



## METROWEST YMCA CODE OF CONDUCT & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

YMCA employees and volunteers will report to their supervisor any indication of or warning signs concerning abuse involving a child, inappropriate behavior by an employee/volunteer, AND any instances of employees or volunteers **violating this Code of Conduct**. YMCA employees or volunteers who identify suspicious behavior or a violation of policy by a fellow employee or volunteer must report the event immediately to their supervisor or if not available, the Branch Executive or Manager on duty, or to the Human Resource Department. Also, as it relates to child protection, all YMCA employees fall under the MA guidelines of Mandated Reporting and are mandated by law to report all incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children under the age of 18.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

The MetroWest YMCA has established the following Code of Conduct Policy for all MetroWest YMCA volunteers.

The MetroWest YMCA reserves the right to take any corrective action it deems appropriate where, in its opinion, a volunteer fails to adhere to the standard of conduct, or in any other way acts in contradiction of the interests of the MetroWest YMCA or interferes with the relationships between the MetroWest YMCA and its members, its employees, and the general public. Corrective action will generally take the form of progressive discipline (*i.e.*, or discharge from the volunteer position). However, the seriousness of a volunteer's conduct, as determined exclusively by the MetroWest YMCA, will determine the severity of any disciplinary action.

1. At all times employees and volunteers are required to adhere to and comply with all written and stated policies of the MetroWest YMCA. This includes the Mission and Character Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.
2. The MetroWest YMCA does not discriminate or interfere with the lifestyle of its volunteers, however, it does require that volunteers will abide by the standards of conduct set forth by the YMCA.
3. Employees and volunteers must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired including ID badge while on duty.
4. The YMCA reserves the right to review a volunteer's public My Space/Blog/Facebook, etc. sites. Volunteers may be subject to loss of their volunteer position if the sites are deemed inappropriate and do not meet YMCA values.

The following list identifies by way of examples, but not limited to, a number of **typical** types of conduct for which a volunteer may lose their volunteer opportunity following the first offense:

- a) Falsification of volunteer application or any other volunteer records.
- b) Obtaining a volunteer position through the use of false statements.
- c) Violation of the MetroWest YMCA's policies prohibiting unauthorized disclosure of confidential and proprietary information.
- d) Recruiting YMCA participants to another competitive business or activity.
- e) Theft, wrongful appropriation, and other forms of dishonesty, including, but not limited to, the unauthorized use of the MetroWest YMCA's time, material, equipment, or property.
- f) Any conduct that is deemed to be physically, emotionally, verbally or sexually abusive.
- g) Discrimination against or harassment of a MetroWest YMCA volunteer, employee, supervisor or participant/member because of race, creed, religion, mental or physical disability, national origin, color, ancestry, gender, gender identity, age, marital status, citizenship, veteran's status, genetic information, sexual orientation, or other protected class.
- h) Inappropriate language, jokes, or sarcasm and/or use of threatening, intimidating, coercive, harassing, abusive, or vulgar language, sharing intimate details of one's personal life or engaging in any actual or threatened inappropriate conduct in the presence of or directed toward any MetroWest YMCA member, child, parent, employee, volunteer or others with whom work-related interactions occur, regardless of where or when the use of such language or conduct occurs.
- i) Defaming a YMCA representative, employee or a fellow volunteer.
- j) Insubordination in any form.
- k) Violation of safety and security procedures.
- l) Carrying, use of or threatening to use any weapon while on duty or on the premises.
- m) Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours, or on YMCA property or program sites.
- n) Smoking or use of tobacco on Y property or in the presence of children or parents during volunteer hours.
- o) Fighting, horseplay, practical jokes, or other disorderly conduct which either does, or has the potential to, result in property damage or injury to a MetroWest YMCA volunteer or others.
- p) Sleeping on the job or otherwise neglecting job volunteer duties.
- q) Engaging in any other conduct which in the MetroWest YMCA's sole discretion, has a detrimental effect on the MetroWest YMCA or its members.

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The increasing incidence of reported child abuse has become a critical national concern. This is a special concern of the MetroWest YMCA because of our organization's role as an advocate for children and our responsibility for enhancing the personal growth and development of both children and adults in all MetroWest YMCA programs.

Your position with the YMCA may not involve working directly with children, but it is important to the YMCA that ALL employees and volunteers are aware of the expectations and approved conduct for employees and volunteers who interact with youth. It is likely that you will encounter children and/or youth programs throughout your role at the YMCA, and as a YMCA employee or volunteer you are a crucial component of creating an abuse-free zone at the YMCA. Be aware of the following requirements regarding conduct with children:

