



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Welcome to the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center! We offer quality infant, toddler, preschool, pre-kindergarten and multi-age kindergarten programs for children 6 weeks to 5+ years of age. Valuable highlights include highly qualified educators, yoga, swim safety program at the Emilson Branch, gymnastics play, environmental/outdoor Family Farm discovery, and the KidZone (our large motor activity room). We are pleased to welcome you and your family to the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center Community!

The South Shore YMCA is a charity. Dollars raised through charitable gifts to our Annual Campaign to ensure financial assistance and accessibility to Early Learning, Afterschool Programs and services.

Mission Statement

The Better You Belongs Here.

Philosophy

At the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center, it is our philosophy that children learn about their world through hands-on play and exploration. We are sensitive to the growth and development of each child, and are mindful of diverse learners as we plan our instruction. Our educators provide guidance and support as children become active thinkers, ask questions about what they are learning, explore and develop their interests as learners, develop positive self-esteem, learn about healthy living, and learn to interact positively with one another. We will help children reach these goals by providing activities that are developmentally and age appropriate, through hands-on exploration and play, large and small group instruction, and by providing a variety of choices for every style of learner. Our values and beliefs about children are deeply rooted in the history of the YMCA.

Statement of Purpose

The South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center is dedicated to the growth and development of all young children by providing quality education and care. We will do so in an environment that is nurturing, safe, and free to educate, engage, and empower children and their families to develop a life-long love of learning.

Non-discrimination Policy

The South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center does not discriminate with regard to race, national origin, political beliefs, parents' marital status, cultural heritage, disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity or child's toilet training status.

Licensing Information

All South Shore YMCA Early Childhood Centers are licensed by the MA Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) and are mandated to adhere to all of the rules and regulations regarding group day care licensing. The EEC regional office is located at 1250 Hancock St. Suite 605N, Quincy, MA 02169. 617-472-2881 x628. Parents may contact EEC for information regarding the program's regulatory compliance history.

Early Learning Center Program Organizational Chart:

Laureen Browning – Vice President of Youth Development
781-826-7910 or 781-771-0458 lbrowning@ssymca.org
Maureen Melone - Early Learning Center Director
781-826-7900 x221 mmelone@ssymca.org
Chrissy Newell- Assistant Director cnewell@ssymca.org
Catherine Wilson-Assistant Director cwilson@ssymca.org

Financial Assistance

Thanks to charitable donations made possible through our Annual Campaign, Financial Assistance is available to those based on the need demonstrated by household income and/or extenuating circumstances. Monies secured through this campaign, ensure that no child, family or adult is turned away from the South Shore YMCA due to an inability to pay. To apply, please speak to the Early Learning Center Director about completing a financial assistance application. Applications may also be found on ssymca.org. Please consider volunteering your time, talent or treasure to this year's Annual Campaign!

Our Educators

At the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center we believe that the quality of the children's experiences while in our care is largely dependent on the quality of our educators. Therefore, we carefully select our educators based on their education, experience, passion, and ability to work with children and families. The South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center provides an extensive orientation process regarding program policies and procedures, curriculum, and philosophy of education. We provide ongoing professional development opportunities for our educators to further their own learning through courses and trainings offered inside and outside of the South Shore YMCA. Early educators participate in a fall professional development day and a spring Early Educators Retreat and complete 12 StrongStart Essentials modules to support the healthy growth and development of young children as well as ensure core competencies are enhanced and critical early childhood education skills achieved. In addition, all employees of the South Shore YMCA ELC receive training in first aid and CPR as well as Child Abuse Prevention, Recognition and Reporting.

Positive Guidance

The South Shore YMCA believes that all children should experience success. We strive for a setting that provides children with opportunities to explore their environment within consistent, age-appropriate limits. We ensure that policies and procedures regarding child guidance promote the recognition of the individual and diverse developmental needs of each child. A high quality program can take place in a mutually respectful and caring environment. In addition, teachers will take a proactive approach to behavior management by modeling and incorporating positive communication, social, and emotional skills into the curriculum. In doing so, we will help each child self-monitor and regulate their own behavior.

The KidZone: Our Large Motor Activity Room

Developing habits for healthy living starts at an early age. At the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center, we foster knowledge of the importance of daily exercise as part of early childhood curriculum in the "KidZone." The KidZone is an indoor playground with opportunities for climbing, sliding, crawling, riding, and just plain moving.

Because we also feel that parents are their child's strongest role models, families of children enrolled at the Early Learning Center will be able to use the KidZone together on scheduled Saturday mornings (notifications will be sent as scheduled).

Please review the following policies before coming to the KidZone with your family:

- The KidZone is a water only area.
- Parents are responsible for their children while using the KidZone during this time.
- Please be respectful of the equipment and use all items in the manner in which they were intended.

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 6:30am – 6:00pm

ELC Scheduled Closings & Early Closures 2019-2020

- Professional Development Day: Monday, October 14, 2019
- Thanksgiving Break: Thursday & Friday, November 28-29, 2019
- Christmas Eve: Closing early 3:00pm Tuesday, December 24, 2019
- Christmas Day: Wednesday, December 25, 2019
- New Year's Eve: Closing early 3:00pm, Tuesday, December 31, 2019
- New Year's Day: Wednesday, January 1, 2020
- Early Educator's Retreat: Monday, April 20, 2020
- Memorial Day: Monday, May 25, 2020
- Thursday, Closing early 3:00pm, July 2, 2020
- Independence Day (observed), Friday, July 3, 2020
- Ready for School Day: Thursday, August 27, 2020 ***subject to change with 30-day notice**
- Ready for School Day: Friday, August 28, 2020 ***subject to change with 30-day notice**
- Labor Day: Monday, September 7, 2020

Early Learning Center Policies and Procedures

Enrollment Procedures

To enroll a child at the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center, the following procedures must be completed:

Child and Family Visit

In order to help ensure that the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center is the right match for each family, we require that families visit the center for a tour prior to registration with your child(ren). In addition, once the registration forms and Enrollment Fee (if child is not a SOUTH SHORE YMCA member) have been received, a special time and date will be scheduled for your child to visit the classroom to become familiar with the surroundings, educators and new classmates! During the visit your child will have the opportunity to interact with both educators and children to help as the child transition to the Early Learning Center. While the child visits the classroom, the center Director will meet with the child's parent to complete the enrollment paperwork and review the Early Learning Center's policies and procedures.

Enrollment Fee:

To confirm your child's enrollment an \$90.00 per child/\$150.00 per family non-refundable Enrollment Fee will be due upon registration along with 1st week's tuition (see Tuition Policy below). Enrolled children who are members of the SOUTH SHORE YMCA will receive the benefit of a one-time waived Enrollment Fee. Please note if there is any reason there is a disruption of enrollment, the \$90.00 per child/\$150.00 per family Enrollment fee will be required upon re-enrollment. In addition, families who are enrolled at the Early Learning Center who wish to become members of the SOUTH SHORE YMCA will receive the benefit of a waived Joiner's Fee at the Emilson Branch in Hanover.

Medical Information Needed Prior to Enrollment

- Immunization records updated
 - If your child's immunization schedule is modified/delayed due to a reaction and/or religious belief you must submit documentation from your child's physician stating as such.
- Lead screening
- Date and proof of last physical examination

Policy and Procedures Orientation

Prior to the scheduled start date, all families are required to read and sign-off on all policies and procedures of the Early Learning Center.

These include:

- The Family Handbook
- Child Guidance Policy
- The Healthcare Policy
- Safety Precautions

- Procedures for addressing individualized needs such as IEP's and health plans
- Tuition payment
- Referral Policy
- Termination and Suspension Policy
- Transportation Plans
- Child Absence Policy
- Open door Policy
- Positive Guidance Policy
- Parent Communication & Family Involvement
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire

Annual Registration Fee

Each family enrolled at the Early Learning Center will be charged an Annual Registration fee of \$80.00 per child, with a family limit of \$135.00 upon re-enrollment. Along with the annual registration fee families will be asked to update their child's registration packet. Per the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) all registration paperwork is valid for one year only and must be updated annually. Following this procedure will ensure your child's place in the Early Learning Center program. Please note although enrollment is "rolling" throughout the year enrollment begins in March for the following September.

