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FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
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**EXPERIENCE THE  
MAGIC OF CHILDHOOD  
YMCA Preschool  
Brace Family Preschool Academy**

**2021-2022  
Family Handbook**

**[ymcacharlotte.org](http://ymcacharlotte.org)**



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
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Dear Families,

Welcome to the Brace Family YMCA Preschool Academy!

We are thrilled at the opportunity to come alongside you in this season of your child's preschool journey. It is our joy and a true blessing to partner with our families as we scaffold & nurture the building blocks of each child's learning and development. Our goal is to instill in each child a love of learning that will last a lifetime and to provide an environment where each child feels successful at every stage of their development.

The following information is meant to serve as a reference guide to the BRACE FAMILY YMCA Preschool Academy. Within its pages, you will find our mission and goals, policies on admission, enrollment, tuition, illness, emergencies, and child guidance, as well as outlines of procedures that will be used in the operation of the Preschool Academy. Please use this as your first recourse for questions. However if you find that you still have additional questions, please reach out to me.

Again, thank you for allowing us to collaborate with you as we embark on this year of adventure and discovery!

Tonja Giles  
Preschool Program Director

## **Program Information**

### **The YMCA Mission/Vision**

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

The YMCA Vision: "The YMCA of Greater Charlotte will connect and engage people to enhance lives and build community."

### **Our Philosophy/Goal**

At the heart of our Preschool Academy is the belief in a holistic approach to learning. We draw from and identify with philosophies of education that emphasize the "child as a person" who is innately curious and who learns best in an environment where they are given opportunities to use all of their senses. Our goal is to provide a safe, wholesome, rich environment where children may achieve their greatest God-given potential. Each child will experience developmentally appropriate opportunities that will help them grow physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. We integrate the "YMCA Character Development Traits" (Caring, Respect, Responsibility, Honesty and Faith) into all of our activities.

### **About Our Program**

The BRACE FAMILY YMCA offers a Christian preschool program designed to meet your child's educational needs with a variety of activities that include Character Education/Devotion, center time, creative play, music, physical fitness, while also incorporating fine and gross motor development. All of our classes are planned to develop each child's self-esteem and strong image of self-worth through learning and sharing in a fun, structured environment.

Children are encouraged to explore, ask questions, and solve problems in a warm and nurturing setting. Copies of your child's daily schedule will be given out at Meet the Teacher; additional copies are available upon request from your child's lead teacher.

Our program is a combined system of concept explorations, play based learning, and multi-sensory activities. We believe that through play and other process-oriented experiences, children gain confidence in their ability to learn. In keeping with our commitment to Christian principles, we weave the YMCA's 5 Character Traits into our daily activities. From circle time to their adventures through the learning centers, from the organized classrooms to the playground, we strive to provide an atmosphere where children can laugh, learn and play; a place where a child can be a child, growing intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually every day.

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte adheres to YMCA Quality Standards which are set by NC State guidelines. Please be advised, the Brace Family YMCA Preschool is not licensed and regulated by the State Department of Child Development due to being a half-day program, however they do follow a licensed, published curriculum and National YMCA Quality Standards (audits take place bi-annually). Half-day preschools are not required to be fully licensed and regulated by the State Department of Child Development. Preschools are not drop-in care programs. Children may not participate in the following programs or a combination of the following programs for more than **four hours in a 24-hour period** (calendar day) in a Charlotte YMCA or a combination of Charlotte YMCAs: unlicensed preschool, Y Kids (drop-in care) and unlicensed afterschool. **This means that you will not be able to utilize the drop-in care (at any YMCA in Greater Charlotte) for your child if they have already used the Children's Preschool Academy that day.** This is a NC State guideline. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Preschool Academy Director.

