

**Purpose**

The Billings Family YMCA (YMCA) seeks to create a safe, nurturing environment in which its mission of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility can be accomplished. We depend on our staff and volunteers to create and maintain this environment. These standards are designed to prevent abuse, reduce the risk of false allegations, and promote transparency, accountability, and trust across all programs and services. Any behavior that violates these standards, places a consumer at risk, or undermines the YMCA's commitment to safety and integrity will be addressed promptly and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or dismissal from volunteer service.

**Monitoring and Supervision**

When staff and volunteers are adequately supervised, potential offenders are less likely to act on their impulses because they face detection. When consumers are adequately supervised, they too are less likely to engage in inappropriate interactions with others.

***Ratios & Group Sizes***

Consumer to staff ratios in YMCA Youth Development programs are maintained during active programming. Staff are required to know all ratios of programs they are working with and report to supervisor if ratios are broken. Staff under 16 years of age are not to be included in ratios and must be accompanied by staff over 18 years of age.

Child Watch:

- Infants 8wks-18mths- 1:5 (10 max.)
- Toddlers 18mths-2yrs11mths- 1:6 (10 max.)
- Youth ages 3ys-12yrs 1:12 (24 max.)

Preschool ages (3-5) 10:1

School Age ages 5-12: 14:1

Dance 1:10

Swim Lessons Pre K 1:6; 5 and up 1:8

***Mixed Age Groups***

In most incidents involving one consumer abusing another consumer, the consumers are from different age groups. Each program is responsible for establishing specific guidelines for additional monitoring and supervision of activities that involve consumers from different age groups. Staff and volunteers must know that close line-of sight supervision is required when monitoring programs that mix age groups.

Increasing supervision in areas where consumers of different age groups participate is provided by different supervision methods such as quick checks, rotation checks, and monitoring of live feed cameras.

***Unique Consumer Needs***

The Billings Family YMCA is committed to providing a high-quality experience for all consumers participating in our programs. We strive to accommodate the unique needs of each individual and ensure a safe, inclusive environment for all.

### ***Identifying and Addressing Unique Consumer Needs***

To understand and address the unique needs of our participants, we collect relevant information during the registration process for all consumer programs. This includes a section for parents/guardians to disclose any health concerns, behavioral issues, or emotional/physical needs. Additionally, staff may identify specific needs through ongoing interactions with children and their families. If, at any time, a staff member determines that a program may not be a good fit for a participant, we will engage in a discussion with the parent or guardian to explore alternatives.

### ***Approach for Emotional or Neurodivergent Participants***

For consumers who may struggle with emotional regulation or are neurodivergent, we utilize a "Step Back and Calm Down" method. This approach allows the child to briefly step away from a situation, with the support of staff, to regain composure. While one-on-one supervision is not provided, the participants must remain within sight of staff for safety. We understand that each child is unique and may respond differently to various situations, and our staff is trained in behavior management techniques such as redirection, providing clear and appropriate age rules, and offering positive reinforcement.

### ***Behavioral Concerns and Documentation***

Behavioral issues are documented through formal **Behavioral Reports** in all departments. These reports are signed by both the parent/guardian and the program director and are kept on file for reference. These procedures are outlined in our Parent Handbook, available on our website, and are also discussed during in-person meetings with parents/guardians when necessary.

If a participant's needs cannot be met within a given program, the program director will reach out to the parent/guardian to discuss further options.

**Excessive behavioral issues may result in removal from the program.**

### ***Determining When a Behavioral or Incident Report is Necessary***

Behavioral Reports are completed for significant incidents, and parents/guardians are asked to sign these reports after they are reviewed by the program director. The following behaviors will result in a Behavioral Report:

- **Violent behavior** (e.g., hitting, biting, kicking) or **bullying** will not be tolerated and will result in a write-up and immediate dismissal from the program if necessary.
- **Continual violent behavior** or repeated violations of the YMCA's code of conduct may lead to immediate removal from the program.
- **Timeouts** may be used for minor behavioral issues. The duration of the timeout should be age-appropriate, and no longer than five minutes.

