



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

KIDS CLUB HANDBOOK

Westfield Area Y

Revised 12/11



WELCOME!

Welcome to the Westfield Area Y Kids Club program. This handbook describes our policies and procedures. We hope that this service will enable you to make greater use of the fitness classes and the facilities.

The Kids Club program is for children to socialize and play with other children. Parents must always be in the building while children are in our care. Communication between the staff and parents is essential. We make every effort to communicate to the parents daily on the kind of day your child had at the Y. We appreciate your sharing with the staff any insight into your child's life that could influence his or her time here.

The Y offers a variety of sports classes that are listed in the brochure that your child can attend. If you sign your child up for any of these classes a staff person will escort your child to and from the class.

Hours of Operation

Labor Day - July 3rd

Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 2:30PM Saturday 8:30AM – 12:30PM
Monday – Thursday 6:00 – 8:00PM

July 5th – Late August

Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 1:00PM Saturday 8:30AM-12:30PM
Monday – Thursday 6:00-8:00PM

If we need to close Kids Club for inclement weather there will be a message left on ext. 423 and posted on our website. Kids Club is closed for one week at the end of August, a reminder will be posted.

Registration

All children who attend the Kids Club program must be registered. To register, parents must fill out a registration card and submit a copy of the child's birth certificate. At that time you will receive this handbook explaining the program.

Our Program Room

The Kids Club room is divided into two areas, the infant/toddler side and the preschool side. All toys and furniture are age appropriate for each side.



Infant and Toddler Side: 4 months – 3 years old

Preschool Side: 3 years – until 10th birthday
(evenings up to 11th birthday)

Parents of children 2½- 3 years of age may choose what side best fits their child. Children may need some time for transition into the preschool side. Toys and equipment are safe for children ages 3+ on the preschool side.

There is a limit of 4 infants on the infant/toddler side (4-12 mos.). Parents must sign infants up at the Welcome Center and pay in advance for 9AM and 10AM time slots. If you cannot come in during your scheduled time, please call/email at least 2 hours prior to your scheduled reservation (x423 or erooney@westfielddynj.org). You may reschedule up to three babysitting hours within the same session. There are no refunds, and any monies paid for reservations not properly cancelled will be forfeited. We allow 18 children on the infant/toddler side and 30 on the preschool age side.

Waiting List

Once the room is filled, a waiting list will be established.

Payment

Payment cards are available at the Welcome Center. Silver members are required to give the payment card to the Kids Club greeter when they arrive. The staff will mark off the time that was used and return the card to you. These cards are the same as cash. There will be no refunds given for lost or unused cards.

Fee/Availability

MEMBERSHIP TYPE	CHILD'S AGE	DAILY MAX.	FEE
Infant and Toddler:			
Gold	4 – 12 mo.	1 hour	\$4/hr.
Silver	4 – 12 mo.	1 hour	\$6/hr.
Gold	12 - 36 mo.	1 ½ hours	FREE
Silver	12 - 36 mo.	1 ½ hours	\$5/hr.
Preschool:			
Gold	3 – 10 yrs.	2 hours	FREE
Silver	3 – 10 yrs. (age 11 evenings)	2 hours	\$5/hr.

Sign In-Out Procedure

Parents sign children in and out. Parents must label their child's snacks and place a nametag on their child. It is best to label all of your child's belongings. Parents may not leave their belongings in the room. The Y offers lockers for members while working out. Children's coats must be hung up outside of room. Strollers must be **closed** and left outside the classroom in the hallway. The Y is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Release of children

Children will only be released to the same parent that signed them in. Until we get to know parents and children, parents may be asked to show identification. Your Y membership card is fine.

Staff

All of our staff members are mature people who enjoy working with children. Many of our staff members have formal education in early childhood. All staff members become certified in CPR/First Aid and attend workshops and trainings to further their education.

Director of Preschool & Kids Club – Eileen Rooney
Coordinator of Kids Clubs – Leatitia Oldenstam & Marilyn Goldberg

First Days

First separations are sometimes difficult for both parent and child. This adjustment period is vital for a successful experience at the Y, for both parents and the children.

There are some children who find it difficult adjusting to new groups and a new environment; they may be more comfortable beginning the program with shorter hours and gradually lengthening their stay over a two or three day period.

For the well being of the child who arrives anxious or upset, the staff will try to accept their behavior without pressuring them. They help the child deal with separation by encouraging the child to focus their attention on an area of interest.

Saying goodbye is an important part of the child's adjustment. It is reassuring to the child to be told when the parents are leaving, rather than finding the parents have disappeared from the room. If your child is crying and we can't calm them down we will come to get you after fifteen minutes.

Families should be greeted and acknowledged by the staff. It is reassuring to the child to hear the parents and staff exchange greetings and good-byes. In addition it ensures that the staff is aware that the child has entered the room and he/she is now responsible for the child.

Emergencies/Fire Drills

In the event of an emergency, the staff will evacuate the children to the sidewalk on Ferris Place. Parents should evacuate from the nearest exit and walk around to meet their child. We have enough Y staff to safely evacuate the rooms. Children MUST BE SIGNED OUT before leaving.