## **CLASSROOM MILESTONE INFORMATION**

### **Two Year Developmental Milestones**

- Identifies names with people and objects
- Enjoys using large motor skills (dancing, running, jumping)
- Interest in fine motor skills (lace boards, cutting, coloring)
- Learning how to listen, comprehend and communicate
- Attempt potty skills
- Explores toys and objects by sorting, pushing or pulling

### **Two Year Curriculum Focus**

- Activities that encourage children's imagination
- Group circle time activities that foster listening, language and social development
- Hands on learning environment
- Music and dramatic play that encourages creativity and build self esteem
- Art activities that encourages experimentation
- Engaging story time activities

### **Three Year Old Developmental Milestones**

- Can use sentences to relate simple stories
- Small motor skills are more easily mastered
- Interest in using material to form new objects
- Use imagination in play
- Asserts independence
- Imitates activities and actions
- Assists others with simple tasks
- Explores own environment

### **Three Year Old Curriculum Focus**

- Enhance small and large motor skills through table time manipulatives
- Introduce letter, numbers to promote language development
- Play experiences that encourage independence
- Creative art materials to express how they think, feel and view the world around
- Interactive activities that promote language and cognitive skills.

### **Four Year Old Developmental Milestones**

- Development in running, jumping, climbing and swinging
- Stronger independence and social skills
- Increased language skills (i.e. Sentence structure)
- Understand simple stories
- Imagination becomes more vivid
- Participate in simple games

### **Four Year Olds Curriculum Focus**

- Hands on manipulatives to teach basic math concepts (shapes, numbers, sorting, patterns, graphing)
- Reinforce letter recognition and beginning sound development
- Build skills for understanding the world around them
- Art activities that strengthen creativity and expression
- Sensory activities to introduce basic science concepts
- Exploration through simple number songs, rhymes and finger plays
- Directional and Positional words
- Self help skills

### **Transitional Kindergarten Developmental Milestones**

- School readiness
- Building the bridge to meet the needs of the 5 year old in areas of social, physical, and academics
- Developmental skills and self-esteem are enhanced

### **Transitional Kindergarten Curriculum Focus**

- Enhance social development
- Prewriting and spelling skills
- Graphing, measuring, sorting, patterns
- Science and the world around them
- Art and music development

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

Children will be assigned to classes based on their age **on or before August 31, 2021.**

***Children will not be "aged up" into a different classroom. They MUST meet the specified birthdate criteria for the class.***

Children do not change classes after they have a birthday. We recognize that classes will have a range of birthdays represented (just as children will have throughout their school career) and design our curriculum accordingly. The activities are done in a small group setting, so we can meet each child's developmental needs, and the curriculum is designed so that the activities grow with them as they develop over the course of the year.

## **STUDENTS:**

*While the BRACE FAMILY YMCA Preschool Academy will make every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for mentally and physically handicapped children, the Preschool Academy cannot accept children that are (1) of danger to themselves, (2) of danger to others, or (3) a disruption to the normal activities making it unreasonably difficult for other children to learn and participate in our programs. A parent/guardian is encouraged to discuss with the Preschool Director any special conditions or circumstances involving their child. This must be discussed prior to registration, so that we can advise you as to whether or not we can make reasonable accommodations for your child.*

## **Classroom Ratios (Teacher: children)**

Twos- 2:12

Threes- 2:14

Fours- 2:16

Transitional Kindergarten- 2:16

## **Curriculum**

The Brace Family Preschool Academy prides itself on a play based curriculum. Giving children opportunities and intentional guidance provides them with a variety of valuable learning experiences. Play fosters and develops language, problem solving, and motor skills while allowing kids to dive into academic areas in a fun and meaningful way. We provide many age-appropriate resources to enrich their learning through play and exploration. We believe that children learn best through hands on experiences. All activities are child centered. This program encourages self-expression and exploration. The daily activities will consist of circle time, read aloud stories, free choice centers, art, music and small group work. In addition to spending quality time in the classroom, the students also attend several "special" classes throughout the week.

***A daily class schedule will be given to you at the beginning of the year by your child's teacher. This schedule will include times of activities (story time, lunch, outside, etc.)***

## **Teachers**

Our preschool is staffed with many certified, as well as, experienced and trained teachers who are eager to work with your child! Our teachers either hold their B.A. in education, with years of preschool/elementary teaching experience, or a degree in a related field and relevant experience, or have a vast amount of preschool teaching experience and have received YMCA preschool certifications. We have searched high and low for leaders who exemplify outstanding character, compassion and love of children. We take pride in the high expectations we set for our preschool staff each year and evaluate them on a bi-annual basis.

