To prevent access to the children we serve by those individuals we check every applicant's criminal history and speak with individuals about their character as well as job skills. We structure our programs so that no staff member or volunteer is left alone with a child or other vulnerable individual. We try to prevent any opportunity for abuse, and we periodically interview children and others about their experiences in the program. We take all allegations, including those from children, very seriously. We refer all allegations to the authorities for investigation, and we cooperate fully with any investigation. Failure to do so may be grounds for termination.

Wrongdoers need to know that this is a very risky place to attempt to abuse children or the vulnerable. This thorough process not only protects the people in our care, but it also minimizes the potential for false abuse allegations against innocent staff members and volunteers. Do you have any questions about our policy?

Appendix 2



CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

In keeping with the policy of maintaining the highest standards of conduct and ethics, the Tuscarawas County YMCA ("YMCA") will investigate any suspected, abuse of children or adults or fraudulent and/or dishonest use or misuse of the YMCA's resources or property by staff, board members, consultants, or volunteers. Staff, board members, consultants, and volunteers are encouraged to report suspected abuse or fraudulent and/or dishonest conduct (i.e., to act as "whistleblower"), pursuant to the procedures set forth.

CODE OF ETHICAL PRACTICE AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Tuscarawas County YMCA will be bound by the code of ethical practices and relationships of the Association of Professional Directors of the YMCA of the USA. The issues of appropriate behavior among employees and participants are as important as it has ever been. Given increasing awareness of child abuse and concern for potential sexual harassment among employees and participants, the following are guidelines for employee conduct and behavior:

1. During YMCA programs, staff members and volunteers should never be alone with a single child, out-of-sight or unobserved by other staff.
2. When counseling children, an observer (staff or volunteer) should join with the counseling employee or volunteer. If this is not possible, keep the counseling session (conversation) in the open where it can be viewed by others.

3. Employees and volunteers are to refrain from the use of offensive language, innuendoes, physical contact, or behavior, including sexual harassment or intimidation, to members, fellow employees, volunteers, or other participants in YMCA programs or activities.
4. Employees and volunteers may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to your home unless one of the following conditions exists.
 - a. You and the child's family or guardians have a relationship that predates your employment or volunteer position at the YMCA.
 - b. You and the child's family or guardians have a relationship that predates the child's enrollment in a YMCA program.
 - c. You and the child or child's family or guardians are related.
5. Employees and volunteers shall not interact with children under the age of 18, whom they have become acquainted with through YMCA programs and activities, through, but not limited to, online services such as Facebook, Linked-in, Twitter, or other similar chatrooms or interactive services.
6. Employees and volunteers will not possess, share, create, produce or distribute sexually oriented materials, including printed and online pornography on YMCA property.
7. Anyone observing any inappropriate behavior, conduct, or abuse as noted above, or which they believe to be inappropriate, must report it to their supervisor and/or the CEO and cooperate fully with any investigation. Failure to do so may be grounds for termination

Sanctions

This organization has **zero tolerance** for abuse and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of consumers in its programs. Any mistreatment or abuse by an employee or volunteer will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service and cooperation with law enforcement.

Acceptable Forms of Nonverbal Communication

In working with children, the following, under appropriate conditions, may be permissible forms of nonverbal communication.

1. Hand to Shoulder contact
2. "High Five's"
3. Side by Side Hugs
4. Eye Contact
5. Rustling of Hair or Pats on the Head
6. Fist bumps
7. Handshakes
8. Thumbs up
9. Smiles

Appendix 3



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Tuscarawas County YMCA Social Media Policy encompasses websites and all internet activity related to both YMCA business social media sites such as association Facebook pages, and individual social media sites such as personal Facebook pages, Myspace, X and others. Managed appropriately, the YMCA believes in online communities and acknowledges them as a valuable component of shared media.

Personal Social Media Conduct

This policy has been developed for employees who maintain personal sites (i.e. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that may contain postings about YMCA's business, programs, fellow employees and the work they do, and the content that violates the YMCA personnel policy, or code of conduct. Many staff members may have or write blogs or post to sites. Although individuals have the right to express themselves as they deem fit, certain social media activity may lead to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Also, employees should be aware that under some circumstances, they will be individually responsible for their actions.

