PROVIDING
THE BEST CARE

Child Watch Drop-In Center
PARENT/GUARDIAN GUIDEBOOK

Program operated by YMCA of Austin and located at ACC Highland Campus:
Building 4000 (near the Veteran’s Resource Center)
WELCOME!

At the Y, strengthening the community is our cause. Every day we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

Our program presents an opportunity for youth to experience early child development while meeting the needs of parents attending ACC. While keeping children safe in a nurturing, and caring environment, we provide young children additional opportunities for holistic development, social experiences, and learning through play. Child Watch elevates traditional drop-in child care to include key YMCA program elements, including fun physical activity, positive relationships and enriching activities. As with all child/youth programs in the Y, Child Watch supports health and well-being, character development, excitement about learning and using our Y Voice which is Welcoming, Genuine, Nurturing, Determined and Hopeful. The YMCA core values are responsibility, respect, caring, honesty, and faith.

If you have any additional questions after reviewing the guidelines and procedures, then please contact me.

Warmly,

Elena Hickey
Youth Development Director
e: elena.hickey@austinymca.org
p: 512-542-9622
OUR SERVICES

We provide nurturing care for children of parents and guardians attending ACC at Highland Campus.

ACTIVITIES & ENGAGEMENT
Following a creative curriculum, our Child Watch is divided into age-appropriate areas, and offers many options for exploration and learning; including blocks, toys & games, arts, sports, reading, music, and movement.

QUALITY CARE
We expect only the highest quality of care from our staff. Staff are trained to maintain both a safe and fun environment and are expected to always stay actively engaged with the children in our care.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS
Child Watch staff are required to take and maintain certification (where applicable) in the following:

- New Employee Orientation & Youth Development in-house training
- Child Abuse Prevention (yearly)
- Bloodborne Pathogens (yearly)
- First Aid (every 2 years)
- CPR (every 2 years)
- Listen First

EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

HOW WE SHOW UP
We strive to live our cause with purpose every day.

THE STAFF PLEDGE
As staff members of the YMCA of Austin, we understand that it is our responsibility to demonstrate our core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and faith to help build positive relationships among kids, members, volunteers, staff, and the communities we serve. YMCA staff members are expected to give the best customer service at all times.
USING OUR FACILITY

SIGN IN
All children must be signed-in by a parent or authorized adult (18 years or older) who is listed on their Daxko* account.

For the safety and well-being of your child, staff will ask a series of questions each time your child comes to the program, and all children must wash their hands with soap and water upon entering. You must stay on ACC Highland Campus while your child is in our care.

If your child is not potty trained, please provide diapers and wipes at sign in. Staff will only change diapers of children under the age of 3, and will contact you to change diapers of your older child(ren) if necessary.

NAME TAGS
Upon sign-in, each child will be given name tags that indicate their first name, first letter of their last name, age, and any food allergies (if applicable).

SIGN OUT
Unless arrangements are made prior to pick up, only adults who dropped off the child(ren) are allowed to pickup. If another individual is picking up your child(ren), the drop-off adult must tell the check-in staff, so staff can verify in our system.

Only persons 18 years or older and on the same participant account can pick up or drop off a child.

Staff will verify the identity of any adults picking up children through photo id on the Daxko* account.

If you would like to bring another participant’s child, you must have a signed note that includes the parent’s Daxko* account number explaining the situation.

SPECIAL NEEDS
Children with special needs are welcome! Our staff will make every effort to accommodate every child’s needs. Please clearly communicate any special circumstances we should be aware of or accommodations that your child needs prior to visiting; this ensures a successful partnership between staff and family.

PROTECTING YOUR PROPERTY
We strongly encourage everyone to leave toys and electronics at home to prevent loss or damage to your property.

If you do bring games, tablets, phones or other electronics for your child(ren), we require that all content is YMCA appropriate and G-rated.

COMFORTING CRYING CHILDREN
Staff will make every effort to calm and comfort upset children and help them acclimate to the Child Watch environment.

If your child experiences 15 minutes of inconsolable crying, the staff will locate you for assistance. After calming your child, a second attempt at leaving your child is permitted, but if crying persists for another 10 minutes, you must pick up your child.

If you have come to Highland campus to take a test and don’t want to be disturbed, then you must give us an alternative contact.