Incident reports are completed for all minor or major incidents that may occur and may include but are not limited to, injury, theft, altercation, Etc. Reports are submitted to the Associate Executive Director, and CEO for review. Incidents reports are kept on file.

### **Immediate Action for Serious Incidents**

In cases where a consumer is exhibiting severe behavioral or medical issues, such as fighting, running away, violent behavior, bullying, or engaging in drug use, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. Depending on the situation's severity, we may call 911 or a non-emergency service. In all cases, the **CEO, AED, Guardian, or Director** will be notified and involved in addressing the situation.

### **Monitoring Consumer in Facilities**

Consumers under the age of 12 should not be alone in the facility without a parent or guardian present unless part of a staff supervised program.

Consumers 12 years and older may be in the facility without an adult or guardian present. The MOD and Fitness Staff make regular rounds paying special attention to any consumer under the age of 18.

All consumer members and consumer guests must complete a membership application or waiver form signed by a parent or legal guardian which includes identifying information, any special medical or behavioral circumstances, any legal indemnifications, the youth's date of birth, and emergency contact information. \*Consumer 12-17 may sign waiver and membership application when parent or legal guardian is unable to be reached.

For direct supervision, the program may offer structured, scheduled activities like basketball tournaments, swimming activities, camp programs, etc. These activities should have one or more staff assigned to lead and supervise depending on ratio requirements. Consumer under the age of 12 must be signed out of a program by a guardian or authorized adult.

All program staff will wear nametags or identifying clothing so that the consumer can easily recognize them as staff.

### **Nap Time**

Staff and volunteers will utilize monitoring and supervision best practices such as line-of-sight supervision, zone monitoring and listening and observing for inappropriate behaviors between consumers.

### **Nap Time General Procedure**

Using these methods, staff and volunteers consistently monitor high-risk areas where sexual behavior between consumers is most likely to occur including:

- Every consumer sleeps in individual cribs, on individual cots, or mats. Consumers are not allowed to share a sleeping mat, blanket, or sleeping bag.
- Consumers should be placed in the same location to sleep as much as possible.
- Individual consumers' bedding is stored separately without contact with the floor or bedding of others.
- Sleeping equipment is stored separately (ex. The floor side of one mat does not touch the sleeping surface of another mat), and disinfected daily.

- Three feet (36") of spacing is maintained between cots, mats and cribs where possible. If there is no room, consumers are placed as far apart as possible with alternating consumers head-to- feet. Sleeping areas are arranged with as much space as possible between each consumer.
- Consumers should be soothed to sleep as needed by an adult. Staff, volunteers, and consumers should not sit or lie on anyone's bed or be in anyone else's sleeping bag.
- Quiet music or white noise may be played to help consumers rest and is defined as low volume to allow conversation easily within the room. Instrumental music is preferred.
- Rooms have enough light for staff to easily monitor consumers. Consumers are not allowed to nap in areas not visible to employees and volunteers.

### ***Bathroom Activities***

When supervising restroom use, adult staff members should first quickly scan the bathroom before allowing consumers to enter. **Do not assume that it is safe.**

### **Bathroom General Procedures**

For Group Bathroom Breaks:

Staff or volunteers will take groups of three or more consumers to the bathroom – following the "rule of three" or more

- Examine areas. No consumer, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or at another off-site location.
- Check restroom. Staff will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing consumers to use the facilities.
- Take consumers into small groups. Even if only one consumer needs to go to the bathroom, never go alone, always take at least 3 (known as the rule of three).
- Only one consumer can be in the bathroom at a time, this includes siblings. If a restroom has more than one stall, more than one consumer can go in at a time if you stand in the doorway to ensure that the consumers are not going into each other's stalls. Also remember that if you only have three consumers with you and two go into a stall you have now left yourself one on one with a consumer.
- If the bathroom only has one stall, only one consumer should enter the restroom while the others wait outside with the staff
- Minimize consumers of different ages using the bathroom at the same time.
- Staff need to stand outside the bathroom door but remain within earshot or line-of-sight.
- Staff should not use the restroom at the same time as consumers in their care.