Should you have any specific questions about your child's participation or behavior, you may schedule a virtual conference outside of class time. This will ensure that classroom instruction will remain uninterrupted and your concerns will be thoroughly addressed in a one-on-one setting. You can also leave a message for our teachers at: (704) 716-4323 or [Tonja.giles@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:Tonja.giles@ymcacharlotte.org) at any time.

## **Evaluations**

The teachers are continually assessing your child on a daily basis. We can learn so much about a child through daily activities. Individual progress reports will be sent home in the Fall and Spring. Students will be fully evaluated twice during the school year, and we discuss these evaluations with parents at our January family conferences. There will not be school on the day of your conference. We believe that since we are a small and close-knit preschool, that continuous daily communication is essential. Our teachers are dedicated to sharing with you both joys and concerns; if you have any questions or would like advice on how to academically prepare your child more at home, please let your child's teachers know.

## **Administrative Topics**

### **Enrollment**

The YMCA of Greater Charlotte will not discriminate by race, color, sex, nationality, origin, creed, or special needs.

### **Registration/Fees**

Registration can be completed at the Sales & Service Desk at the Brace Family YMCA (only) or online. A non-refundable/ nontransferable registration fee of \$75 (Members) or \$100 (Program Participants) as well as our one time supply fee of \$90 per child (pro-rated Jan-May \$45). The first month's tuition for Members and Program Participants is drafted the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, starting with August 15<sup>th</sup> – April 15<sup>th</sup> into equal 9 payments. Registration will need to be completed online at [www.ymcacharlotte.org](http://www.ymcacharlotte.org). Registration cannot be completed without proper payment.

The Registration Fee covers all necessary registration processes. The Activity Fees are used to help pay for special classroom projects, school festivals and parties. These fees are non-refundable. Please note, special events such as field trips, scheduled during the preschool year may require additional fees to be paid at that time.

If you are interested in enrolling your child for the upcoming school year, registration will begin in February and is on a first-come, first-served basis. Children who are currently attending (and their siblings) will be allowed to register one week prior to the public.

All participants must be registered in the program prior to the start of the program or may be added throughout the year if space is available. All participants must be entered into our system prior to the child's first day. This may take up to 3 business days after registration is turned in.

### **Admission**

Children will be enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis. Additional space may become available in additional classes, as the school year progresses if individual participants leave the program.

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

- The child's registration form and fees are not paid at registration.
- The child is not participating in or benefiting from the program.
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for the child.
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for other enrolled children due to the behavior of the child.

### **Withdrawal / Cancellation**

If you plan to withdraw your child from the program before the end of the school year, you are required to give a written notice to the Director, fifteen (15) days in advance. You will be charged for those final 30 days. Should you not make us aware of your child's withdrawal from the program, you will continue to be charged on schedule. All withdrawals for the year must be turned in before April 15<sup>th</sup> 2022.

## Up-to-Date Information

Please make sure you update your family's records through your online YMCA account prior to the start of the program. **Information that needs to be reviewed and updated includes contact information, emergency contacts, and authorized pick ups. You will also need to update medical information for your child, including allergies, medications and vaccination dates.** Please notify your child's teacher and the director IMMEDIATELY about any change in the family's address, telephone number, e-mail or cell phone number(s) as well as the place or phone number of parental employment or any other pertinent information such as change in insurance, doctor, or allergies.