Tuition Policy

Tuition payments are due weekly and are to be made in advance. Tuition will be expected on Friday for the upcoming week. **Tuition payment is made for Professional Development Days and August 'Get Ready for School Days'** so we may provide the best in educator trainings, staff development to support & retain experienced talented teachers whose guidance is invaluable to children. Professional development opportunities allow us to invest in our staff, keep them current with the ever changing trends in child development. **Tuition payment is also made for closed holidays; no-show days, family vacations, and days closed /delayed openings due to inclement weather, or closure emergencies and or other delays.** The Enrollment Fee (if applicable) and the first week's tuition are due upon enrollment. Enrollment fees are non-refundable; tuition deposits are refundable with at least 2 weeks' notice prior to expected date of enrollment. Tuition rates are subject to change. A 30-day notification of rate changes will always be provided.

Automatic Payment Deduction

For the convenience of our families, tuition payment through automatic payment deduction is provided by our billing department. Upon enrollment, families are provided with the authorization form to complete for automatic payment deduction of tuition payments. This form can also be found at ssymca.org. Tuition is withdrawn weekly on Friday for payment of the upcoming week's tuition.

Withdrawals/Changes

A written three week notice and verbal notice to the center Director is required if you decide to withdraw your child from the program. We also ask for a written request to change the days your child is enrolled. This allows for authorization of the change, to maintain proper numbers in the classrooms. A new Enrollment Fee will be charged if

the child is re-enrolled. If for any reason you decide to withdraw your child from the Early Learning Center, three week's written notice must be provided to and approved by the Director (change forms can be found at the front desk for this purpose), and full tuition payment is expected up until the last day of the week of the date specified on the change form.

Last Week's Tuition Payment

If for any reason you decide to withdraw your child from the Early Learning Center, three week's written notice must be provided to and approved by the Director (change forms can be found at the front desk for this purpose), and full tuition payment is expected up until the last date specified on the change form. If payment is not issued for the full time of your child's enrollment, the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center reserves the right to incur the payment that is owed through your bank draft/ credit card on file until the balance is paid off in full.

Return Check Policy

A charge of \$20.00 and the original payment must be made by money order. Please note if returned checks occur more than twice you will be required to pay by money order.

Late Payment Policy

Tuition payment is due in advance, on Friday for the upcoming week. Payments that are not made by Monday of the current week will be considered late. No student's account may have more than one week's tuition outstanding at any time. Any accounts with an overdue balance will be sent a termination letter, unless agreement has been made with the business office (781-264-9444) and/or payment has been submitted.

Termination Due to Lack of Payment Policy

Any account with an overdue balance will receive a warning letter on the day that it is deemed late, (Monday). If payment is not received by the following Friday, a termination letter will be sent (Monday) and if payment is not received by Friday, your child will not be able to return to the Early Learning Center on Monday. The effective date of the termination notices will be reflective of your last week's paid tuition. If your payment is brought up-to-date by the termination date, your termination notice will be voided. Repeated instances of termination notices will compromise your child's enrollment and all scholarship funding. All billing questions may be referred to Laurie Fournier at the business office (781-264-9444) or lfournier@ssymca.org.

Curriculum and Assessment

Curriculum

We believe that young children are capable and competent learners. Therefore, our teachers provide learning opportunities for children that will enable them to learn, grow, and thrive in an environment that nurtures the potential of every child. Our teachers use the Common Core State Standards as a guideline for all lessons, activities, and experiences, in order to provide a well-rounded, enriching, and appropriately challenging curriculum. These standards serve as a guideline for what schools should teach and what students should know and be able to do as a result of their education at every grade level.

In addition to the use of the Common Core Standards, the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center also uses a research based curriculum, High Scope- COR Advantage which is backed by 50 years of early childhood research that still guides best practices and policy today and is found to be highly effective in the education of young children. This curriculum provides guidelines and suggestions for learning centers and activities that support early learning in all of the 5 content areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies, and Health Education.

Other Program Highlights:

- Aquatic Safety Sessions for Preschoolers and Kindergarten at the Emilson YMCA
- Outdoor play and exploration at the Y Family Farm
- Interest Centers
- Gymnastics Play
- Yoga
- Research based assessment practices that guide instruction
- Monthly visit from the South Shore Natural Science Center Naturalist
- Specialized small group instruction

At the Early Learning Center, we are committed to keeping all children safe. We have implemented "**Child Safety Unit: A Safety Curriculum**" in our Preschool 1 through Pre-Kindergarten 3 classrooms. It focuses on teaching children basic skills designed to help them keep themselves safe from dangerous or abusive situations. Please contact the Director with additional questions, or if you wished to review the curriculum materials.

Enrichment Activities

Please note that the schedule of the specialist/enrichment activities offered by the ELC are subject to change at any time during the year. This includes swim, gymnastics play, yoga, Family Farm and naturalist visits. Our schedule is largely dependent on availability at the Emilson YMCA and can change when the Emilson program needs or staff changes. In addition, children who are enrolled on the day of their class' specialist are eligible to attend that specialty. Children will not be permitted to join a specialist if they are not enrolled on the day that it is offered.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of examining children's progress toward developmental milestones and goals. In order to ascertain the interests and developmental needs of each child, Early Learning Center educators use an assessment tool approved by the Department of Early Education and Care. Using the knowledge gained through such assessments, educators plan instruction that meets the diverse needs of each child. Assessment data will be collected throughout the year that addresses the cognitive, physical, language, motor, social, and emotional growth of each child. This information

is collected through various means such as classroom observations, anecdotal notes, and carefully designed activities that monitor the development of each child. All information gathered will be shared with families at their request, and/or at the educator/family conferences.

Educator/Family Conferences

Scheduled conferences will be offered twice during the year (Jan & June) however, we encourage families to consult with the teachers or director regarding their child's progress at any time. Our "open door" policy gives families & staff the opportunity to discuss each child's progress at any time during the year, not just during conferences. In addition, the Director and/or teachers will bring significant developmental /behavioral concerns to the families' attention as soon as they arise.

Transition Plan

As children develop and move from one classroom to the next, our educators will work together with families and each other to make the transition a smooth one. When a child is developmentally ready to move on to the next classroom and there is space available, they will be introduced to the new educator and environment carefully. Depending upon the needs of the child, the transition plan may include daily, short visits to the new classroom, outside time with their new classmates, or a social story displaying pictures of the new classroom and outlining what to expect in an age appropriate way. If a child is not developmentally ready to move on to the next classroom when their chronological age dictates, the child will continue in their current classroom with the goal of transitioning the child.

When transitioning out of the Early Learning Center, the Early Learning Center Director will communicate with the child's new educators only with written parental consent. Each family will receive a written notice explaining steps ELC will take to ensure a smooth transition and what to expect as your child moves up!

Parent/Family Involvement/Communication

We believe parents and families are the most significant role model in their child's life. The SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center supports and encourages a partnership with families in the education and care of their children.

Therefore, the Early Learning Center welcomes families to visit the center unannounced (open door policy) while their child is at the center.

Parents will receive daily communication regarding their child's day via a daily communication log and face to face communication. Information provided on this sheet will include: curriculum highlights, meal choices, and other important information detailing your child's day and their development. In addition, we will provide parents with the opportunity to give feedback and input regarding their child's education via a designated spot on the daily communication log. We encourage families to participate in Family Nights, Open House, volunteering opportunities, in-house trainings, and additional family engagement group opportunities. This may include the development of policies, programming, and participation in the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Annual Support Campaign.

- Parents will be contacted whenever special problems and/or significant developments regarding their children arise and will be notified in writing prior to the implementation of any change in program policy and procedures within 7 days.

- In order to provide continuous improvement to our programs, the Early Learning Center will conduct a family survey at least twice per year. This will provide families the opportunity to further influence their child's education and care.
- The Early Learning Center will ensure effective communication with families whose primary language is not English or who may require alternative communication methods.
- Any change in educators will be communicated to families as soon as possible.
- Any communicable disease or condition that has been identified in the program will be communicated to parents immediately, upon confirmation of child's health care professional, via posting in your child's classroom.
- Families will be notified prior to introduction of any pets into the classroom.
- The use of any herbicides and pesticides (if applicable) will be conveyed to families prior to their use at the Early Learning Center.
- Any unplanned menu changes will be conveyed to families on the Daily Communication Log.
- To embrace the mission of the South Shore YMCA, the Early Learning Center engages the guidance of a Family Advisory Council to support ELC curriculum and fundraising initiatives.