When an employee chooses to post information for the public via a social media site, the employee is legally responsible for everything posted. Individuals can be held personally liable for posting any comments or media deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous (whether pertaining to the YMCA, individuals, or any other entity). For these reasons, employees should exercise caution with regard to exaggeration, colorful language, speculation, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions and derogatory remarks or characterizations. Outside parties can pursue legal action against the employee for postings.

Staff that post to websites must be aware that, although some sites offer privacy settings, the Internet is a public domain and all the information you publish can be accessible to the public. Posting information on these pages is conceptually similar to sending a letter to the editor. You are advised to be mindful that the information you post on the internet will likely be seen by members of the YMCA community and could reflect poorly upon your character or upon the YMCA. As an organization that holds personal character in the highest regard, the YMCA is obligated to take actions to preserve its core values. When posting, it is important that employees follow these guidelines inside and outside the YMCA and both on or off duty: If you choose to discuss YMCA matters, you should identify yourself and your role at the YMCA, but make

it clear that you are speaking for yourself (by using first person) and not on behalf of the YMCA. It is a violation of this policy to make any false, unsubstantiated, or defamatory statements about the YMCA. An employee could add a content disclaimer such as “unless otherwise noted, the views expressed here are mine alone and not those of my employer.” If an employee chooses to participate in public social media activity, they must ensure that their profiles and online behavior are consistent with the YMCA handbook’s Code of Conduct as well as the Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct. All behavior must demonstrate the YMCA’s core values of respect, caring, honesty, and responsibility and be consistent in presentation to colleagues, donors, volunteers, co-workers, members, and leadership.

It is recommended that you choose the highest security/privacy settings on pages such as Facebook and Myspace so that only those you have carefully selected as friend connections can view your content. It is your responsibility to monitor your page diligently. Should content or an image be posted without your consent by a “friend” that is not in keeping with YMCA core values, it is your responsibility to remove it from your page.

Be mindful of copyright laws when copying content and quoting others. Always use caution in connection with posting content (text, images, videos, or any other copyrightable works). Do not post the Tuscarawas County YMCA logo or any other logo belonging to the YMCA to your personal website, blog, or any other social computing platform without first receiving written authorization from your supervisor.

Protect the confidential and proprietary information belonging to the Tuscarawas County YMCA, its partners, suppliers, employees, members, volunteers, or other people or companies on any online social computing platform.

Do not post pictures of members or guests enrolled in YMCA programs or participating in activities at the YMCA, especially those of children. Using cell phones or other devices to record and photograph on YMCA property without the approval of the CEO is prohibited.

Do not make pornography in any form available to consumers participating in the organization’s programs, events, and activities or assist consumers in any way in gaining access to pornography.

Report unsanctioned contact – you have agreed to no contact with YMCA-related children apart from YMCA programs. If you receive email, social media, or blog entries from any children whom you know from YMCA programming, you should contact your supervisor immediately. Any response to them is in violation

of your no-contact promise to the YMCA. If you do receive such a communication, you should determine how the child got your email or blog address and you should correct the deficiency and block further correspondence.

Postings may generate media coverage. If a member of the media contacts you about a YMCA-related blog posting or requests YMCA information of any kind, do not respond and contact the CEO. You should also contact your direct supervisor for clarification on whether specific information has been publicly disclosed before you blog about it.

YMCA Business Social Media Standards

The Tuscarawas County YMCA recognizes the value of social media in marketing its vision and mission, programs and in communicating special events. Our YMCA maintains both an Association Facebook page. These pages are designed only to announce happenings at our Y's and to accept "fans", but not to connect with individuals directly or communicate privately with others. When managing the Tuscarawas County YMCA social media sites for business purposes, it is important that employees follow these guidelines:

Do not cite or reference members, children, guests, partners, employees, or suppliers without the prior written approval from the individual being referenced and/or the supplier. A written release must be obtained by a parent or guardian for those under age 18. A child under the age of 18 years old cannot give approval to be contacted or communicated about.

