



# BACKGROUND RECORD CHECK and CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

At the Attleboro YMCA, we believe it is our duty and obligation to protect every child who walks through our doors or participates in one of our programs. To ensure your child's safety, we have adopted the following Child Protection Policies.

Child protection is a community initiative that requires teamwork and cooperation from all sides. In order to keep children safe at the Y and in the Y's programs, we need your help. We ask that you review these policies and follow the YMCA's guidelines. If you have any questions about the policies or if you suspect that a YMCA staff member is not adhering to the policies outlined below, please contact Carol Mahoney Senior Childcare Director at (508) 409-0774 or Robin McDonald at (508) 409-0763.

## Staff screening and hiring practices for all staff

- Criminal record checks: The Y conducts criminal and sexual offender background checks (CORI and SORI) on every new hire. The checks are then repeated annually for all existing childcare and camp staff, and bi-annually for all YMCA staff.
- Reference checks: Before hiring a new staff member, supervisors must contact three references and use the Y's reference check forms, which specifically address the prospective staff member's experience with children. One reference must be a family member.
- Online searches: Prior to hiring a new staff member, supervisors are required to conduct a check through Google and common social networking sites to ensure that the individual's content is in keeping with the Y's values. Supervisors must also check the national sexual predator website prior to hiring a new staff member.

## Additional requirements for all Childcare staff

In accordance with state and federal laws, all Attleboro YMCA licensed childcare employees are required to undergo a more rigorous and thorough Background Record Check. In addition to the regular employee screenings all childcare staff must additionally be screened and approved through the Massachusetts Early Education and Care Department through the following screening processes.

- Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI)
- Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI)
- Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Fingerprinting

No employee will be allowed to work until all records have come back approved by the approved and fingerprinting deemed "suitable".

## Staff training and education procedures

- YMCA Code of Conduct: Each new hire must review and sign the Y's Code of Conduct.
- Child Abuse Prevention Training: Every YMCA staff member attends the Y's employee orientation, which includes Child Protection training. All childcare and camp staff members participate in additional trainings.

### Member screening

- The Attleboro Y does not allow any Level II or Level III sex offenders to access our facilities. Upon each person's first visit to the Y, they are compared against the local and state registry lists. Within the first few days of joining, each member's information is run through the National Sexual Offender Registry. The Y continues to conduct regular check of our entire membership against the National Sexual Offender Registry.

### Program supervision and operation

- Program staff are identifiable by staff t-shirts or name tags.
- At no time is a child alone with a staff person where they cannot be observed by others. All Y programs abide by the "Rule of Three," where staff and children are in groups of at least three—one staff with two children, or two staff with one child—whether working on a project, transitioning to another activity area, or going to the restrooms.
- Use of bathrooms is always conducted in a highly public and well-traveled area.
- The YMCA staff does not engage in diapering children. However, if a younger child requires assistance in the result of an accident, staff will not close doors to the bathroom or stall so they can be observed.
- While physical contact is important in the emotional development in children, staff members are trained in regards to appropriate physical contact with children. For example, while side hugs are acceptable, frontal hugs are not.

### Babysitting and outside contact

- Staff and volunteers must refrain from interactions with YMCA program participants under 18 years of age when they're outside of the YMCA program activities.
- YMCA staff may not babysit, provide care or instruction, or maintain relationships outside the YMCA with any children or families they meet through YMCA programs. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Extra practices, coaching, or tutoring
  - Transportation in a non-YMCA vehicle
  - Special events such as movies, sporting events, or any similar non-YMCA excursions
  - Visits to any residence
  - Gift giving
- Staff may not transport children who are YMCA program participants in their own vehicles.
- Online contact: Staff members are not allowed to maintain contact with children who are program participants through online forums, personal email, or social networking sites. For example, staff members may not "friend" or accept friend requests from minors who are part of a YMCA program.

### Responding to an allegation of child abuse

- All staff members have been trained in reporting child abuse/neglect and are considered mandated reporters. This means that when a child comes to a staff member with a report of abuse or if a staff member suspects that a child is the victim of abuse, that staff member must forward that information on to a supervisor, who if deemed necessary, will place a call to the Department of Child and Family Services.
- If it is believed that a staff member is abusive or neglectful, that person will be removed from working with children. Pending the outcome of an investigation, it will be decided whether to reinstate, suspend or terminate the staff member.