## Tuition

Full tuition is drafted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, from August 15<sup>th</sup> – April 15<sup>th</sup>. Refunds are not given for days missed due to illness, snow days, Act of God or Nature or vacation. Your child has an assigned spot in our program (we cannot give your child's spot away to outside children on days your child does not participate). **Should you have questions regarding payments, please contact Marla Cesario at : Marla.cesario@ymcacharlotte.org or 704 716 4283 or 704 716 4281.**

Monthly Rates	Members	Program Members
2 Year Old Class – Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 – 1:00	\$230.00	\$305.00
3 Year Old Classes: 3 days – Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00 - 1:00	\$303.00	\$381.00
3 Year Old Classes: Monday - Thursday 9:00—1:00	\$320.00	\$396.00
4 Year Old Class – Monday – Thursday 9:00 – 1:00	\$320.00	\$396.00
4 Year Old Class – Monday – Friday 9:00 – 1:00	\$369.00	\$447.00
Transitional Kindergarten – Monday - Friday 9:00 – 1:00	\$431.00	\$550.00

**A \$25.00 late fee will be charged if tuition is paid after the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.** Parents are given a one week grace period to pay late (fee included), however should they not pay within that week, their child/ren will not be allowed to return to school until their account is up to date. Should they wish to withdraw their child, our withdrawal procedure still applies.

## Tax Time

For those of you who write off your child's tuition on your taxes, you can use the following YMCA Tax ID Number:

56-1045299

## **Operating Procedures**

**School Hours: 9:00 – 1:00**

### **Pick-Up/Drop-Off**

All children will participate in carpool. Parents are not permitted to enter the building to walk their child to class. Carpool runs from 9:00 - 9:10 AM and 1:00 -1:10PM.

### **Arrival (9:00 – 9:10AM):**

**Our carpool begins at 9:00am.** A staff member will greet your car and check your child into preschool. Please do not let your child out of the car until a staff member opens the door. The staff member will direct your child to his/her classroom. We ask that **PARENTS PLEASE STAY IN THE CAR.** We need to keep the carpool line moving.

**Children will not be permitted into the school until the doors open for arrival.** Please respect the fact that our teachers need to have their time to prepare for the day.

**We also ask that children arrive no later than 10 minutes after class time starts, as this makes them not only feel out of place because they may have missed the morning activity, but it also disrupts the class. If you are later than 10 minutes, you will need to park and walk your child to the TOP front door of the preschool building. There, the Director will walk them to class. The teachers lock all entrance doors after 10 minutes of drop off time.**

### **Dismissal (1:00 PM):**

You will receive a sign with your child's name to display in your car window during pickup. As you near the Preschool entrance, show your sign and we will bring your child to you. Please **stay in your car.** A staff member will put your child in the car. For liability reasons, staff members CANNOT strap your child in the car seat. **PLEASE PULL** forward to the parking space at the bottom of the preschool driveway to buckle your child. This helps make our carpool line run smoother and faster. North Carolina law requires a child safety seat or booster seat for children under 8 years old. **Staff will not dismiss a child into a car if a proper car seat is not evident.**

ALL children must be picked up by 1:10PM. **The parents of children picked up after 1:10PM will be charged \$1 for every minute they are late. The late fee will automatically be drafted from your credit card on file.** Picking up your child **ON TIME** is very important. Your child will worry if they are left waiting for a parent. Late pickup also affects the preschool staff. Our staff members have responsibilities outside of the Y which they must attend to after 1:10 PM. Please make EVERY effort to pick up your child on time. If you think being late will be an issue, please find a "pick up" buddy from your class. This would be a parent who is willing to pick up your child and wait for you until you arrive. Make sure your "pick up buddy" is on your approved list.

### **Early Sign Out/Late Drop Off**

If you wish to pick up or drop off your child prior to regular time (due to a doctor's appointment, for example), please inform your child's teacher in advance. You will need to park and ring the doorbell at the TOP door of the preschool building.

### **Authorized Pick Up**

For the safety of your child, participants will only be released to the legal guardian or a person listed on the **approved pick up** form. Every adult MUST present a photo ID at carpool pick up. In the event that a child will be picked up by someone NOT on the approved list, a parent must send a note including the person's name picking up (as seen on the photo ID). To help speed up our carpool process, please have your ID ready as you arrive in the carpool line.