MANAGING BEHAVIOR
In order to guide children toward positive behavior that supports a safe and nurturing environment for all, the YMCA reserves the right to utilize the following methods & policies as they see fit:

- Staff redirect the child and discuss appropriate behavior.
- If a child receives three redirections in a visit, the child’s time may be reduced to 1 hour 15 min. If the problem persists, the parent/guardian may be asked to pick up the child.
- In severe cases, the Team Leader will consult with a YMCA Program Director, and suspension from the program may be considered. Suspension could be effective immediately without use of the interventions listed above.

We understand that children go through developmental stages in which their behavior changes. We endeavor to help as best we can in a positive way. Please communicate any concerns you have or successful redirection techniques that you have used.

HAVING THE BEST EXPERIENCE
It is our goal for everyone—children, parents, and staff members, to enjoy the best experience possible.

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EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS
THE PARTICIPANT PLEDGE
As a participant of this program, you understand the importance of demonstrating the YMCA core values of respect, responsibility, honesty, caring, and faith. We ask that all participants adhere to these values as well.

FOR ALL
We ask all participants and staff to use a Y Voice that is Welcoming, Genuine, Determined, Hopeful, and Nurturing. If an issue arises, please alert staff in a respectful manner. No cursing or aggressive/hateful language is allowed in the facility.

* Daxko is our registration and program management system.
MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

MAXIMUM CAPACITY
To ensure safety and high quality service, each Child Watch space has a maximum capacity which is calculated by the number of staff on duty and situational needs.

WAITING LISTS
When a Child Watch space has reached maximum capacity, parents/guardians will be given the opportunity to add their name to a waiting list.
When space becomes available, participants on the waiting list will be contacted in chronological order.

CHILDPROOFING
All Child Watch spaces are fully childproofed, including but not limited to:
- Child proof electrical outlets
- Half-doors locked so kids cannot open from inside
- All cleaning and personal items kept out of reach of children
- Room is kept neat and organized to minimize trip and fall hazards

STROLLERS
Please leave strollers outside of our Child Watch facility to prevent tripping hazards and risks to your property.

FOOD GUIDELINES
Parents may provide a snack for their child, but it MUST be nut-free. Water and other beverages that do not require refrigeration are welcome.

CLEANING PROCEDURES & SANITATION
Cleaning is the responsibility of every member of the Child Watch team. All toys are cleaned using a healthy and chemical free vinegar solution. Hard surfaces are sprayed thoroughly and then wiped with a clean cloth.

PRECAUTIONARY CLOSURES
As a precaution, we will close a section or the entirety of Child Watch for disinfection procedures after possible exposure to a communicable disease such as HFMD, Chicken Pox, Measles, Head Lice, Scabies or an unexplained rash. (See “Illnesses” section for more information.)
Closure can last anywhere from 2 to 5 hours. The area will be disinfected with a bleach and water solution, and the area will reopen after the smell of bleach is gone. Closure notifications will be sent via the YMCA of Austin Mobile app.
We will also notify welcome staff and post signage on our doors.

ILLNESSES
We ask you to please help us keep a healthy environment so that we can avoid closing the facility (see “Precautionary Closures” section for more information):
- If your child has experienced fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, please wait 24 hours after all symptoms resolve (without the aid of a symptom-reducing medication) before using our facility.
- If your child has an unexplained rash, please wait to use our facility until it goes away and they have no other symptoms, or you have a doctor’s note stating that they are not contagious.
- If your child has recently experienced a contagious illness such as Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD), please bring in a doctor’s note stating they are no longer contagious before using our facility.
- If your child has head lice or nits, we ask you not to bring them in until they are nit free. We check heads of all children before they come into our space. You are welcome to do the lice check yourself and let us know. If we see any child over-scratching or complaining of an itchy head, we will recheck them.
EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
YMCA of Austin emergency procedures are posted in a visible location in the Child Watch area. All staff are trained in the emergency procedures, location of telephone, emergency numbers, evacuation procedures and first aid supplies.

FIRE
Fire drills are conducted and documented on a yearly basis by ACC and YMCA of Austin staff.

INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS
Incident/accident forms are completed any time your child experiences illness/injury while in our care.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
All suspected cases of child abuse are reported immediately to a supervisor. All staff have gone through training to detect possible abuse and safety precautions.

PLEASE NOTE: Only certified, background-checked, and trained staff and volunteers are allowed in our Child Watch facility. Parents/Guardians are allowed in the room to help with comforting their child(ren), changing diapers, etc. for no more than 15 minutes. This is for the safety of all children in our care.

Together, we can create a fun, safe experience for your child.
We always welcome your feedback to better serve you and your family.

Thank you for being a part of our Austin Y community!

SINCERELY,
Your YMCA of Austin Staff Team