Celebrating Diversity

The Early Learning Center welcomes all families and celebrates the many cultures represented in our Y community. As educators we encourage open discussions with families to find more about each child's family and culture so we can have a better understanding of the cultural differences and traditions.

We feel by maintaining open communication and educating ourselves, it often helps to build towards mutually agreeable practices and procedures that will benefit our program as well as assist with building a strong bond with each individual family in our program. The South Shore YMCA is committed to embracing & celebrating all cultures and incorporating their celebrations within the curriculum planning - we invite you to be part of the process by sharing your families' culture with us!

Parent Rights and Responsibilities

We believe parents and families are the most significant role model in their child's life. Therefore, the Early Learning Center welcomes and encourages families to visit the center unannounced (open door policy) while their child is at the center. We encourage families to participate in Family Nights, Open House, volunteering opportunities, in-house trainings & daily reports. We expect families to get involved in their child's learning and development and value your input and suggestions.

Confidentiality - Children's Records

Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential and will be stored in a locked cabinet in the Director's office. The records will not be distributed or released to anyone without the written consent of the child's family. Upon request and at reasonable times, families will have access to the child's records. The family will provide the center with a list of individuals who may view and discuss the child's progress in the program. Families have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to the child's record; as well as amend any information contained in the child's record. Upon written request, the Early Learning Center will transfer the child's records to the family, or any other person the family identifies when

the child is no longer in our care. The Early Learning Center will not charge a fee for copies of any information contained in the child's record. Please allow a three day waiting period for all copies.

Child Guidance Policy

Our policies and procedures for the behavior management of children were developed the goal of maximizing the growth and development of the children and for protecting the group and individuals within it. Our child guidance techniques are used in a consistent, reasonable and developmentally appropriate way based on an understanding of the individual needs and stage of the development of each child. By using the following child guidance techniques, we strive to minimize inappropriate behavior while creating a positive and nurturing environment for all of the children in our care.

Child Guidance Techniques will include:

- Setting reasonable and positive expectations.
- Offering choices and providing children an opportunity to verbalize their feelings.
- Firm and reasonable limits and rules will be explained to children in an age-appropriate manner using clear, easy to understand words.
- Redirection- we will offer alternatives to children when undesirable behavior is displayed.
- Verbal intervention- we will talk with the child about his/her inappropriate behavior and give suggestions on how to deal with the situation more appropriately.
- Logical consequences- we will help the child understand the logical consequences of his/her actions, which will encourage self-control through understanding.
- If a child is acting out by hurting themselves or others, we may separate the child and assist them to an area where he/she can be supervised at all times until the child feels he/she can rejoin the group.
- If a child persists with particularly challenging behavior, the teacher and the parents will discuss appropriate management techniques together.
- Children shall participate in the establishment of rules and limits appropriate to their age.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Guidelines:

The staff of the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center will use positive guidance strategies at all times. Early Learning Center staff will not use any of the following as a means for behavior management:

- 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.

- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remaining in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
- Depriving children of outdoor time

Physical restraint (supportively holding a child in the least restrictive way) is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child and/or other children from imminent danger). Staff must assess the situation and intervene in a calming non-threatening manner. The goal is to help the child regain self-control in the least restrictive way. All incidents must be immediately reported to your supervisor, parent notified (always maintaining confidentiality) and documented

Child Guidance Plan Procedure

In some cases, for a variety of reasons, a child's behavior may be of concern for educators because it persists or it is not typical of his/her developmental age. If an educator develops a concern about a child based on the assessment process, the behavior will be observed, recorded, and reviewed before a referral is recommended. A family meeting will be set up to discuss the program's concerns and referral in a sensitive and supportive way with the Director, and appropriate Early Learning Center staff.

Families and educators will work in partnership to develop a plan with the goal of helping the child develop pro-social behavior, and maximize the growth and development of the child while also protecting all the individuals in the program. In some cases, external referrals may be recommended in an effort to provide the least restrictive learning environment for the child. All referrals are kept confidential.

Mandated Reporting

All SSYMCA staff fall under the MA guidelines of Mandated Reporting and are mandated by law to report all incidents of suspected abuse and/or neglect of children under the age of 18 to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) via 51A Report. According to MA General Laws to Protect Children Section 51A-F no staff will ever be "discriminated or retaliated against" for making a report of suspected abuse.

All staff will report to their supervisor any indication of or warning signs concerning abuse and or neglect involving a child, inappropriate behavior by a staff member/volunteer AND any instances of staff violating this Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy SOUTH SHORE YMCA staff who identify concerning behavior or a violation of policy by a fellow staff person must report the event to their supervisor or next /lateral chain of command and /or to the VP of Human Resources immediately.

Overview of Reporting Procedure

1. Any form of child abuse (a child who is harmed or threatened with physical or emotional harm by the acts or lack of action /deliberately or through negligence or inability/of a caretaker) including physical, emotional, sexual or neglect if suspected, is to be reported to your supervisor immediately.
2. At that time both you and your supervisor (or next/lateral in chain of command) will report the abuse or neglect to the MA Department of Children and Families (DCF).

3. The Executive Director or designee and Program Director in consultation with DCF may jointly decide if, when, and/or how the parents/guardians should be advised that the SSYMCA has filed a 51A report.
4. Once the suspected abuse or neglect has been orally reported to DCF, a written report (51A) must be submitted within 48 hours. Please note that any mandated reporter who fails to make the required reports may be fined up to \$5000 and /or 2 1/2 years in jail. (Chapter 119 sections 51A-E).
5. If the alleged abuse involves a SSYMCA staff or volunteer, they will immediately be suspended from work and will remain suspended until a full investigation is completed. Reinstatement of a staff or volunteer will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of SSYMCA CEO Paul Gorman.
6. Parents and/or guardians will be immediately informed of any allegations of abuse or neglect involving their children while in the care and custody of the Early Learning Center. The Department of Early Education and Care will be immediately notified.

DCF Area Office Directory: 9am- 5pm

Braintree 781-794-4400

Cape Cod & Islands 508-760-0200

Plymouth 508-732-6200

After 5pm weekends/holiday:

Child-At-Risk-Hotline 1-800-792-5200

DCF Website: www.mass.gov/dcf

Children's Advocacy Center of Norfolk County:

www.mass.gov/da/norfolk/CAC/index.html

Biting Policy

At the Early Learning Center, we are concerned with the safety and well-being of each and every child. We understand that each child develops at his/her own rate and in his/her own learning style. It is our goal to provide a nurturing and safe environment for every child enrolled in our Early Learning Center programs. Understanding that biting is developmentally appropriate for toddlers and children in their early preschool years, we have developed this policy to help keep children safe. The goal of our Biting Policy is to help us to meet each child's needs, to provide safe, nurturing care for all our children and families, and to help us identify if a child at our center needs additional services or referrals.

Biting Procedures

Informing Parents/Guardians

If a child bites another child, the incident will be documented for both children. The parents/guardians of both children will be notified, and due to confidentiality children's names will not be used.

Teacher Response

When a child bites, the educator will immediately attend to the child who has been bitten. The educator will then turn to the other child and give age appropriate verbal feedback.

Repeated Biting Incidents

If a child bites repeatedly (more than once per week or once per week on a regular basis) the educator will follow our behavior management policy for identifying behavior that is of concern for the safety of the child who is biting as well as the other children in the center.

Behavior Management Plan

If a child is repeatedly biting (see definition above) we will refer to the procedures outlined in the Child Guidance Plan Procedure.

**In some cases, it may be necessary to ask the parent to withdraw the child from the center because we have been unable to reduce the biting occurrences. If this situation occurs, we want the parents/guardians of the child to understand that we will welcome re-enrollment of their child after the biting phase has passed.

Individuals with Diverse Abilities

The SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center will make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities and chronic illnesses.

We will consider each case individually and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In some cases, external referrals may be recommended in an effort to provide the least restrictive learning environment for the child. The following is a list of family resources. Inquiries about these and other referral services may be made through the director.

Referrals

The SOUTH SHORE YMCA Learning Center shall use the following procedures for referring families to appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services, but not limited to vision, dental and hearing for their child should the center staff feel that an assessment for such additional services would benefit the child.