If there is any change in who may pick-up your child, especially if someone who has been regularly signing your child out is no longer allowed custody, please update your online account and contact the Preschool Academy Director at (704) 716-4323 immediately to change your approved list and to turn in copies of official court documents (required by the YMCA).

**Please note: As per our strictly enforced safety protocol our staff cannot transport students in their own vehicle. Also, staff may not babysit, drive or ride in cars with members or invite children to their home.**

### **Cell Phone Use**

Using a cell phone while in carline puts all of our children at risk. Distracted drivers in a small area where staff and children are walking back and forth is simply not acceptable. We will **strictly enforce** the following policy:

If you are on your phone in the carline (this includes talking, texting, playing games, etc.) you will be given **one warning and one warning only**. If you are found to be on your phone again during carline, you will lose your carline privilege for the remainder of that week and all of the following week. We regret having to resort to such measures but the safety of the children is our **number one priority**. Please communicate this important information to anyone who may be picking up your child.

Also, remember that carline is a time for you to briefly communicate with your child's teacher. The time allotted for this is for quick updates/feedback on the day or information they need to share with you. Please be respectful and give them your full attention during this time. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

### **Things to Bring to School Each Day**

Your child does not need to bring much to school each day. All that is really required is that they show up promptly with their preschool backpacks (with an extra set of clothes and their daily communication folder inside), their snack/lunch, and water bottle for the day.

Parents of 2-year-olds: on the first day, please send in 10 diapers and a set of wipes in a labeled plastic bag. These items will be kept for your child in the classroom throughout the year. When your child's items run low, we will send home a note as a reminder to send more in. This way you will not need to pack them daily for your child.

- **A lunch box labeled with your child's name.**

**Lunch** – Parents send lunch daily. The Brace Family YMCA Preschool does not provide lunch. We ask preschoolers to eat their "growing food" before eating a "treat" that may be in their lunch. Please send a nutritious lunch that is easy for your child to manage. We strive to teach healthy eating habits and appreciate your help from home. We ask that your child's lunch contains the four basic food groups. Teachers will sit with the children during lunch time in order to provide them a positive role model. Here are some other lunch reminders:

- Do not send candy! Chewy and hard candy are choking hazards.
- Please do not send soda.
- Students are asked to finish all healthy food before eating any treats.
- Teachers will send back any uneaten food in the child's lunch bag.
- If your child is in the Twos, please cut grapes, carrots or any food that is a potential choking hazard.
- Please label all reusable food containers and ice packs, so they do not get put in the wrong lunch box.

- We are not a licensed preschool facility. We can therefore not reheat food or keep food in a refrigerator. If your child enjoys a hot lunch, there are several styles of insulated containers that will keep food warm.
- Another highly suggested item for lunch is reusable lunch containers. By using these, your child can independently open his/her own lunch and does not rely on the teacher to open several bags, containers etc.

- The Brace Family Preschool Academy is a **Peanut/Tree Nut Free\*** school. This step was taken in an effort to provide a safe environment for children in our school who have severe nut allergies. While the YMCA of Greater Charlotte is committed to providing an environment free of peanuts and tree nuts, we cannot guarantee that allergens will not find their way into our facility. **Please consult ingredients when preparing your child's snack. Preschool aged children do not often know if they have an allergy to such products and if they do, they do not often remember to be careful of what foods they eat. The YMCA of Greater Charlotte's policy is put into place for the safety of all the children. Due to YMCA Guidelines, staff members reserve the right to remove any nut products from your child's snack/lunch due to the health issues of many children with allergies. Crackers will be given as a supplement.**
- **Labeled water bottle.** Water fountains are not available for use.
- **Backpack.** Please send your child with a backpack big enough to hold their folder, lunch box and water bottle.
- Since toys from home can be lost or cause friction among children, please do not let your child bring them to school. There may be a day set aside for Show and Tell. This is a perfect time for your child to share a special toy. We also ask that children do not wear distracting jewelry.