For single-use restrooms:

- Consumers must ask permission to use the bathroom.
- Staff on duty need to frequently check bathrooms and be alert for improper behavior.

### ***Assisting Toileting/Potty Training/Diapering***

Staff should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs—diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, and so on. When this is not feasible, staff should be positioned so that they are visible to others. Other than diapering, consumers

are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.

### ***Consumers 2 and under***

Staff will assist with potty training and will change out accidents. Parents should provide extra clothing. If extra clothing is not provided, the parents will be contacted immediately. If accidents occur on a regular basis parents will be asked to bring the consumer in a pull up. Staff must remain in full view of other staff and are never allowed to change a consumer without another staff member present.

### ***Consumer 3 or older***

Staff will not wipe or change soiled cloth underwear when assisting with potty training. If accidents occur in cloth underwear parents will be called to change their consumer. If no extra clothing is available, the consumer will be sent home. Staff can suggest sending a consumer in a pull up for easier transition in potty training. Child Watch staff will change consumers if they soil a pull-up.

### ***Monitoring During Swim Lessons***

To ensure efficient monitoring and supervision of aquatics programs, and in addition to training our employees, the Y follows supervision procedures in the below areas:

1. Ensure instructors teach swimming lessons in open, viewable swimming areas supervised by other employees.

- Monitor that interactions with consumers follow the YMCA's guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions. (i.e. horseplay, "chicken fights," and dunking).
- Require instructors, when possible, to keep their hands above water and visible to others.
- Require instructors, when assisting a consumer during the lessons, to explain aloud where they will touch the consumer – "I am going to put my hand under your back to help you float."
- When possible, encourage parents/guardians to observe swimming lessons.

### ***Monitoring the pool deck and any sitting areas***

- Ensure all entrances and exits to the pool deck are appropriate and regularly monitored.
- Watch for inappropriate physical contact which maybe out of view, such as underwater.
- Monitor consumers to ensure they are following the YMCA's guidelines for appropriate interactions (including physical interactions, verbal interactions, and electronic communications).
- Have a plan of action for responding to any deck changing (individuals changing on the pool deck and not in the appropriate locker room or changing area).
- Staff should not have personal cell phones on pool deck at any time.
- Monitor the use of electronics (cameras, phones, etc.) to ensure that videography and pictures are not taken on deck.

### ***Monitoring Consumer Program Swimming***

The Billings Family YMCA and authorized off site locations for Summer Camp program are the only locations where the Consumer Program staff can take consumers to swim.

- A group of consumers should always be in line of sight and surrounded by staff and volunteers.
- Family Locker rooms are available for male and female staff available to go into the locker rooms with the consumers. If staff are going to swim, they must change in an area where program participants are not present.
- If a consumer needs to use the restroom, the staff member must use the "rule of three" and notify the rest of the staff when taking consumer to the restroom.
- Then, that staff member must accompany the consumer to the on-deck restroom or the family locker room and then accompany the consumer back to the pool. Never leave the consumer alone in the bathroom. Always use the "rule of three" when taking consumers to the locker room or restrooms.
- Staff are expected to be "rescue ready". This means staff are walking on the deck and always supervising the consumers. If a group is not swimming a member of staff must be present with that group.
- A group of consumers can only be in a pool area that has direct supervision of a staff member who is scheduled with that group.
- Only Coast Guard approved flotation devices are allowed in pools. Lifeguards will check if they are in question.

### ***Locker Room, Bathroom and Gym Checks***

To maintain a safe environment for all, capitalizing on our Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Guidelines and policy are extremely important to ensure a welcoming and clean environment for all members and guests. The Manager on Duty, facility and fitness staff do random locker room, bathroom and gym checks as a part of their daily duties. Consumer programs should use the Family Locker room and avoid utilizing the Men's and Women's Locker rooms whenever possible.