Whenever any staff member is concerned about a child's development or behavior and feel that further evaluation should be considered they will report the concern to the Early Learning Center Director.

The Director will complete an observation report and review the child's record prior to making a referral. The Director will maintain a list of current referral resources in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services. This list shall include the contact person for Chapter 766 and Early Intervention Program referrals.

Medical Services

Pediatrician- South Shore Pediatrics/Healthcare South: 781-826-2131
Norwell Pediatric Dentistry: 781-659-7442

Counseling

Family- Dr. Barbara J. Green 781-749-9227 ext. 3
South Bay Mental Health- 1-800-244-4691

Education and Special Needs

Early Intervention-
Cohasset, Hingham, Hull, Norwell, Scituate, Weymouth

First Early Intervention
574 Main St.
South Weymouth, MA 02190
781-331-2533

Hanover, Hanson, Pembroke, Halifax, Plymouth
Kennedy-Donovan Center EIP
64 Industrial Park
Plymouth, MA 02360
508-747-2012

Abington, Rockland, Whitman
Brockton Early Childhood Intervention Program
801 Pleasant St.
Brockton, MA 02301
508-586-9855

Special Education:

Hanover Public Schools: Keith Guyette, Director of Student Services
kguyette@hanoverschools.org, 781-878-0786

Norwell Public Schools: Leah Ciolkosz, Early Childhood Coordinator, 781-659-8800

Scituate Public Schools Dianna Mullen, Director of Special Education,
dmullen@scit.org, 781-545-8759

Rockland Public Schools: Tina Miklos, Early Childhood Coordinator,
781 871-8412

Marshfield Public Schools: Susan Dupuis, Director of Special Education
781-834-5000

Hingham Public Schools: Elizabeth Costanzal, Early Childhood Coordinator
781-741-1570

Social Services and Tuition Assistance:

- Women Infant and Children (WIC); Janet Costa, 508-747-4933
- South Shore YMCA Financial Assistance: 781-264-9444
- Community Care for Kids: 617-471-6473 <http://communitycareforkids.net>
- Self Help Inc.: 508-599-1666 cpc@selfhelpinc.org
- Parental Stress Hotline: 1-800-632-8188
- Department of Children and Families (DCF): 781-682-0800 South Weymouth
508-732-0800 Plymouth
- Quincy Family Resource Center: 617-481-7227 www.QuincyFamilyRC.org

Referral Meeting

The Director will meet with the child's family to share any concerns and provide:

- a list of referral resources
- a written statement including the reason for recommending a referral for additional services
- a brief summary of the center's observations related to the referral
- steps taken to assist child in classroom routine
- ELC will offer additional support in making the referral if needed
- children under the age of three may be referred to services provided by Early Intervention Programs

Follow-Up to the Referral

The director will, with family permission via release of information form, contact the agency or service provider who evaluated the child for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at the center. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from this agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the center shall review the child's progress at the center to determine if another referral is necessary.

Termination and Suspension

Although we strive to meet the needs of every child in our care, there are circumstances where a child cannot function safely in our environment. If certain aggressive behavior causes a significant risk or harm to the health and safety of the child or other children and/or staff, the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Learning Center may terminate the enrollment, without notice, of any child whose behavior creates a significant risk. In such circumstances, the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center will use the following progressive procedures:

- We will observe and record inappropriate behavior.
- We will ask the family to participate in an immediate family-teacher conference where we will discuss our observations and goals.
- The center director may suggest outside community resources to the family. The Early Learning Center will work with these resources for further guidance in responding to the child's behavior.
- If the inappropriate behavior continues after reasonable accommodations have been made, the Early Learning Center will request termination of enrollment. Families will be notified in writing, or at a meeting if possible, regarding the reasons for termination. A copy of this letter will be kept in the child's records. The director will inform family of information and referrals for other services through the Community Care for Kids Child Care Resource Agency. We will prepare the child in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand to ease with the transition.

Other Conditions for Termination or Suspension:

- Failure to pay weekly tuition.
- Unresolved disagreement regarding center policies or procedures as stated in the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center Family Guide.
- Lack of updated physical and immunizations (child may re-enroll based on availability once updated paperwork is completed).
- When a child and/or family is physically and/or verbally abusive or threatening to children or staff.
- Consistent late pickup (after 6:00 p.m.).

Health and Safety

Health Care Policy

The Early Learning Center has a comprehensive Health Care Policy and works with our health care consultant Barbara Blaney RN and the Hanover Public Health nurse, Nancy Funder RN, to ensure the health and safety of all children. Please see your child's Family Board to review our Health Care Policy or request a copy from the Early Learning Center Director.

No Recording Policy

In order to continue to provide the best in early learning and overall child /staff safety the following policy will immediately be in effect:

The use of any type of audio or video recording device is prohibited unless authorized by the ELC Director.

By maintaining open communication, it helps to build towards mutually agreeable practices and procedures that will benefit our program as well as assist with building strong partnerships with each family.

Policy for Mandated Reporting of Suspected Abuse

All SOUTH SHORE YMCA staff fall under the MA guidelines of Mandated Reporting and are mandated by law to report all incidents of suspected abuse and/or neglect of children under the age of 18 to the Department of Children and Families via 51A Report. According to MA General Laws to Protect Children Section 51A-F no staff will ever be "discriminated or retaliated against" for making a report of suspected abuse. To learn more about the South Shore YMCA's commitment to Child Safety please pick up our **Safe Kids** brochure or visit our website ssymca.org & click on Social Responsibility.

Notification of Injury

The Early Learning Center will inform families immediately of any injury which requires emergency care beyond minor first aid. We will inform families in writing of any first aid (via injury/illness report) administered to their child within 24 hours of the incident. If a child has an accident in which they hit their head, the family will be contacted immediately and the child will be monitored closely by Early Learning Center staff.

Health/Illness

When your child is not feeling well, we trust that you are the best judge of your child's health. We expect that families will use sound judgment, and will not bring a sick child to the center.

However, if in the opinion of the teaching staff that your child is sick, we will call you to pick-up your child. If you are called because your child is sick, please make every effort to come the center as soon as possible.

While awaiting your arrival, your child will be made comfortable in the Director's office or designated, supervised program space.

The following criteria will be considered by educators when determining if a child is sick:

- Fever of 101 degrees or more
- Inflammation and/or discharge of the eyes
- Vomiting
- More than one incidence of diarrhea
- Communicable disease
- Unknown rash

If your child was sent home due to illness, he/she should be symptom free at drop off upon their return to the Early Learning Center. Please be respectful of this policy as it allows your child ample time to recover and helps to stop the spread of illness to the other children. It is the family's responsibility to notify the center if your child has a

communicable disease such as: measles, mumps, chicken pox, head lice, etc. A child may be readmitted without a statement from a physician only if the child has been absent for a period of time equal to the longest incubation period of the disease as specified by the Department of Health and Social Services.

On occasion, if the health concern persists, the Early Learning Center Director may request that a child be seen by a physician prior to returning to the center.

PLAN FOR MILDLY ILL CHILDREN

Children who are mildly ill may remain at the Early Learning Center if they are not contagious and they can participate in the daily program (including outdoor activities). If a child's condition worsens during the day or, if it is determined that the child poses a threat to the health of the other children, or if the child cannot be cared for by the classroom teachers, the Director will contact the child's family. The family will be asked to pick up the child. Any toys, blankets, or mats used by an ill child will be cleaned and disinfected before being used by other children.

PLAN FOR MANAGING INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Educators will take extra precautions when children who are ill at the Early Learning Center. Children who exhibit symptoms of the following types of infectious diseases, such as gastro-intestinal, respiratory and skin or direct contact infections, may be excluded (in the Director's office or sent home) if it is determined that any of the following exist:

- the illness prevents the child from participating in the program activities or from resting comfortably
- the illness results in greater care needed that staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- the child has any of the following conditions: fever, unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or other signs of serious illness
- diarrhea, vomiting in the previous 24 hours at home or once at the center
- mouth sores, unless the physician states that the child is non-infectious
- rash with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease
- purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conductive with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids) until examined by a physician and approved for re-admission, with or without treatment
- impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered
- head lice, free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites
- strep infection, until 24 hours after treatment and the child has been without fever for 24 hours
- chicken pox, until last blister has healed over

A child who has been excluded from child care may return with a note after being evaluated a medical provider and it has been determined that he/she is considered to pose no serious health risk. Nevertheless, the center may make the final decision concerning the inclusion or exclusion of the child.