### **Daily Apparel**

Clothing for your preschooler should be simple, comfortable, washable, and easy for your child to manage in. **Rubber soled shoes are a must (no sandals please)**, especially for **daily** outdoor activities. Please send appropriate outerwear for the morning's weather conditions. During the winter time, please make sure your child is wearing **layers** as they will spend time at outside. (unless it is absolutely too cold). As with the warmer weather; please note that we cannot apply sunscreen to students. It needs to be applied before they arrive to school.

Please be mindful that while at school we play and discover many new things and although our staff takes great care in preventing paint spills, messes, etc., we ask that you **not dress your child in their best new clothes** and expect them to remain spotless. If an accident occurs, your child will be dressed in the extra set of clothes you are to leave in their backpack (starting on the first day of school); the soiled clothing will be returned home to you on that very day. **Please don't forget to send an extra set of clothing back if this happens.**

### **Labeling**

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of labeling **all** your child's personal belongings. Very often if an item is not labeled, teachers are unable to determine its owner. Therefore, if your child brings it to school, make sure that their name is clearly written on it. **Here's a list of items to label: shoes, socks, clothes, coats, hats, gloves, backpacks, lunch boxes, drink cups, etc.**

### **Potty Training**

The two-year old teachers will work with the parents when potty training. If you are potty training your two year old, please make your child's teachers aware. Be sure to let them know what techniques you are using at home, so that the teachers can reinforce them at school. Potty Training is a HUGE developmental milestone. We want to help make it as smooth of a process as possible.

All three year olds **MUST** be potty trained by the first day of school. We know that accidents can occur occasionally. The teachers will assist your child in changing into clean clothes if there is an accident. Please be sure to send a change of clothes, in case this happens. If a three year old continues to have accidents, we may ask that the preschooler stays home until the accidents are under control.

### **Screen Time**

We believe that screen time should not be a part of the preschool day. Occasionally, our teachers will use technology (iPads or laptops) to show a quick video about a subject being studied. We provide opportunities for light, moderate and vigorous activities throughout the day. We do not allow any technology (iPads, phones, DS devices, etc.) from home to be brought to school.

## **Newsletters and Messages from School**

Your child's red tote bag will be used to transport papers, newsletters, messages, crafts, lunch boxes and clothes. Please check your child's tote bag after school **each day** to insure that you don't miss any important news. If you need to communicate with your child's teacher or the director, please put any notes in your child's bag (or PIN to the outside) OR you can email us at [tonja.giles@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:tonja.giles@ymcacharlotte.org).

A newsletter will be emailed bi-weekly week from the preschool director. This will include information about upcoming events and fun happenings at the preschool. This newsletter will keep parents abreast of all the wonderful happenings at our preschool. All teachers will also send home a bi-weekly newsletter to share information and a peek ahead of thigs to come. The newsletters also offers a snapshot of the exciting activities the children participated in. A monthly calendar with scheduled activities and themes for each week of that month will also be sent home at the start of each month.

## **Emergencies**

All of our staff is CPR and First Aid certified. Our preschool staff will treat routine cuts, scrapes and bumps. In the case of serious illness or an accident involving your child, we will contact you immediately. In the event that you cannot be reached, your signed authorization waiver (which you completed at registration) allows us to secure prompt treatment. Please be aware that in the case of a life-threatening emergency, 911 will be called **first**.

## **Wellness Policy**

The YMCA recognizes that children might need to be excluded from program participation if they have a short-term illness, injury, or acute illness that could present a significant risk to the health and safety of the child or anyone in contact with the child. Every situation will be evaluated in a case-by-case basis.

Staff will monitor children for signs of illness. If your child develops symptoms of illness during their stay, parents will be notified and will need to pick up their child immediately. **Children who have the following symptoms should remain at home until they are symptom free for 24 hours unless a written note from the child's physician is given, stating that their symptoms are not contagious.**

- A fever 100.4 degrees or higher. Children must be fever free for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication before they can return to programs.
- Continuous and/or colored nasal drainage. A current note from a physician can be provided if drainage is caused by an allergy.
- Diarrhea. Child cannot have more than two loose stools in a 24 hour period.
- Vomiting within a 24 hour period.
- Communicable diseases. Examples include, but are not limited to, pink eye, head lice, skin rash, and strep throat.