The locker room procedures include:

- Program staff must always be present in the locker room areas when they are in use by consumers.
- Staff are always present in locker rooms, especially when groups are transitioning.
- Staff prohibit the use of locker room horseplay such as towel snapping, running or screaming.
- Staff and consumers must shower at separate times.
- Youth Programs should use the Family Locker room; the co-ed shower area is to rinse off with a bathing suit on. These showers are in open view and require clothing due to coed nature of locker room.
- One staff member should supervise co-ed shower area by standing in the shower, clothed, and off to the side.
- Staff control turning on shower water and do not allow non-program members to come in or out the shower door to pool deck.
- Other staff in group go to pool deck to await those done showering.
- Communicate via radio to ensure all staff are in position.

- One staff member will post up by sink in front of changing stall and monitor to ensure only one consumer is in a private changing stall at a time.
- The hot tub, sauna and steam room in the men's and women's locker rooms are completely off limits to all consumers while participating in a YMCA program. Staff and volunteers are not allowed to use them when on the clock.
- MOD, facilities and fitness staff should regularly monitor hot tub, sauna and steam room areas.

### ***Playground Activities***

- Consumers should always remain in line-of-sight of staff and volunteers.
- Consumers are to be provided with a definition of specific and narrow geographic boundaries around the playground area.
- Barriers of supervision (such as storage sheds, playhouses, tunnels, and shrubs) are to be out of bounds to consumers.
- Staff are assigned specific areas to supervise, and staff may not congregate.
- Staff should conduct periodic head counts while on playground.
- Supervisors conduct periodic check-ins and assessments of the activity period and of the entire activity area.
- Entrances and exits are supervised at all times.
- Be actively engaged with the consumers during play in all areas.
- Ensure safety by placing mats under high-risk play equipment like monkey bars.
- Consumers are not allowed on any equipment they need assistance reaching such as monkey bars and rings, or high up areas. If it's not within the consumers reaching distance, they should not be using playground equipment.
- Due to our YMCA playground size, there should be no running.

### **Gym Activities**

- Position staff at exits and entrances.
- Actively engage with consumers by playing group games.
- Ensure one staff member is at the door and another at the exit.

### **Headcounts and Group Supervision:**

- Head counts should be done continuously before, during, and after activities.
- Staff should "sandwich" consumers in lines, leading, following, and monitoring transitions.
- Lines should always transition slowly and safely- not allowing large gaps to exist in lines.
- Transitioning should be done quietly keeping in mind respect of others at the YMCA.

### **Red Flag Behaviors regarding abuse, policy violations and consumer to consumer sexual activity**

It is important to watch for, and respond to, these red flag behaviors in adults such:

- Violating your YMCA's policies regarding appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions with consumers (for example, piggyback rides in the water, allowing consumers to hang onto them in the water, etc.).
- Loitering during consumer-only lessons or activities.
- Watching a consumer or group of consumers for an extended period.
- Inappropriate sexual behavior and/or activity by an adult.

It is important to watch for, and respond to, these red flag behaviors in consumers:

- Seeking out unsupervised areas.
- Inappropriate physical contact with other consumers (i.e. horseplay, "chicken fights," and dunking).
- Consumers who appear to be uncomfortable with attention they are receiving from an adult or another consumer.
- Inappropriate physical contact out of view (i.e. underwater).

ALL **Red Flag Behaviors** are documented and reported to the Guardian and CEO and Associate Executive Director.

### ***Signing in and Out***

#### *Direct Supervision on Scheduled Activities or Programs*

The safety of every consumer in our program is our main concern. The following procedures will ensure safety and abide by our leading practices.