When a communicable disease has been introduced into the Early Learning Center and documented by the child's health care professional, families will be notified via posting on your child's classroom Family Board and at the sign/in sign/out table.

Whenever possible, information regarding the communicable disease shall be made available to the families. The Director shall consult the Health Care Consultant for such information. DPH must be contacted when there is a reportable communicable disease. The program will maintain a list of the children who have documented exemptions from immunization and these children will be excluded from attending when a vaccine preventable disease is introduced into the program. If your child's immunization schedule is modified/delayed due to a reaction and/or religious belief you must submit documentation from your child's physician stating as such. Please see our Health Care Policy posted in each classroom Family Board and on the ELC Office Board.

The Massachusetts Immunization Program provides some free childhood vaccines. The toll free telephone number is 1-888 658-2850 or visit mass.gov/dph/imm

PLAN FOR MEETING INDIVIDUAL HEALTH NEEDS

In order to meet the needs of children with specific health needs, such as allergies or chronic illness, the Early Learning Center will adhere to the following procedures. For chronic medical conditions diagnosed by a physician, an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) must be in the child's record folder. The plan must describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. During the enrollment process, families will be asked to record any known allergies or chronic illnesses on their child's "face sheet". Each child's face sheet will be updated yearly and will be kept in the child's record folder.

With family consent, allergies and/or other important medical information will be posted in each classroom, on the refrigerator in the kitchen, and on the snack storage cabinet. This information will be updated regularly and as needed.

All teachers and staff will be kept informed regarding individual health needs by the Director so that children can be protected from exposure to foods, chemicals, pets or other materials to which they are allergic. For a child with specific food allergies, the director will inform the staff of substitutions for snacks and lunches when completing menus.

The names of children with allergies that may be life threatening (i.e. - bee stings) will be posted in conspicuous locations in the Early Learning Center with specific instructions of how to respond if an occurrence were to happen. The Director will be responsible for making sure that all staff receives the appropriate training (such as EPI Pen) on how to handle emergency allergic reactions.

Handwashing

In order to help protect children and educators against the spread of infectious disease, the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center will adhere to the following hand washing procedures:

Children and Adults will wash their hands:

- Upon arrival at the Early Learning Center
- After diapering or using the bathroom

- Before eating, or preparing food
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After outdoor play
- After handling any materials such as play dough, dirt, or sand

Toileting/Diapering Procedures

Diapering

Educators will change children's diapers throughout the day and as needed. Before and after every diaper change, the educator will wash their hands according to EEC guidelines. Educators will wear gloves whenever changing a child. Diapers will be changed on a changing table with fresh paper. The changing table surface will be cleaned and disinfected between each use. Each child will be cleaned and dried with individual washing materials. The family will supply all diapers /wipes and ointments as needed. Soiled diapers will be placed in a sealed, leak-proof container and will be cleaned and disinfected as needed.

Toileting

Children who are toilet trained will use the bathroom as needed and as scheduled throughout the day. After using the bathroom, all children will follow proper hand washing procedures. For children who are learning to use the toilet, educators will follow family requests and work in partnership during this process. Educators will provide many opportunities throughout the day for children to become familiar with the toileting process.

Toileting Accidents

All families are asked to provide a complete set of clothes (appropriate to the season) to be left at the Early Learning Center. If a child has a toileting accident, he/she will be cleaned up by an educator in the bathroom and changed into clean clothes. The soiled clothes will be placed in a sealed plastic bag and returned to the family at the end of the day

Tooth Brushing

At the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center, children will brush their teeth when in care for more than 4 hours. This policy is in promotion of positive oral health habits. Children will brush under the supervision of educators and will use toothpaste with fluoride approved by the American Dental Association. Toothbrushes will be stored so as to avoid the spread of infectious disease and new toothbrushes will be provided to each child after a period of 3 months, or after illness. Parental consent will be kept in each child's record.

Infant Sleep Policy/SIDS Risk Reduction

Infants will always be put to sleep on their backs to reduce the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Babies must always be placed on their backs for EVERY sleep- at bedtime and naptime. Early Learning Center educators will always place babies on their backs to sleep. In addition, educators will always have a direct line of sight on all infants as they sleep so as to provide constant and diligent supervision.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the following steps can be taken to reduce the risk of SIDS:

- **Breast-feed.** Research shows that any amount of breast-feeding reduces the risk of SIDS. The protective effect is strongest if your baby breast-feeds exclusively for the first six months of life.
- **Back to sleep.** Place your baby to sleep resting on his or her back, rather than on the stomach or side. This isn't necessary when your baby's awake or able to roll over both ways without your help.
Don't assume that others will place your baby to sleep in the correct position — insist on it. Advise sitters and child care personnel not to resort to the stomach position to calm an upset baby.
- **Select bedding carefully.** Use a firm mattress and avoid placing your baby on thick, fluffy padding, such as lambskin or a thick quilt. These may interfere with breathing if your baby's face presses against them. For the same reason, don't use bumper pads or leave pillows, fluffy toys or stuffed animals in your infant's crib.
- **Don't overheat baby.** To keep your baby warm, try a sleep sack or other sleep clothing that doesn't require additional covers. If you use a blanket, make it lightweight. Tuck the blanket securely at the foot of the crib, with just enough length to cover your baby's shoulders. Then place your baby in the crib, near the foot, covered loosely with the blanket. Don't cover your baby's head.
- **Baby should sleep alone.** Adult beds aren't safe for infants. A baby can become trapped and suffocate between the headboard slats, the space between the mattress and the bed frame, or the space between the mattress and the wall. A baby can also suffocate if a sleeping parent accidentally rolls over and covers the baby's nose and mouth.
- **Offer a pacifier.** Sucking on a pacifier at naptime and bedtime may reduce the risk of SIDS. One caveat — if you're breast-feeding, wait to offer a pacifier until your baby is 1 month old and you've settled into a comfortable nursing routine. If your baby's not interested in the pacifier, try again later. If the pacifier falls out of your baby's mouth while he or she is sleeping, don't pop it back in.

Infant Feeding

Educators will follow the lead of the family in regards to infant feeding schedules and meal patterns. The family will be responsible for providing all bottles, cups, formula, water, breast milk, milk, and food. We require that all bottles for the day be made by the family prior to their departure for the day.

Each item should be labeled (labels will be provided by the Early Learning Center) with the child's first and last name as well as the date it was prepared.

At the end of the day, all unused food/formula/breast milk will be returned to the family. All bottles, cups, containers will also be given back to the family at the end of the day for cleaning.

Infant Room: Shoeless Environment

Infants spend a great deal of time on the ground learning to crawl and building motor skills. In order to ensure their safety on the floor, we ask that all shoes be removed or that the booties provided outside the classroom be placed over shoes before entering the infant room.

Administration of Medication

No Educator will administer the first dose of any medication to a child in case of an allergic reaction. The first dose of any medication must be given at home. Subsequent doses of all medication will only be administered with written consent from the family. In addition, prescription medication will only be administered with the written order of the child's physician. The medication must be in the original container with the child's name, the name of the drug, and directions for usage and storage on the label.

Non-prescription oral medication such as Tylenol, must have written family consent (Authorization of medication form) and the written permission of the child's physician regarding specific dosage, times, days, and purpose (valid for one year). In the event that non-prescription medication such as Tylenol needs to be administered, the center Director or classroom teacher will make every attempt to also obtain verbal consent from the family.

All non-prescription topical ointments (applied to unbroken skin) such as sunscreen, diaper cream, bug spray, require the written consent of the family (valid for one year.) These will be provided by the family and will be used only by their child. All items must be properly labeled with the child's name and in their original container.

All non-prescription topical medications that are applied to broken skin, wounds, rashes must be stored in the original container, labeled with the child's name and used only for that child. A physician's order will be required and logged onto medical record when applied.

For children who require medication that has a certain procedure such as the epi-pen, educators will receive training in following the specific written directions. A written record of all medication administered will be kept at all times at the Early Learning Center.