Do not post pictures or videos of members or guests enrolled in YMCA programs or participating in activities at the YMCA, especially those of children, unless prior written approval by that individual or guardian has been given and your supervisor has authorized the posting. A written release must be obtained by a parent or guardian for those under age 18. A child under the age of 18 years old cannot give approval.

Protect the confidential and proprietary information belonging to the Tuscarawas County YMCA, its partners, suppliers, employees, members, volunteers, or other people or companies on any online social computing platform.

Use good judgment. It is asked that all employees assist in monitoring the internet for information that may reflect negatively on the YMCA. If information seems questionable or makes you feel uncomfortable, discuss the content with your manager. Violation of this policy is a serious offense and may lead to discipline or discharge.

Appendix 4



Parental Handout

The Tuscarawas County YMCA is committed to providing the safest possible environment for children that are involved in YMCA programs, activities, and open recreation. This is a collection of policies that have been initiated for staff, volunteers, and participants to help ensure the highest level of child safety.

Child Watch Policy

1. During YMCA programs, staff members and volunteers should never be alone with a single child, out-of-sight or unobserved by other staff.
2. When counseling children, an observer (staff or volunteer) should join with the counseling employee or volunteer. If this is not possible, keep the counseling session (conversation) in the open where it can be viewed by others.
3. Staff and volunteers are to refrain from the use of offensive language, innuendoes, physical contact, or behavior, including sexual harassment or intimidation, to members, fellow employees, volunteers, or other participants in YMCA programs or activities.
4. Some acceptable Forms of Nonverbal Communication while working with children under appropriate conditions include:
 1. Hand to Shoulder contact
 2. "High Five's"
 3. Side by Side Hugs
 4. Eye Contact
 5. Rustling of Hair or Pats on the Head
 6. Fist bumps
 7. Handshakes
 8. Thumbs up
 9. Smiles

Outside Contact Policy

1. Staff are prohibited from taking a child home after a YMCA program or event.
2. Staff may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to their home unless one of the following conditions exists.
 - a. The staff or volunteer and the child's family or guardians have a relationship that predates their employment or volunteer position at the YMCA.
 - b. The staff or volunteer and the child's family or guardians have a relationship that predates the child's enrollment in a YMCA program.
 - c. The staff or volunteer and the child or child's family or guardians are related.

Electronic Communication Policy

1. No staff or volunteer shall post pictures of YMCA members or participants, especially children, on any social media site.
2. Staff and volunteers will not interact with children under the age of 18, whom they have become acquainted with through YMCA programs and activities, through, but not limited to, online services such as Facebook, Linked-in, Twitter, or other similar chatrooms or interactive services.
3. Anyone observing any inappropriate behavior, conduct, or abuse as noted above, or which they believe to be inappropriate, should report it to a member of the YMCA Program Leadership Team.

Information of Child Abuse

There are four types of child abuse. They are:

1. **Physical:** An injury or pattern of injuries that happen to a child and are not accidental. These injuries may include beatings, bruises, bites, welts, strangulation, broken bones, or death.
2. **Neglect:** Neglect occurs when adults responsible for the wellbeing of a child fail to provide for the child. Neglect may include not giving food, clothing, shelter, failure to keep children clean, lack of supervision, and withholding medical care.
3. **Emotional:** Any chronic and persistent act by an adult that endangers the mental health of emotional development of a child including rejection, ignoring, terrorizing, corrupting, constant criticism, mean remarks, insults, and giving little or no love, guidance, and support.
4. **Sexual:** Sexual abuse is the sexual assault or sexual exploitation of children. Sexual abuse may consist of numerous acts over a long period of time or a single incident. Children can be victimized from infancy through adolescence. Sexual abuse includes rape, incest, sodomy, fondling, exposing oneself, oral copulation, penetration of the genital or anal openings, as well as forcing children to view or appear in pornography. The perpetrator keeps the child from disclosing through intimidation, threats, and rewards.

In the United States between 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused by the time they are 18. In 80% of the sexual abuse cases the child knows the offender and in 50% of all cases, the offender is a member of the child's household. Abuse crosses all socioeconomic backgrounds.

