

Gift Giving and Gift Acceptance - Youth

Offenders routinely groom youth by giving gifts, thereby endearing themselves to the youth. They might instruct the youth to keep the gifts a secret, which then encourages keeping other bigger or more harmful secrets from trusted adults.

Gifts to Youth

The YMCA strongly discourages employees and volunteers from exchanging gifts with youth. However, gifts to youth may be given under the following circumstances:

1. Gift requests must be submitted to a supervisor and/or a designated administrator prior to being purchased;
2. The supervisor and/or designated administrator will determine a cost limit regarding how much can be spent on the gift; and,
3. Parents/guardians of the youth must be notified about the gift item and why the youth are receiving the gift.
4. Employees and volunteers are prohibited from giving gifts to individual youth. Gifts must be authorized by a supervisor or designated administrator and given to all youth (i.e., celebration of special events/holidays or group recognition).
5. Employees and volunteers must communicate that the gift is given on behalf of the YMCA, not the individual employee or volunteer.

Gifts from Youth

Sometimes it may be difficult to refuse gifts from youth or their families. In many cultures, people give gifts to reflect their appreciation for people or services. To be respectful of youth and their families, the YMCA makes reasonable allowances for acts of gratitude involving small gifts of appreciation from youth and/or their families that have a monetary value not exceeding \$100.00. Employees and volunteers must disclose all such gifts to their immediate supervisor and/or a designated administrator. Under no circumstances can money be accepted from youth or their families as a gift.

This gift acceptance policy should be included within materials given to parents/guardians and youth; however, if a parent or youth approaches an employee or volunteer with a gift that exceeds a value of \$100.00, the employee or volunteer should politely decline the gift and refer to this policy. The employee or volunteer can also encourage the parent or youth to speak with an immediate supervisor and/or a designated administrator if they have any questions.

Artwork and letters of appreciation written by youth for employees or volunteers may only be accepted if these items will be displayed in a public area at the YMCA. Employees and volunteers may not take youth artwork or letters away from the YMCA whether to their personal homes or any other location