This data will show the date of each administration of medication, the dosage, the name of the educator administering the medication, and the name of the child. All medications will be stored properly according to medication instructions in a location that is safe and secure. All unused medications will be returned to the family.

Nutritious Menu Choices

Serving healthy meals and snacks to children is important to providing good nutrition, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits, and helping to prevent costly and potentially-disabling diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity. At the Early Learning Center, we will work with families to ensure that all children's nutritional needs are met by following USDA guidelines. The Early Learning Center will provide a nutritious snack and will follow family and physician's orders regarding special diets and allergies.

Families will be responsible for sending a nutritious lunch daily that includes something from the 4 food groups. Please label all containers with the child's name. We cannot heat up or chill food, please use ice packs and thermoses for this purpose. The following are some suggestions for healthy children's lunches:

- **Sandwiches**- whole wheat bread, cheese, turkey, tuna, jelly, chicken, bagel with cream cheese, pizza, tortilla with honey

- **Fruit/vegetables-** orange, apple, raisins, dried fruit, carrot sticks, banana, sliced cherry tomatoes (*all fruit and vegetables should be sliced into sticks, not cubed or round, so as to avoid choking hazards*)
- **Other items-** crackers, granola bars, muffins, yogurt, pasta, rice cakes, cottage cheese, hard-boiled egg
- **Beverages-** milk or water

The Early Learning Center has made a commitment to the **Partnership for a Healthier America** and implements all **HEPA** (Healthy Eating and Physical Activity) standards in our classrooms. Please see your child's classroom Family Board to learn more about ways we provide a foundation for learning through curriculum and play, provide daily opportunities to learn about healthy food choices and promote physical activity to keep our children healthy and strong!

Birthdays

We love celebrating birthdays at the ELC and keeping kids healthy! Any family who wishes to celebrate their child's birthday at school can purchase a book at the ELC front desk for \$5.00. A bookplate will be placed in the front cover of the book wishing the child a happy birthday and the book will be donated to the child's class. A family member is invited to read the book to the class or the classroom teacher will read the book aloud. The class will sing happy birthday to the child after the reading is complete. We believe that our new Books for Birthdays policy will support two goals: fostering early literacy skills and supporting healthy eating habits!

Here's How it Works...

1. Purchase a Book at the front desk for \$5.00 (or bring in your own favorite!)
2. A special happy birthday message will be placed in the book honoring the child.
3. The book will be donated to your child's class.
4. The book will be read aloud on the child's birthday by the teacher or the child's family member.
5. Everyone will sing "Happy Birthday" together!
6. The book will remain in the class for future enjoyment by all.

Holiday Celebrations

On occasions such as celebrations and class parties, families may send in healthy snacks to share with the class. Emphasis is placed on healthier choices when celebrating rather than cupcakes and other sugary snacks. Items to consider may include: fruits, pretzels, rice cakes, bagels and fruit popsicles. All food donation items must be factory sealed with the ingredients listed on the package. Homemade items cannot be accepted to ensure the safety and inclusion of all children. Please check with your child's teacher prior to an event to discuss your child's celebration!

Allergies

Any allergies to food, chemicals, or other MUST be listed on the child's information sheet under "allergies," and on an Individual Healthcare Plan completed and signed by the child's pediatrician. Please include information of treatment of allergy and possible reactions that may occur in the child from the allergy. With family consent, this information with a picture of the child will be posted in food preparation areas, in the Director's office, and in the child's classroom. Educators will be informed of children's allergies and trained in how to properly respond to each case.

Please note and respect that out of concern for individuals with severe allergies, the Early Learning Center is a peanut free childcare center.

Animal and Pet Policy

Animals can be fascinating to children and provide a wealth of learning opportunities. Classroom pets or visiting animals of the Early Learning Center must be in good health. In addition, all animals must have documentation from a veterinarian showing that they are up to date on immunizations and are of the nature to have positive contact with children. Educators will supervise all interactions between children and animals and will coach children on safe behavior with animals. Any child with an allergy to a certain animal will not be exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed in childcare due to risk of salmonella. All children and staff will follow proper hand washing procedures following any contact with animals.

South Shore YMCA Early Learning Aquatic Safety Sessions

Preschool-PK & Multiage Kindergarten children who are enrolled in our Early Education programs will have the opportunity to participate in a developmentally appropriate aquatic safety program taught by the Emilson and Quincy aquatic staff with support of the Early Learning Center educators at the YMCA. The goal of our swim safety education program is part of the South Shore YMCA Aquatic Safety Initiative: to provide children with basic water safety and introduce swimming skills. At the South Shore YMCA, we consider aquatic safety to be one of our highest priorities. Knowing how to swim is a critical life skill. Participating in our aquatic safety session is an opportunity for children who are enrolled on the day of their class to engage in water safety. Consider enrolling your child in the Emilson YMCA swim lessons, contact Meaghan Hilton at 781-829-8585 x8238 or visit www.ssymca.org. Learning how to swim also helps children build confidence in the water and in life.

Participation in our Aquatic Safety Sessions depends on several factors:

- The minimum age for participation is:
 - (Hanover) 2 years and 9 months (due to 'beach front' shallow end access)
 - (Quincy) 3 years' old
- The child's enrollment schedule.
- The child's ability to engage in the sessions safely and cooperatively. *(If it is determined a child may need additional support regarding safe behavior while on the van or while at swim lessons, a meeting will be scheduled with family to discuss ways to promote optimum safety).*
- The availability of the pools throughout the year.
- Inclement weather factors that may impact the safety of the roads involved in transporting children (Hanover) in our 7D- Student Transport van.

This program offered for Early Learning programs at the South Shore YMCA is a unique and innovative opportunity for our students. We strive to help more children

participate in Aquatic Safety Sessions and thus decrease the risk of childhood drowning by including this in our weekly programming.

The successful implementation of this program requires the support of many in our South Shore YMCA community including our educators, support staff, swim instructors, van drivers, and families. Because this program requires the support of so many, it will be left to the determination of the ELC Director to decide if the sessions will occur or need to be canceled for the day.

Reasons that Early Learning Aquatic Safety Sessions may not run:

- The pool has been closed for planned or incidental pool maintenance.
- Inclement weather.
- Unforeseen staffing changes (unfortunately these changes can happen due to sickness/emergencies w/ minimal notice. Our child/teacher ratios are mandated at all times including the pool).
- Transitional times for children during the year such as the month of September.
- Holidays or School vacation week programming at the Branches that utilize the pool and other facilities such as the locker rooms.
- During the summer months the Early Learning Centers will have Wacky Water Wednesdays at the ELC Playground.

Goals and Skills taught in the Early Learning Aquatic Safety Sessions may include:

- Safe behavior in Aquatic environments
- Waiting for their turn while holding the wall
- Comfortably putting face in the water
- Submerging fully (gradually submerging for extended periods of time)
- Treasure Dives, submerging and retrieving an object at the bottom of the pool
- Floating on front and back with support progressing to reduced or no support
- Gliding off wall on front and back with teacher support
- Gliding off wall on front and back with reduced support or independently
- Paddle stroke with support from teacher or floatation device
- Paddle stroke with reduced support or independently
- Jumping in with support and working towards jumping in independently
- Introduction to front crawl and back crawl (done in the oldest age groups)

Remember: A child who swims builds confidence with every lap.

The South Shore YMCA is committed to strengthening our communities by nurturing the potential of children, promoting healthy living and fostering a sense of responsibility.

Policies for Preschool/Pre-K/Kindergarten Aquatic Safety Sessions

At the SOUTH SHORE YMCA, we believe that every child should learn about water safety and feel comfortable in the water.

We support the SOUTH SHORE YMCA's Water Safety Initiative at the Early Learning Center by offering aquatic opportunities for preschoolers & kindergarteners. Please review the following in regard to this program at the Emilson Branch. Please note the sessions will not run during schools vacations (December, February, and April), during the months of June and September and when notified.