**If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the staff will call an emergency number listed on the child's health form.**

Program participants will wash/sanitize hands upon entering the classroom at the beginning of the day and before eating food. Participants will also wash hand after each visit to the restroom.

***Please be considerate of the students and teachers in the classroom and do not send your child to school sick. If an illness such as Head Lice, Fifth Disease, Hand, Foot and Mouth or Chicken Pox has been reported to us, the preschool will send written notices home with fellow students so that families can be alert for symptoms.***

## **Medicines**

We will accept prescription medication in the original bottle with prescription label and current date and over the counter medication only if accompanied by a physician's note. These medications will be kept out of reach of other children. Parents/caregivers must sign an Authorization to Administer Medication form if medicine is needed. With the exception of emergency medication, all medication will be kept out of reach of children in a locked location. Emergency medications will be kept in a safe location in the child's classroom.

## **Absences**

Should your child be out sick, due to illness, vacation or emergency, your child's teacher would like to know in advance. While this of course is not required, our teachers do get concerned when a child is out, especially for an extended amount of time. You can reach them at the office: (704) 716-4323 or [tonja.giles@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:tonja.giles@ymcacharlotte.org).

## **Inclement Weather**

The BRACE FAMILY YMCA Preschool Program will not offer make up days or refunds due to missed days due to inclement weather, Act of God, or Power outages.

In the event of inclement weather or other event that requires closing or delaying preschool, we will notify families as quickly as possible.

**Please note:** Brace Family Preschool Academy **cannot** make up school days missed due to inclement weather even if CMS has scheduled a make-up day.

## **Volunteer Opportunities – \*Suspended until further notice\***

## **Child Guidance Policy**

In order to provide the positive kind of discipline desired, we must first begin with the proper student-teacher ratios. The next step is ensuring that our teachers understand the age group they teach and are well-prepared with a variety of activities. Within each classroom positive rules and guidelines are established. When a child does not follow the rules, he/she will be reminded.

We believe in encouraging self-regulation. The teachers model positive interactions and appropriate communication in guiding a child through this process.

The philosophy of our program is based on the "Golden Rule" with respect being shown to all. It is expected that our staff is to give respect and courtesies to each participant. The staff will make every effort to relate to children on an individual basis as well as implement appropriate behavior management techniques in order to make all children successful. Good manners and personal empathy are traits we will foster. Encouraging good behavior helps **discourage** unacceptable behavior. Therefore, using the principle of positive reinforcement, each child will be praised for good effort and made to feel important and successful. Negative behavior will be interrupted and redirected toward positive behavior. Please encourage your child to follow the instructions of the teachers.

Staff will make **reasonable and appropriate** attempts to modify activities, rewards, system/procedures:

- Staff will not damage the participant's self-image or embarrass the child.
- Staff will help participants learn self – control, choose alternatives, identify feelings and develop understanding and respect for the feelings of others.
- Every effort will be made by staff to enlist cooperation of the child and families to solve problems.

Discipline problems that persist or are disruptive to the class will be shared with the director.

Even though we provide low teacher-child ratios, loving care and plenty of age appropriate toys and activities, children will sometimes show aggressive behavior (hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, etc.) toward a classmate. All signs of aggression are unacceptable but are not considered abnormal for young children who are learning to get along in group situations.

Our desire is to work with families through any difficult stage their child may be going through. If a behavioral problem is recurring, the family may be called in for a conference with the teachers and or/directors. Our goal is always to come up with a plan that can provide the child with consistency at home and at school.

**We reserve the right to request temporary or permanent withdrawal of a child whose family is unable or unwilling to work with the school or a child whose behavior is dangerous to him/her and/or others.**

**Examples of Inappropriate Behavior:**

- Fighting with another student (pushing, yelling, etc)
- Hitting another child/teacher (with closed fist...example: punch)
- Hitting another child/teacher (with open hand...example: slap)
- Throwing objects at another child/teacher

Other: Leaving the group, spitting, inappropriate language, etc.

