

Youth Consumer Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct for Youth outlines specific expectations of youth.

Abuse or Mistreatment

The YMCA's top priority is keeping youth safe. Any form of abuse or mistreatment of youth, employees, and volunteers is prohibited. Youth shall not abuse or mistreat employees, volunteers, or other youth in any way. Use of abusive, obscene or profane language, including racial, religious, gender, or sexual references directed at other people will not be tolerated.

Youth shall not engage in verbal or emotional abuse or mistreatment of other youth, employees, or volunteers.

<i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions for Adolescent and Teenage Youth</i>	<i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions for Adolescent and Teenage Youth</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriate jokes• Encouragement• Praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name-calling• Bullying or Hazing• Ridicule or Humiliation• Discussing Sexual Behaviors• Cursing• Sexual Jokes• Shaming or Belittling• Derogatory remarks• Harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate other youth• Derogatory remarks about another youth or their family• Comments relating to physique or body development• Inappropriate games like <i>Truth or Dare</i> and <i>Never Have I Ever</i>

Youth shall not engage in the physical abuse or mistreatment of other youth, employees, or volunteers.

<i>Appropriate Physical Interactions for Adolescent and Teenage Youth</i>	<i>Inappropriate Physical Interactions for Adolescent and Teenage Youth</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Side hugs• Shoulder-to-shoulder or "temple" hugs• Pats on the shoulder or back• Handshakes• High-fives and fist bumps• Pats on the head when culturally appropriate• Touching hands, shoulders, and arms• Arms around shoulders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full-frontal hugs• Kisses• Showing affection in isolated areas• Lap sitting• Wrestling or Piggyback rides• Tickling• Exposing private parts of the body• Any type of massage given by or to a youth• Any form of affection that is unwanted by the youth or the staff or volunteer• Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas• Hitting, Spanking, Shaking or Slapping• Unnecessary restraints• Viewing or showing others pornographic materials

Personal Relationships

Appropriate personal relationships between youth are encouraged. However, the YMCA strongly discourages romantic relationships between youth while in programming. Youth are not permitted to hold hands, sit on others' laps, use full-frontal hugs, or kiss other youth while in programming.

One-on-one Interactions

Most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a youth, or when a youth is alone with another youth. The YMCA aims to eliminate or reduce these situations and prohibits private one-on-one interactions unless approved in advance by the YMCA administration. If you observe one-on-one interactions between employees and youth, you should report this to the program director or call/email a Child Protection Committee member at 864-280-7658 or abuseconcerns@faymca.org. You can also call an anonymous helpline at 855-347-0751.

Electronic Communication

The Y takes very seriously its obligation to protect children. Y staff should not have contact or communication with minors (under age 18) who participate in Y programs outside of Y work time. With today's electronic communication options (e-mail, text messages, blogging, social networking sites) it is more important than ever that all employees understand the Y's policy on such contact or communication in order to protect youth and staff.

For purposes of this policy a "youth" is anyone under eighteen (18) years of age who participates in YMCA programs or whom a YMCA employee has met through YMCA programs.

a. Communication Guidelines

1. Employees should not initiate personal phone calls with or receive personal phone calls from youth. A call is considered "personal" if it does not involve both a Y phone and Y specific subject matter. When employees receive calls from youth and/or regarding a non-Y subject, this must be immediately reported to a supervisor.
2. Text messaging with youth is not permitted. If an employee receives a text message from a youth, a supervisor must immediately be made aware.
3. Employees must not share any personal email addresses or instant message names or nicknames with youth. Employees should not initiate or respond to e-mail or instant messages from youth while using any personal (non-Y) connection to the internet.
4. Use of social networking sites to communicate with youth is only permitted if done through a Y- sponsored or approved site. No personal blog or social networking site should be used. Any website or blog maintained by an employee should not have pictures or make reference to any youth, and employees should not request or accept to be linked as "friends" or connections with youth in social networking sites.
5. Communication between employees and youth should only be through YMCA e-mail accounts and phones, any such communication with youth should be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor.

Youth will comply with the YMCA's policies governing the use of cell phones. Youth are not permitted to access or share cell phones with other youth while in programming.

Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

Possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages, drugs, and tobacco products (including e-cigarettes/vapes) while at the YMCA or while engaged in the YMCA's programming is strictly prohibited. Youth will not be permitted to participate in any program while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or illicit substances. Possession of these substances will result in confiscation and/or disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program. Parents/guardians will be notified as appropriate.

Weapons

We want the YMCA to be a safe place for employees, volunteers, and youth. Weapons and items that may be

considered weapons are prohibited. This includes laser pointers. Possession of these items will result in confiscation and/or disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program. Parents/guardians, and/or the authorities will be notified as appropriate.

Violence

The YMCA seeks to provide a safe environment for youth, employees, and volunteers in our community. Violence and threats of violence including but not limited to destruction of property, bullying, physical fighting, and assault, will not be tolerated at the YMCA, on our grounds, in organization facilities, in other facilities being utilized by the YMCA, or during YMCA sponsored activities and events. Employees are available to assist in the resolution of differences. Engaging in violence will result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program. Parents/guardians will be notified as appropriate.

Disruptive Behavior

We take pride in the appearance of the YMCA, and we always want to ensure youth are safe. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior is not permitted in the YMCA. This includes, but is not limited to, graffiti, littering, spitting, or throwing objects that could intentionally or unintentionally harm others or cause disorder. Engaging in disruptive behavior will result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program. Parents/guardians will be notified as appropriate.

Bullying

The YMCA will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one youth by another youth. Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms including:

1. *Physical bullying* – when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as by hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
2. *Verbal bullying* – when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful name.
3. *Nonverbal or relational bullying* – when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
4. *Cyberbullying* – the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
 1. Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
 2. Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
 3. Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
 4. Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
 5. Hazing – an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
 6. Sexualized bullying – when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, exposing private body parts, creating or sharing images or videos involving private body parts or sexualized material (including artificially generated materials), and utilizing sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This applies to all youth, employees, and volunteers. Engaging or participating in bullying will result in disciplinary action, up to and including, dismissal from the program. Parents/guardians will be notified as appropriate.

Reporting

Because the YMCA is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for abuse, it is imperative that everyone, including youth, actively participate in creating a safe environment. If any employee, volunteer, or youth observes suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations by an employee, volunteer, or other

youth, that person must report their observations. Remember, at the YMCA, the policies apply to everyone. Reports will be taken seriously and investigated in the manner described in this policy.

Examples of Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors Between Employees/Volunteers and Youth

Violation of this policy or any abuse prevention policies outlined by the YMCA

Seeking private time or one-on-one time with youth(s)

Privately communicating with youth(s) via electronic communication or social media

Buying gifts for individual youth(s) or their parents

Making suggestive comments to youth(s)

Picking favorite youth

Youth are encouraged to report concerns or complaints about employees, volunteers, or other youth to a Child Protection Committee Member who can be reached at 864-280-7658 or the anonymous helpline at 855-347-0751.