- Families must complete a consent form for children to participate.
- Session times are posted on the classroom Family Board. In order to participate in morning sessions children must arrive at the Early Learning Center by 9:00am in their bathing suits. Please provide a swim bag with underwear and towel for your child.
- If your child does not arrive in a bathing suit, they will not be allowed to participate in the session that day. Children who are not participating will stay at the Early Learning Center with an educator for regular program activities.
- If children are in the process of becoming toilet trained, the child must also come to the center wearing a swim diaper (provided by parents).
- Children must be in good physical health and must not have had illness such as diarrhea for a period of 48 hours.
- Children will be driven in a van by a licensed 7D van driver and 7D equipped van to the Emilson Branch of the South Shore YMCA. **Parents must complete a field trip consent form prior to the first session.**
- If the designated permission forms are not returned by the specified date, the ELC Director reserves the right to ask have the child wait to participate until the paperwork can be properly processed.
- South Shore YMCA swim instructors will work with children in the pool while Early Learning Center educators assist.
- Children will change into their dry clothing at the Emilson Branch and be driven by van back to the Early Learning Center.

Transportation Plan for Preschool Aquatic Safety Sessions

With family consent, the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center will transport preschool aged children (2.9 yrs-5+ yrs.) to the Emilson YMCA (75 Mill St. Hanover) for Aquatic Safety Sessions. All families must complete a field trip form in order to be transported to the Emilson Y. Children are expected to wear safety restraints at all times while on the South Shore YMCA program van. All children under the age of eight will be required to sit in a booster seat that will be provided by the YMCA. Children are also expected to behave appropriately while on the van. **Transportation can and will be suspended without notice if a child is behaving in an unsafe manner or being inappropriate while on the program van.** The South Shore YMCA follows all transportation policies provided in EEC 6.06 CMR 7.13. . Please note: Transportation is subject to change due to severe weather conditions. If severe weather conditions occur, the Early Learning Center may ask you to pick your child up from the Emilson Y to ensure safety of children and van drivers. Emergency contact information must always be up to date so you can be reached in the event that arrangements to pick your child up from the Emilson Y must be made. If severe weather conditions occur, the Early ELC Director may decide to cancel sessions in order to ensure the safety of children. All emergency contact information, daily attendance sheets, and a first aid kit shall accompany each class when leaving the Early Learning Center for Aquatic Safety Sessions or field trips.

Field Trips

The Early Learning Center may provide opportunities for occasional field trips for Preschoolers – Kindergarten. If your child does not attend the field trip we will be unable to provide care. Please see the permission slip for detailed information on transportation, arrival and departure times, destination, volunteering etc.

Emergencies While on a Field Trip

Prior to departure from the center the Lead staff will ensure the following steps have been taken:

- (1) Each classroom will bring their designated classroom 1st aid kit
- (2) Each classroom will bring all Emergency/First Aid information/contacts
- (3) Each classroom lead will bring a working cell phone and Center Walkie-Talkie.

If an accident/ illness occurs while on a field trip, the Director will assess the situation and determine next steps including contacting the parent/guardian.

Transportation Plan for Arrival and Departure

Children will be transported to and from the Early Learning Center by their family or by an adult otherwise designated by the family.

Child Absence Policy

In order to ease transition from home to school and so as not to interrupt the daily routines of the classroom, all children must arrive to the Early Learning Center by 9:00am. Arriving prior to 9:00 helps children get acclimated to their school day and allows children the benefit of starting the day as scheduled with their classmates. If your child will not be at school on a day that he/she is normally scheduled to attend for any reason, it is required that parents call the Early Learning Center at 781-826-7900 to inform the Director of their absence before 9:00am. When a child will not be in attendance on their regularly scheduled day at the Early Learning Center, it is the responsibility of the family to call the Early Learning Center and inform the staff of the child's absence by 9:00am. This requirement is mandated for the safety of your child. If parents neglect to call the center regarding a child's absence, the Director or your child's teacher will contact the parents to inquire about the child. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in compromised enrollment.

If in the event that the Early Learning Center does not receive a phone call from the child's family, the Early Learning Center staff will take the following steps to ensure the child's safety:

- If a family member of an absent child has called the Center, the staff person who took the phone call will note the confirmed absence on the 'Call-In Log' located in the Infant Classroom to the right of the telephone.
- At 9:15 one of the ELC leadership staff will call each classroom to find out which children are not in attendance.
- The staff member will call the contacts listed on the absent child's emergency contact sheet.
- When contact has been made, the staff person will note the person spoken to and the time on the 'Call-In Log'.
- If, after calling all emergency contacts listed, no contact has been made to confirm the child's absence, the staff person will inform the Director. The

SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center will then contact the non-emergency number of your local town police department asking for a well-child check to ensure the child's safety.

Drop Off Policy

When dropping your child off each day at the Early Learning Center, each family must park their car and accompany their child into the child's classroom. Each family is required to sign their child in to school both at the reception desk and in their child's classroom. In order to ease transition from home to school and so as not to interrupt the daily routines of the classroom, **all children must arrive to the Early Learning Center by 9:00am.** Arriving by 9:00 helps children get acclimated to their school day and allows children the benefit of starting the day as scheduled with their classmates.

Authorized Pick-up Policy

During the enrollment process, each family must complete an Emergency Contact Form. Listed on this form are only those persons authorized to pick up your child from the Early Learning Center. If someone other than an authorized person will be picking up your child, families must notify the center in writing. All individuals authorized to pick up a child must have a picture ID readily available for staff to reference upon the child's sign out and dismissal from the Early Learning Center.

No one under eighteen years of age will be allowed to pick-up your child. Should an emergency arise and you need to have someone who is not listed on the Emergency Contact Form pick up your child you must contact the Center and provide the authorized individual's name, address, phone number, and verbal permission. The following day you document in writing your authorization.

If an authorized individual arrives at the center to pick up a child and staff has any reason to question the ability of that person to function in a responsible manner (i.e. due to the influence of alcohol or drugs, or apparent emotional instability) the child will not be released. Staff will contact family members for additional authorized contacts to pick up the child safely.

Late Pick-up Policy

The Early Learning Center's hours of operation are 6:30am – 6:00pm. All children must be picked up by the closing time of 6:15pm. If a family is late for pick-up, the Early Learning Center will adhere to the following policy.

- Families must call the center and provide the time in which they expect to arrive.
- Families will be charged a \$1.00 fee per minute which will be added to the family's weekly bill.
- If the tardiness is consistent, a meeting with the family and director will be called to discuss strategies to avoid tardiness. Consistent cases of tardiness may result in compromised enrollment.
- If the parent or guardian does not pick up the child by the closing time, the staff will attempt to notify the emergency contacts. If all attempts fail, the local authorities will be notified one hour after closing (7:15pm), the Department of Children & Families (DCF) Child at Risk Hotline and the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) will be notified. No child will be left unattended.

Emergency Procedures

At the Early Learning Center, all staff members are trained and certified in CPR and First Aid. Children with minor injuries such as bumps, scrapes, or bruises, will receive care by educators who have been trained in first aid. When administering first aid for minor injuries educators will always consult the child's health form. When an injury occurs, educators will complete an incident report form, provide a copy to families, and retain a copy for the child's records. Families will always be informed of all first aid given to their child. For major emergencies such as a broken bone, or puncture wound, the child will be taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital with all emergency information/forms. Families will be contacted immediately. Lead educator will accompany the child in the absence of the parent/guardian and remain at the hospital until parent/guardian arrives.

Evacuation Plan

Evacuation plans will be posted in each classroom and at all exits. Evacuation plans will be practiced at least once a month and at varying times to ensure that all children and staff have adequate experience. Staff and children will practice exiting the building using different routes so as to become familiar with each possibility. The Lead Educator will maintain documentation of the date, time, number of children/educators and effectiveness of each drill in the Fire Drill Log located in the Director's office. This documentation will be maintained for five years.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, the Early Learning Center staff will execute the following procedure.

- The Lead Educators will be responsible for taking the daily attendance information, emergency contact information, and first aid kit out of the building. This information will be kept in a location close to the classroom exit.
- The Lead Educators will lead the children out of the building with a second staff person at the end of the line watching for stragglers.
- The Director will be the last to leave the building. He/she will make a visual inspection of each classroom for children and close each door before exiting the building.
- Once evacuated, all classes will meet on the playground and Lead Educators will check attendance using the daily attendance sheet.
- Educators will wait for the signal of the Director before reentering the building with the children.

Family Information

Inclement Weather Policy

The Early Learning Center will make the determination to close/delay openings based on the severity of the storm and /or State of Emergency.

Please check the website at ssymca.org for all updates starting at 5:30am on the day of the inclement weather and/or the evening prior. We encourage families to sign up for the REMIND app and we will also do our best to send alerts via COR Advantage.