Philosophy of Discipline

The Westfield Area Y holds children in the highest regard. We believe in promoting a healthy self-image and always reinforce positive behavior. We accomplish this by practicing the techniques of encouragement, acknowledgement of positive behaviors, shaping and role modeling. When we need to extinguish negative behaviors we rely on non-threatening techniques. Children are first distracted from the negative situation and then redirected to something positive. If necessary a quiet area is used to provide children several seconds to think about their actions.

We at the Westfield Area Y believe children need structure and discipline. We strongly believe that children are human beings who require respect. Our philosophy of discipline reflects these feelings.

The Y reserves the right to DISMISS any child from Kids Club who is harmful or a threat to the well being of any other children/staff or that does not adhere to the policies and procedures. Please see attached expulsion policy.

Outside Time

Children on the preschool side may play on the playground. Please dress your child accordingly. We occasionally visit the gym or play games in a racquetball court.

Snacks

Children may bring a simple snack and a drink to Kids Club. All children must be sitting at the snack table while eating or drinking. Snacks, juice boxes, bottles or sippy cups must be labeled with your child's name. There are no gum, candy, soda or nut products permitted in the program. We ask that parents send in wipes to wash their child's hands.

Food That Are Choking Hazards

Please do not pack food for children under 4 years of age that are implicated in choking incidents (round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, or slippery). Examples of these foods are hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), raw carrot rounds, whole grapes, hard candy, nuts, seeds, raw peas, hard pretzels, chips, peanuts, popcorn, marshmallows, spoonfuls of peanut butter, and chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Infant toddler side: Children may eat and drink only while sitting in the snack chairs or in the stroller. Preschool side: All children must sit at snack table while eating or drinking.

Healthy and Safety

Children should only attend the program when they are healthy. If your child shows any symptoms of being ill you must submit a doctor's note stating that they are not contagious. Children who are home from school sick are not permitted in the room.

- Fever – 24 hours fever free and to other symptoms.

- Vomiting – Keeping food/liquids down for 24 hours, no other symptoms.
- Strep Infection/or on an Antibiotic – 24 hours on medication, 24 hours symptom free 24 hours fever free.
- Diarrhea – 24 hours diarrhea free, no other symptoms.
- Runny Nose/Coughing – At director’s discretion he/she may be sent home. (If child is uncomfortable and is not participating)
- Earache/Red Eyes/Sore Throat – Child should be kept at home if she/he displays any of these symptoms. If any of these symptoms develops during program hours, child will be sent home.
- Rashes – A note from physician that it is not contagious.
- New Medication – Keep child at home for first 24 hours, in case she/he has allergic reaction.
- Allergies – That would contribute to any symptoms mentioned above, a note from the doctor stating the symptoms are allergy induced and not contagious.
- Head Lice – Nit free & must return to program with label from lice shampoo.

The classroom and all toys are cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis.

Bathrooms/Diapers

We ask that parents bring their children to the bathroom and/or put on a fresh diaper before coming to the program. We will call parents to change any diapers or help children who are newly potty-trained and require assistance in the bathroom. Staff will escort older children to the bathroom and wait outside for them.

Toys

Children are not permitted to bring toys from home. We have a variety of toys that will interest children of all ages.

Lost Items

There is a lost and found located in the hallway outside of Kids Club—please check the bin if your child is missing anything. To avoid the loss of personal belongings, be sure everything is labeled with your child’s name. The Y is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Expulsion Policy

Parental Actions for Child’s Expulsion

- Failure to pay.
- Failure to complete required forms including sign in and out procedures & registration forms.
- Habitual to tardiness when picking up child.
- Parent leaving the building while child is registered in Kids Club.
- Physical or verbal abuse to staff.

Child's Actions for Expulsion

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.

Proactive Actions That Will Be Taken In Order To Prevent Expulsion

- Staff will try to redirect child from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriate activities, supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- A brief time-out will be given so child can regain control.
- Child may lose certain privileges.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
- The director, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.

Schedule of Expulsion

- If after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the program.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to the program.
- Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the program.

Biting Protocol and Policies

Biting is an upsetting experience for everyone involved. It's upsetting for the child who is bitten and for that child's parents. It's upsetting for the parents of the child who bites. It's even upsetting for the biter, who is just learning that biting hurts other people. It's upsetting for classroom teachers who regularly cope with this developmental stage in young children. Biting, which is commonly seen among children 1 ½ to 3 years of age, is usually a normal stage of development and is something that almost all young children will try at least once.

Why Do Young Children Bite?

To most adults, biting seems to be a hostile, animalistic act. Yet, for many young children, biting is a natural stage in their development. Biting occurs for a variety of reasons. If biting occurs in the classroom, teachers will try to determine why the biting occurs. Biting behavior may occur for any of the following reasons:

- Oral exploration
- Teething
- Hunger or fatigue

- Lack of awareness that biting hurts
- Frustration, anxiety, or stress
- Inability to express feelings or needs verbally
- Mimicking behavior
- Inexperienced peer interactions
- A way of showing affection
- A need for autonomy and control
- Exploring cause and effect relationships
- Exploring holding on and letting go relationships
- Excitement and over stimulation
- Impulsiveness and lack of control

What Do Staff Do To Prevent Biting?