**When a situation arises the following steps will be taken:**

**Redirect** – the child will be redirected from the inappropriate behavior to a more suitable choice or activity.

**Warning** – the child will be given a verbal warning and reminded that continuing the inappropriate behavior will result in a consequence.

**Logical Consequence** – the child will be given a logical consequence for their behavior such as being separated from the group for a short time or for a toy to be removed.

**Family Conference** – if the above steps have not been successful, a conference with the family and teachers will be held to discuss and create a plan for the specific circumstance.

**Biting Policy**

With young children (under the age of 3), biting is a normal and temporary developmental phase, particularly for those who do not yet have the verbal skills to express their feelings and thoughts. However, we recognize that this behavior is not only disruptive to the class, but also unsafe. Teachers will do their best to prevent biting, but in the event that a child is bitten the following safety measures will be taken.

- The biting will be interrupted (if possible) with a firm, "NO...we don't bite people."
- The staff will remain calm and not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted and the injury will be cleaned and cooled with ice.
- Staff will remove the biting child from the situation. The child will then be isolated from the group.
- Families of both children will be notified of the biting incident and appropriate forms/ documentation will be filled out. A phone call will be made if skin has been broken.
- If a child bites, regardless of whether skin is broken, three times in one month, they will need to be picked up from the Preschool and will not be able to return the following school day.
- If a child is biting habitually, we will work with the family to create an appropriate action plan for prevention such as providing a more appropriate object for biting (i.e. a teething necklace)
- If an older child (over 3) bites and breaks the skin, they will be sent home immediately.

Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

\*Please note: As a staff team, we are dedicated to helping your child use his/her increasing vocabulary to work through this phase. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Field Trips \*suspended until further notice\***

Throughout the school year the preschool will go on field trips. Notices regarding these trips will be sent home in advance. *Due to YMCA 0-5 Year Old Guidelines, you will be responsible for your child's transportation to and from these field trips.* Please keep in mind that a small, additional fee may be charged to personally participate in the field trip.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

In an effort to maintain a healthy environment and to be sensitive to the increasing number of food allergies of our participants, birthdays may be observed with **non-edible items** only. Children will be given recognition for their special day (with a crown, stickers and/or a special privilege) in the classroom.

You may celebrate your child's birthday by sending in a non-food treat for the class such as stickers, bubbles, etc.

If you are planning an off-site party and would like to invite classmates, please send party invitations for ALL students to the teacher so that they can distribute them into tote bags. Presents are not permitted to be exchanged in the classroom.

### **Class Parties**

The classes will celebrate various holidays and special events throughout the year. The classroom parent/guardian will contact families when food or supplies are necessary. When purchasing or making party treats, please remember that we are teaching healthy eating habits at preschool. **Until further notice, class celebrations will be for students only.**

### **Room Parent**

Room parents are an invaluable part of the class and preschool. Room parents (guardians) are responsible for building a strong relationship with the classroom teachers and other families in the class. Duties include coordinating class parties in conjunction with the teacher, assisting in planning preschool-wide events, soliciting supplies and volunteers for events, and coordinating celebrations for teacher birthdays, holidays and teacher appreciation events.

## **Contacts/Directory**

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the Preschool Academy or other YMCA programs, you can reach the following staff/departments:

### **Preschool Information, Absences, Policies, Student/Family Needs**

704-716-4323

#### **Preschool Director: Tonja Giles**

704-716-4323

[Tonja.Giles@ymcacharlotte.org](mailto:Tonja.Giles@ymcacharlotte.org)

#### **Financial Information: Marla Cesario**

704-716-4283 or 704-716-4281

#### **Brace Family YMCA Front Desk**

704-716-4200

#### **Brace Family YMCA Fax**

704-716-4201

#### **Mailing Address**

BRACE FAMILY YMCA  
3127 Weddington Road  
Matthews, NC 28105.

#### **Preschool Address - Hemby Program Center**

9760 Happy Valley Dr.  
Charlotte, NC 28270