- If the weather conditions are extremely hazardous the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Vice President of Youth Development will determine whether or not the Center will open.
- Should a closure day fall on your child's service day, parents will be required to pay their regular tuition fee.

- In the event of the Center closing early, all families will be contacted via the REMIND app, COR Advantage and or using the information provided on your child's Emergency contact list so please be sure to keep this information current. PLEASE NOTE: updates will also be posted at ssymca.org on the Announcement banner at the top of the ssymca.org site.

Parking Lot

Please be sure to drive **slowly and cautiously** when entering and exiting the ELC parking lot. Please be sure your child is always accompanied by an adult in the parking lot area. Reminder per order of the Town of Hanover and for your safety **right turn only** is permitted.

Outdoor Play

We value outdoor time and consider it very much a part of our daily curriculum at the Early Learning Center. Each classroom will have scheduled outdoor time, weather permitting, as part of their day. With this in mind, please make sure that children are dressed in clothes that are seasonal, comfortable, and practical. The Early Learning Center asks that the families apply sunscreen that has UVA and UVB SPF 30+ before coming to school. During winter months, we will continue to have outdoor play unless the temperature is of concern. All children should come prepared for the weather with boots, hats, mittens, and snowsuits.

Clothing

At the Early Learning Center children will engage in a variety of activities that keep them engaged and involved. Children should wear clothing that is seasonable, comfortable and practical every day. In case of an accident, all children must have an extra set of clothes in his/her cubbie. All belongings should be clearly labeled with the child's name. The Early Learning Center is not responsible for items that are lost or damaged. Please per EEC regulations and for your child's safety **no open toe shoes or flip flops**. The Learning Center is not responsible for items that are lost or damaged.

Rest Time

Children will have a rest period every day at varying times according to their stage of development. During rest time all children will be given the opportunity to rest. If a child does not sleep at this time, they will be given a quiet activity such as puzzles, or books to look at on their cot. Each child will need their own bedding (a crib sheet and small blanket) for their cot at rest time. Please note per Department of Early Education & Care regulations all bedding will be sent home each Friday (or your child's last school day) for washing and should be returned to the center on Monday. Sleeping bags are not allowed as a bedding option for rest time.

Cubbies

Cubbies will be provided for each child. All personal items left at school must fit into the child's cubby. Children who are enrolled part time may be asked to share a cubby with another part time child who does not attend on the same days.

Toys from Home

Early Learning Center educators discourage any toys/valuables from home. These items can get easily misplaced or broken which can be very upsetting for children. Exceptions will be made for children who require a small soft toy for rest time.

Babysitting Policy

Early Learning Center educators and all SOUTH SHORE YMCA employees are prohibited from babysitting, making home visits, transporting children, or attending the birthday party of any child enrolled in the program. Thank you for your cooperation!

Transitions

The SOUTH SHORE YMCA believes that a well-defined procedure for coordinating the successful transition into our program and from one classroom to the next is essential to the educational adjustment and development of a young child as well as the well-being of each child's family. The transition process will be a gradual and positive process to ensure a positive adjustment. Your child's teachers will work cooperatively to determine times for visiting his/her new classroom. We realize this is a big step for your child and will ensure open communication throughout the process including meeting with families to answer any questions you may have regarding your child's transition.

Language Translation

The Early Learning Center follows the EEC resource for language translation options: <http://translate.google.com>. It is not confirmed that the translation is correct so we will also try to find someone who can assist with translating the material. We have teachers who speak Japanese, Portuguese, Cape Verdean, and Spanish. We also have additional resources within our YMCA employees who speak French, Chinese, and Gujarati.

Membership

A family attending the Early Learning Center is entitled to purchase a Household Membership at the Quincy or Emilson Branches with the joiner's fee waived. Once your ELC enrollment application has been confirmed you may obtain your Household Membership YMCA key tag at the Emilson Branch Welcome Desk.

Volunteering/Practicum

The Early Learning Center has many volunteers who are vital to our program. These volunteers include students from local high schools, colleges, and YMCA members. We also have individuals from other programs in the greater Hanover community such as the Friendship Home and Cardinal Cushing Center in Hanover. These volunteers provide assistance to the teachers in the classroom. All volunteers complete CORI/SORI, attend a new employee/volunteer orientation, and meet all the SOUTH SHORE YMCA and state requirements per EEC. Volunteers are never left alone with the children, only participate in classroom and playground activities, and are not included in the classroom ratios.

Volunteering Opportunities

Families are always welcome and encouraged to volunteer in the classroom or at events that are being held in the YMCA. All volunteers will be asked to complete a volunteer application, Cori/Sori and have reference checks.

You will also be invited to complete a new employee/volunteer orientation. Some events that some families may enjoy or be interested in volunteering for are: family

nights, open house, Annual Support Campaign Events (phone-a-thon), other fun activities, or the end of the year celebration. Please see the Director for more information.

Open House

The Early Learning Center offers an Open House in the beginning of each school year to welcome all families. This is a time for us to introduce the teachers/ ELC Director, as well as a time families can introduce themselves to other families.

We utilize this time to review the family guide, explore the upcoming year, and answer any questions /concerns you may have about the program.

It is also a chance to get a closer look at your child's classroom, and meet with the teachers and ask questions about your child's day at ELC!

Families are invited to attend the annual Family Education Night where families will be able to catch a glimpse of what a typical day looks like in our classrooms. The goal of this family engagement event is to help families understand the importance of our Early Childhood curriculum. It is a time to meet other parents, ask questions, see your child's work, and explore the classroom. In order to help you achieve this understanding, we recommend that you attend without your child. Thanks for understanding.

Cultivating Potential

At the Y, strengthening communities is our cause. Strong communities don't just happen; they are the result of steady leadership and stewardship of strong values. We make a difference by focusing on three key areas: **Youth Development**; nurturing the potential of children, **Healthy Living**; improving the nation's health and well-being and fostering a sense of **Social Responsibility**; giving back to our neighbors.

The early years are those of greatest growth, and the time to lay the foundation for educational and lifelong success. Parents, grandparents and your child's extended community nurture your child and build trust. You are your child's first and most important teacher!

We look forward to partnering with you to support the education, health and happiness of your child and family.

Thank you for choosing the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center where children engage in endless opportunities to learn, grow and thrive!

All the best,

Maureen Melone - SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center Director
mmelone@ssymca.org 781-826-7900



Parent/Guardian Statement of Understanding and Receipt Form

The following information is important for the safety and protection of your child. Please read the information, sign this form and return it to the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center.

- I understand my weekly tuition fee and agree to pay this amount by the date it is due.
 - I understand that payments are due on Friday of each week for the following week.
 - I understand that payments are due regardless of sick days, vacation days, closings due to emergencies including weather closures and no-show days.
 - I understand that I must give the SSYMCA Early Learning Center 3 weeks' written notice prior to any changes in my child's schedule including withdrawal from the program. I will be responsible for tuition payments during this time.
 - If payment is not issued for the full time of your child's enrollment, the SOUTH SHORE YMCA Early Learning Center reserves the right to incur the payment that is owed through your bank draft/ credit card on file until the balance is paid off in full.
 - I understand that the Early Learning Center staff and volunteers are not allowed to babysit or transport children at any time outside of the program.
 - I understand that I am not to leave my child unattended at any time at the Early Learning Center unless a staff person is there to receive and supervise my child.
 - I understand that my child will not be allowed to leave the Early Learning Center with an unauthorized person. If my child is to be picked up by someone other than an authorized person, the Early Learning Center must be notified in writing.
 - I understand that all individuals who are not known by the ELC educators as authorized pick-ups for my child must provide photo identification. The educator will match up the photo id with the authorization forms on file.
 - I understand that the Early Learning Center staff are MA Mandated Reporters and by law must report any reasonable suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
 - I have my copy of the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center's policies and procedures as outlined in the Family Guide. I agree to familiarize myself and my child with the information contained in this booklet and understand it constitutes the policies and guidelines of the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center program.
- Please bring any questions re' the Family Guide to our attention. We value your feedback!

I have read and understand the statements above and Family Guide. I agree to abide by the policies and statement of understanding at the South Shore YMCA Early Learning Center.

Parent/Guardian printed name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Child(ren)'s Name

Date