1. Reference checks on all prospective employees and program volunteers will be conducted, documented and filed prior to employment. A program volunteer is any person who is put in place to work at the MetroWest YMCA to assist in any activity on a regular basis, including coaches.
2. All employees and program volunteers must have an annual background check (CORI – Criminal Offense Record Inquiry). Employment or continued employment and/or volunteer services will be determined based on the information obtained in the CORI reports.
3. In order to protect MetroWest YMCA employees, volunteers and program participants, at no time, may a staff person or volunteer be alone with a single child where others cannot observe them. When supervising children, employees and volunteers should space themselves in a way that other staff or volunteers can see them.
4. Within all licensed YMCA programs or other YMCA organized programs where participants are under the age of eleven (11), employees and/or volunteers shall never leave a child unsupervised. Children must always be within sight and sound of an employee or volunteer. Employees or volunteers will utilize face counts attendance and the "rule of three" (*where an employee and/or volunteers is one of the three*) during all transitions. During YMCA programs, all children must be supervised at all times in order to prevent sexual contact and aggression.
  - a. The "rule of three" specifies that there should always be at least three people present – i.e., one employee and/or volunteer and two or more children, or two employees and/or volunteers and one child, **NOT three or more children unsupervised.**
5. All employees and program volunteers will complete a Child Abuse Prevention training as required by the MetroWest YMCA within the approved time period.
6. Parental permission must be given to take photos of YMCA participants. Employees and volunteers are not permitted to use personal cell phones to photograph YMCA participants without YMCA approval. Employees and volunteers cannot use photographs taken at YMCA programs and/or of YMCA participants for purposes other than those directly related to the program or to the YMCA.

7. Employees and volunteers may not have private outside contact with children they meet in YMCA programs or at the YMCA and should never be alone with children they meet at the YMCA. Employees and volunteers whose children have relationships with other children who participate in YMCA programs should never arrange one on one contacts nor put themselves in a position that causes them to be alone with those children. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, inviting children to your home and any contact via electronic means. Employees and volunteers are expected to notify the YMCA if a pre-existing relationship with a child or family exists.
8. Employees and volunteers are not allowed to contact any YMCA member or program participant under the age of eighteen (18) for non-related YMCA communication. This includes, but is not limited to, contacts via email, instant messaging, text messaging, cellular/regular phone, social networking pages or other communication vehicles. Employees and volunteers will not share their personal contact information with any children participating in YMCA programs.

Any and all contact made by the YMCA or on behalf of the YMCA shall be ONLY via approved YMCA issued communication accounts, such as, but not limited to, phone/cell phone, YMCA email account, YMCA approved/sanctioned social networking page or web site.
9. Restroom supervision for all licensed YMCA programs or other YMCA organized programs where participants are under the age of eleven (11): When multiple children are in the bathroom or locker room, YMCA employees or volunteers will be standing in the doorway so they can have at least auditory supervision of the children. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the employee and volunteer (not being alone with a child). The same bathroom supervision standards apply to off-site locations as well.
  - a. While assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open.
  - b. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip.
10. Employees and volunteers will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say "no". Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
11. Employees and volunteers are not allowed to transport children in their own vehicles except for emergencies. Should an emergency occur and personal transportation is necessary, a second person is required to ride along. In such instances, employees and volunteers must notify and get approval of a management level director before providing transportation.
12. Employees and volunteers will not give gifts (even small gifts), ask kids to keep secrets, or show favoritism to certain children. All will abide by the YMCA's approved physical and verbal guidelines set forth for interactions with youth as outlined in state guidelines and YMCA trainings (regarding sitting on laps, frontal hugs, secrets, tickling, etc).
13. In a licensed program, under no circumstances should employees or volunteers release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA). Drop-off and pick-up procedures must always be followed. If there is any doubt regarding the identity of the person picking up, ID will be required. For all other programs, employees and volunteers are expected to follow all department specific procedures for child pick-up.
14. Employees and volunteers may not date program participants under the age of 18 years of age.

15. Employees and volunteers should never abuse children, including:

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| Physical abuse: | strike, shake, slap                                |
| Verbal abuse:   | humiliate, degrade, threaten                       |
| Sexual abuse:   | inappropriate touch, exploitation, verbal exchange |
| Mental abuse:   | shaming, withholding love, cruelty                 |
| Neglect:        | withholding/forcing food, water, basic care, etc.  |

16. Employees and volunteers must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism.

- a. Employees and volunteers will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.
- b. Physical restraint (supportively holding a child in the least restrictive way) is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child or other children from imminent danger. All incidents must be immediately reported to your supervisor, parent notified (always maintaining confidentiality) and documented.

17. Employees and volunteers should report any concerns about a child's physical condition, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. to a management level director. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in an open-ended, non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented and reported to a management level director.

18. Employees and volunteers shall respond to children or families with respect and consideration and treat all children or families equally regardless of race, creed, religion, mental or physical disability, national origin, color, ancestry, gender, gender identity, age, marital status, citizenship, veteran's status, genetic information, sexual orientation, or ability to pay. Care will be given to respect children's special needs.

19. Employees and volunteers are expected to serve as positive role models for youth by exhibiting professionalism in all interactions, portray an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, maturity and always maintain the confidentiality of children and families.

20. Employees and volunteers are required to read and sign all policies related to preventing, recognizing, responding, and documenting and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.

21. Employees and volunteers must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.

22. The MetroWest YMCA has an open door policy, which encourages parents to drop by and observe at any time the program their child is participating in.