Grievance Policy Employee/Volunteer/Parent/Guardians and Consumers

This organization believes employees, volunteers and consumers have valuable thoughts and insights to share regarding the workplace and our operations. We encourage everyone to share opinions, suggestions, concerns, questions and/or grievances about our programs, policies, personnel issues, and/or other workplace matters and the organization. In general, the best person initially to bring opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to is the Director on Duty.

However, to the extent the concerns relate to that individual or to the extent a consumer or parent/guardian believes the person at the organization did not fully address a matter, consumers and parents/guardians may direct their opinions, suggestions, concerns, and/or questions to the next level of management or directly to the CEO, in person, by phone or email. To remedy concerns that appear to have been ignored or unresolved after initial reporting, utilize this formal grievance procedure.

This procedure provides for a timely, thorough and objective investigation of the following concerns:

1. Inappropriate Behavior by Employees/Volunteers;
2. Inappropriate Behavior by Consumers;
3. Retaliation; and/or;
4. Whistleblower complaints.
5. Written Complaint Required

Verbal complaints are encouraged, particularly for issues that may be easily and expeditiously resolved, but a written complaint is required to initiate this grievance process.

To ensure a timely and effective response, complaints should include the following information to the extent possible:

1. The name(s) of employee(s) involved
2. The date(s) the behavior occurred
3. The name(s) of any known witness(es)
4. A summary of the conduct meriting the grievance including:
 - a. The behavior complained of and/or the alleged policy or legal violation(s);
 - b. Direct quotes when relevant and available; and
 - c. Any relevant documentation.
5. The remedy sought by the employee making the complaint.

Anonymous method of reporting a grievance is also available.

If you are not comfortable making the report directly, reports can be made anonymously by using the grievance qr code or link at

<https://tuscymca.org/child-abuse-prevention>

Timeline for work-place grievances:

Employees who themselves have a complaint against another employee who are aware of employee behavior meriting a complaint, must provide the above described written complaint via email to their direct supervisor or CEO within 5-10 business days as the purpose of this policy is to timely and objectively resolve complaints. The direct supervisor or CEO will meet with the employee to hear their concern and attempt to resolve the complaint within 10 business days.

Following that meeting, the direct supervisor or CEO will provide a written response to the consumer who brought the complaint no later than 10 business days. If a complaint is not resolved through the previous steps, you may request the matter be taken to the YMCA Board of Directors who will work to resolve the matter. The decision of this board regarding the resolution of the complaint is final and cannot be appealed.

YMCA Staff Contacts

For more information or to report suggested abuse, contact any of the YMCA Program Leadership Team at the YMCA, 330-364-5511:

Meagan Shaheen, CEO

Ext. 304 meagan@tuscymca.org

Jeff Bray, Youth and Family Director,

Ext. 310 jeff@tuscymca.org

Stacy Harlan, Aquatic Director

Ext. 314 stacy@tuscymca.org

Ryan Hursey, Health & Wellness Director

Ext. 320 ryan@tuscymca.org

Kathleen Johnson, Associate Executive
Director

Ext. 317 kathleen@tuscymca.org

Appendix 5



Media Plan

Do not answer any questions from media or bystanders. This is out of respect to the victim, family and to protect yourself and the YMCA. Direct anyone requesting information to the CEO.



RECEIPT OF THE CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PLAN FOR STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

This receipt acknowledges that I have received the YMCA Child Abuse Prevention Plan for Staff and Volunteers. This receipt will become a part of my personnel file while employed at the Tuscarawas County YMCA.

I understand that the Tuscarawas County YMCA is a "Mandated Reporting" organization as outlined in the Child Abuse Plan for Staff and Volunteers, and as such I am required to report any suspected abuse to my supervisor, CEO, or Program Management Team member.

I agree to read the Child Abuse Prevention Plan for Staff and Volunteers and will present any questions I have to the CEO or my supervisor.

I understand that the YMCA has a zero-tolerance standard for abuse and inappropriate behavior by staff members and volunteers.

The Child Abuse Prevention Plan for Staff & Volunteers is dated **April 27, 2026**, and supersedes any previous plans.

Signature of Employee

Name (please print)

Social Security Number

Date