



Champaign Family YMCA Child Safe Environment Handout

Our Commitment: A Child Safe Environment

Champaign Family YMCA is committed to keeping children safe in our community. This means educating ourselves and our community about child abuse and how we can work together to prevent it. Please read this document and ask us questions to learn more about what you can do to protect children from abuse.

Information about Child Abuse

Child abusers can be parents, caretakers, friends, neighbors or anyone who comes in to contact with your child. They can even be other youth. Everyone has a responsibility and plays a role in preventing abuse. Below are the four types of child abuse that are recognized by most states:

1. **Emotional:** Threatening a child or using words that can hurt a child's feelings and self-esteem; withholding love and support from a child
2. **Physical:** Causing injuries to a child on purpose, such as bruises, burns, scars or broken bones
3. **Sexual:** Having sexual contact in any form with a child, including exposing, fondling, intercourse, pornography or internet solicitation
4. **Neglect:** Not providing children with enough food, clothing, shelter, medical care, hygiene or supervision

Child abuse can happen from an adult to a child, or from one child to another (peer-to-peer abuse).

Child Safe Policy

Our Staff

Champaign Family YMCA has more than 150 staff members and volunteers working with youth in the many programs we offer.

Our Screening

To keep children in our programs safe and provide multiple layers of protection, we screen our employees and volunteers through a comprehensive interview process, reference checks and criminal background record checks and fingerprinting.

Our Training

Employees and volunteers complete an extensive child abuse prevention training program to make sure they understand the problem of abuse and know the warning signs to look for. Supervisors and managers complete additional training to further promote a child-safe environment. All staff members and volunteers are mandated to report any suspected child abuse.

Our Policies

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from working one-on-one with youth, interacting with youth outside of program areas (including babysitting) and contacting youth over social media without written consent from a parent or guardian. If you observe a member of our staff or a volunteer violating these policies, please alert us.

Working Together for Safety

Talk to Your Child

Have an open and honest discussion with your child on a routine basis about his or her experiences in our programs, school, sports and other activities. Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult if anything happens to him or her.

Drop In

Champaign Family YMCA has an “open-door” policy for all youth programs. We encourage you to drop in on your child’s activities. There’s no need to provide advance notice. We welcome you to stop by and see how things are going.

Trust Your Instincts

If something seems “strange”, don’t wait to report it. Please speak up and inform a staff member.

Warning Signs of Abuse

- Unexplainable bruising or other physical markings
- Disturbed sleeping or eating patterns
- Abrupt changes in behavior-anxiety, clinging, aggressiveness, withdrawal or depression
- Fear of a certain person or place
- Discomfort with physical contact

Special Attention

Listen and watch for signs of your child receiving special attention that other children or teens are not receiving. This may include favors, treats, gifts, rides, increasing affection or time alone, particularly outside the activities of school, child care or other activities.

Ask Questions

Every once in a while, ask your child these questions:

- What does safe mean to you? How do you know when you are safe?
- Is anyone scaring or threatening you?
- Is anyone asking you to keep secrets?
- Has anyone said anything to you that made you feel bad?
- Is anyone touching you in a way that you don’t like or you are not sure about?

Reporting Abuse

- Report suspicion of abuse or alleged abuse to the local Child Protective Services or local law enforcement.
- If you think your child has been physically injured, seek medical attention.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding a member of our staff, please contact us immediately. If you are not comfortable sharing this information directly with us, please make a report to one of the resources below.

Resources

National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-422-4453

Local Resources: 1-855-OH-CHILD

Organization’s Contact Information: Paul Waldsmith, CEO 937-484-3549