Staff maintain an environment that is consistent with children's needs, Many of the things that they do in the classroom will prevent biting episodes from occurring. The following are preventive measures that staff regularly follows:

Interactions

- Let the child know with their words and their manner that biting is unacceptable
- Maintain frequent positive teacher-child interactions.
- Respond to children's needs as soon as possible.
- Model empathy and caring interactions.
- The staff will examine the context in which the biting occurred and look for patterns. This is a time when observing and recording behavior is critical. Was it crowded? Were too few toys available? Was there too little to do? Were the children waiting too long? Was this a transition time? Is the biting child getting the attention and care he deserves at all times, or only when he acts out?
- Once staff have collectively examined the context in which biting occurred, classroom teacher will discuss with the director possible changes that can be made within the classroom that may prevent any further incidents, i.e. changing schedule, buying more of the same toy, allowing extra person in classroom during certain times of the day etc.

Positive Discipline

- Provide positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.
- Redirect undesirable behavior.
- Maintain consistency in expectations.
- Separate children who have difficulty being together.
- Always try to encourage but do not expect sharing.

Curriculum

- Provide activity choices to keep all children engaged.
- Provide many sensory activities.
- Allow for autonomy and child choice to minimize frustrations.
- Provide frequent opportunities for active play
- Keep sufficient toys within children's reach.
- Have duplicates of favorite classroom toys. Remove any toys that may cause conflict between children.
- Read books to children that model positive behavior repetitively in classroom.
- Provide teething items for those children needing them.
- Teach simple words to express needs.

Environment

- Staff will explore changing the environment, routines, or activities, if necessary.
- Arrange classroom in small learning centers.
- Keep activity groups small.
- Provide quiet space.

Scheduling

- Minimize the number of transitions.
- Minimize waiting time.

What Do Staff Do When A Biting Incident Occurs?

Teachers follow procedures to tend to the bitten child and to monitor the biter. Our procedures are as follow:

- Tend first to the child who has been bitten, comforting the child and caring for the bite
- Wash the bitten area with anti-bacterial soap and water and apply first aid as needed.
- Say a firm, "No biting it hurts!" to the child who did the biting.
- Model empathy toward the hurt child so the biter will see it.
- Help the children involved to express themselves verbally, give them simple words to use. i.e. (no biting, mine, teacher) When possible have child who was bitten tell biter "Don't Bite Me."
- Have biter removed from the situation or activity for a few minutes in order for biter to compose him/herself. Biter might have been overexcited and needs a few minutes to calm down.
- When possible, encourage resolution of the problem.
- Encourage, but don't force, the child who bit to comfort the hurt child. If possible, find a way to involve both children in cooperative play soon after with supervision.
- Note the biting incident in the logbook. Inform the Coordinator and Director.
- Include events leading up to the bite.
- Complete an incident report for the child who was bitten. Have Director, staff and parent sign it. Speak to the child's parents about the biting incident.
- Discuss the biting incident with the parents of the child who did the biting as well as the parent(s) of the child that got bit. Fill out an incident report. Explore possible reasons for the biting. Talk about things that can be done at home and at school to prevent further biting.

If The Biting Continues?

- Staff review each situation with the Coordinator/Director
- Biting incidents and attempts are documented to determine frequency.
- Staff observes for patterns of biting and attempted bites and documents them.
- The Coordinator and Director meet with the parent of the child who is biting.
- The Coordinator and Director and parents try to determine reasons for biting and possible solutions.
- Parents implement suggestions discussed in the meeting. A form is sent home with the parents' of the biter so they can document the steps they are taking at home to alleviate biting and to ensure that they are following through with the suggestions given. Forms must be completed on a weekly basis and collected by the director at the end of each week.
- Staff implements solutions that correspond to the possible reasons for the biting...
- If biting continues in frequency (minimum of 1 bite per month, based upon reason i.e. teething rather than behavioral),

- 1st bite – incident report to parents of victim and biter.
- 2nd bite – Parents will be given a form to document the steps that they are taken at home to alleviate biting. Form will be given to director at the end of the week.
- 3rd bite – Child will be sent home and suspended until a meeting can be set up with the director to discuss and action plan which may include taking a break from Kids Club, trying a less crowded time, shortening work out hours.
- As with all parent meetings, the discussion is confidential. Details of the meeting are not shared with other parents.
- After 30 days of any biting incidents, the clock resets itself and any further incidents will be handled in accordance to our policy timeline i.e. first incident after 30 days incident free will be treated as first time incident.
- Failure of a parent and/or parents to follow this policy fully will lead to dismissal of the child from the program.

Family Concerns

If at any time a parent has a concern no matter how small, they may speak to the Kids Club supervisor and or director to discuss any and all problems. Kids Club is run by the Preschool Department. The telephone extension is 423. We are always available for you.