Please talk with your supervisor about specific requirements for your program. The following guidelines apply:

#### ***Signing In***

- Every minor and guardian must be greeted with hello within 10 seconds of arrival.
- Prior to the start of the program, a roster must be printed and available at check-in so that staff can confirm who is present and who is absent.
- If a minor does not show up for a program and is on the sign-in and out sheet, leadership should contact the parent or guardian if they are concerned about the consumers' wellbeing.
- During check-in time, there should be an activity for the consumers to participate until everyone is checked in.
- Childcare staff should supervise and engage with participants.

#### ***Signing Out of Youth Development Programs (Preschool, Afterschool, Camp and Child Watch).***

Adults must provide ID with a name that matches an approved pick-up person before Y releases the consumer to their custody.

- Use your sign-in and out procedure as a tool during the program to make sure that all consumers are accounted for (COUNT KIDS, COUNT KIDS, and COUNT KIDS).
- If a consumer or consumers has not been picked up after the end of a program, we need to continue staffing the program with a minimum of two (2) people until all consumers have been picked up.

- If a consumer has not been signed out or picked up after 10 minutes of the end of scheduled activity, the guardian should be contacted. After 10 minutes, the consumer will be taken to the building's lobby or the Fortin Youth Center.
- If you cannot reach the guardian after 30 minutes have passed after the end of the program, contact your Coordinator or Director and they will contact the police.

***Signing Out of Aquatics, Sports, and Health and Wellness Programs. Staff and volunteers must ensure all consumers are signed out of the program and released to an authorized adult.***

- Rosters will be maintained for participants who are checked in and out of the programs by the staff.
- Consumer 12-17 may sign themselves out of programs, a release form must be filled out by the parent or legal guardian.
- If a consumer has not been picked up after 10 minutes of the end of scheduled activity, the guardian should be contacted. After 10 minutes, the consumer will be taken to the building's lobby or the Fortin Youth Center.
- If staff cannot reach the guardian after 30 minutes have passed after the end of the program, contact your Coordinator or Director and they will contact the police.

***Off-Site Activities (such as Field Trips, afterschool and sports programs)***

The off-site procedures include:

- Advance supervisor approval must be obtained for all off-site activities.
- Advance parental approval is required.
- Staff-to-consumer ratios must be specified for the activity.
- Staff and consumers must be easily identifiable.
- Specific bathroom and locker room procedures as applicable must be determined and described to consumers before the outing.
- Policies and procedures for locker rooms, bathrooms, and transportation outlined in this policy must be followed for offsite activities at all times.
- Transportation procedures must be determined before the outing.
- A supervisor observes the off-site activities at scheduled times and random intervals.
- Specific recommendations based on the location and type of activity (for example, parks, pools, outdoor playgrounds, etc.) must be determined in advance of the outing.

***Transportation General Procedures***

When transporting participants to and from YMCA activities, we follow the procedures below to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers, and consumers:

- Staff that have been approved to drive, have completed Defensive Driving Training and are 21+ years old are permitted to drive YMCA vehicles.
- All approved drivers must follow the YMCA Transportation policy.
- Upon registration, our program registration form with waiver is signed by a guardian over 18 years of age online or in person.
- Group roster and emergency contact sheets are always with staff during programs, including during transportation and while at all off site locations.

- Employees do heads counts when boarding the bus, when leaving the bus, periodically throughout the trip, and then again when boarding the bus.
- Employees will sit in seats that permit maximum supervision. If possible, employees should not share seats with consumers.
- Consumers must sit with same sex when being transported. Siblings are not to sit next to each other.
- When possible, high-risk consumers are seated alone or close to an employee.
- Drivers are prohibited from making unauthorized stops.
- Consumers may not be brought to the employee's home or the home of any employee's family member.
- Where applicable, all staff need to document the beginning and ending time of the trip and the mileage, names of the consumers being transported, other employees and volunteers who participate in transportation, purpose of the transportation, and the destination.
- Documentation of any unusual occurrences is required. Ex. Behavioral Reports.
- Staff do not transport consumers in personal vehicles or via public transportation.

**Staff are not allowed to transport consumers in their personal vehicles. If an emergency arises and this is necessary, staff must obtain permission from an administrator.**