



Parent Handbook

YMCA Out of School Care Programs

2026



YMCA Out of School Care Programs

Crossings-OSC | 140-74 Mauretania Rd W, Lethbridge, AB T1J 5L4
6:45 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. Monday-Friday | Eligible Ages: Kindergarten to Grade 6

West Coulee Station | 1350 Abitibi Road W, Lethbridge, AB T1J 5N5
7:15 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. Monday-Friday | Eligible Ages: Kindergarten to Grade 5
Centre Director : G-Nel Nelson | G-Nel.Nelson@Lethbridgeymca.ca | 403-942-5729



General Centre Information

WHO WE ARE

We are a charity that is dedicated to building healthy communities by fostering a sense of belonging for all. For over 115 years we have been creating safe and welcoming spaces that serve people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. The YMCA of Lethbridge is committed to providing support that reflects community needs so that all can learn, grow and thrive.

OUR MISSION

The YMCA of Lethbridge is a community serving charity where children, youth and adults enrich spirit, mind, body and a sense of belonging.

OUR VISION

Our vibrant community is healthy, connected, welcoming, and inclusive.

OUR VALUES

At the Centre of all we do are our core values. We actively encourage our participants, staff and volunteers to embrace and demonstrate them.

1) Caring **2)** Honesty **3)** Inclusiveness **4)** Respect **5)** Responsibility

2026 Childcare & Out of School Care Closure Dates

Childcare & OSC Services will be closed for the following dates in 2026:

Jan. 1, 2026 - *New Year's Day*

Jan. 2, 2026 - *Winter Break Closure*

Feb. 16, 2026 - *Family Day*

March 11, 2026 - *Professional Development Day*

April 3, 2026 - *Good Friday*

May 6, 2026 (*Child Care Only) - *Professional Development Day*

May 18, 2026 - *Victoria Day*

June 30, 2026 (*OSC only) - *Professional Development Day*

July 1, 2026 - *Canada Day*

Aug. 3, 2026 - *Heritage Day*

Aug. 31, 2026 - *Professional Development Day*

Sept. 7, 2026 - *Labour Day*

Sept. 30, 2026 - *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation*

Oct. 12, 2026 - *Thanksgiving*

Oct. 28, 2026 - *Professional Development Day*

Nov. 11, 2026 - *Remembrance Day*

Dec. 24-25, 2026 - *Holiday Closure*

Dec. 31, 2026 - Jan. 1, 2027 - *Holiday Closure*



Daily Schedule

Building healthy
communities

Crossings OSC Daily Schedule

6:45 am – 8:00 am | Child-Led, Age-Appropriate Activities

7:15 am – 7:45 am | Open Snack (School Days)

8:30 am – 10:00 am | Open Snack & Start-of-School Transition (Non-School Days)

11:30 am – 1:00 pm | Lunch – Brought from Home

2:45 pm – 4:30 pm | Afternoon Snack & End-of-School Transition

1:00 pm on Fridays | Planned Activities

3:30 pm – 6:00 pm | Planned Activities / Curriculum-Based Play

6:00 pm | Centre Closes

West Coulee OSC Daily Schedule

7:15 am – 8:00 am | Child-Led, Age-Appropriate Activities

7:15 am – 7:45 am | Open Snack (School Days)

8:30 am – 10:00 am | Open Snack & School Transition (Non-School Days)

11:30 am – 1:00 pm | Lunch – Brought from Home

2:45 pm – 4:30 pm | Afternoon Snack & End-of-School Transition

3:30 pm – 6:00 pm | Planned Activities / Curriculum-Based Play

6:00 pm | Centre Closes

OSC Policies and Procedures

It is important for parent(s)/guardian(s) to understand that YMCA OSC programs are **licensed**. This means there are **policies and procedures** that must be legally followed to ensure the **safest possible environment for all children**.

If you have any questions or would like clarification on anything in this handbook, please **contact the Program Manager**.

Some policies may not apply to all children or families due to **reasonable accommodations**, such as those made for **disability, religion, or other protected groups**. Please speak with the Program Manager for more information on accommodation and supports.

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Child Care Philosophy

In YMCA Out of School Care Programs, **positive and caring relationships** form the foundation of everything that happens in our Out of School Care (OSC) program. Our staff model the **YMCA's core values**, creating a supportive environment where children can **learn, grow, and thrive**.

With the guidance of YMCA educators, children practice behaviors that support:

- **Social skill development**
- **Emotional competence**
- **Cognitive growth**

Our **choice-based programming** and **flexible schedules** create **child-centered environments** where every child feels a sense of **belonging**. Through **play-based learning**, children are encouraged to explore, discover, and progress across **all areas of development** at their own pace.

Child Care Curriculum

The YMCA Out of School Care Programs follow the **YMCA A Place to Connect Curriculum (Grades 1-6)** and **Playing to Learn (KinderCare)**, which is built on the principle that **children learn best through play**. Research shows that play is essential for **healthy social, emotional, and cognitive development**, and it is the primary way children learn. Supported by engaged adults, play helps children develop skills that form the foundation for **future academics** including writing, reading, mathematics, and science.

In a **well-facilitated, play-based program**, children are provided with **intentional opportunities** to engage in **developmentally appropriate small-group activities**. Play materials and thoughtfully designed learning spaces are used to:

- Build on children's **interests**
- Encourage **active engagement**
- Support exploration, creativity, and discovery
- Foster strong relationships and sense of belonging.

YMCA educators are provided with **regular professional development opportunities** to ensure they have the skills required to **effectively implement the curriculum** using a **learner-centered approach**, grounded in **respect for each child's individuality**.

This approach ensures that every child can **learn, grow, and thrive** in a nurturing environment

Attendance and Record Keeping

- Parents/guardians must **sign their child in and out** each day.
- Notify the program via **Lillio app** if your child will be absent, including the reason and expected return date.
- Unrecorded absences may result in a **non-cancellation fee**, as outlined in the Schedule of Fees.

Child Record Forms

The Lethbridge YMCA is required to maintain current and accurate information for each child on the Child Record Form. Parents and guardians must notify the **YMCA Out of School Care (OSC)** immediately of any changes to the information on their child's **Child Record Form** including:

- Healthcare needs
- Contact information
- Authorized pick-up individuals

Child Record Forms will be **updated annually** at the start of each school year and **reviewed every six months**, parents/guardians will be asked to confirm or update the information on file.

All records are **securely stored** in compliance with privacy laws and are accessible only to:

- The child's parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Educators
- Licensing auditors
- Alberta Health Services
- Canadian Centre for Disease Control
- Judicial authorities, in rare cases when subpoenaed

Child records are **retained for seven years** after the termination of childcare services, after which they are securely destroyed. **Critical incident records** and reports sent to Child and Family Services are **retained indefinitely**.

Custody and Court Orders

If a **court order** is in place, the YMCA Out of School Care Programs, requires a **copy of the document**.

- If a parent/guardian has **sole custody**, they are the only person permitted to make changes to the **Child Record Form**.
- If there is **conditional access**, the Centre requires **all details and restrictions** outlined in the court order.
- If there is **shared custody**, **all parties must agree** to the information recorded in the Child Record Form.

This ensures the Centre can **safely and accurately follow legal arrangements** regarding your child's care.

Drop off and Pick-Up

Drop-off

Children must be **dropped off directly to an on-duty educator**, who will acknowledge their arrival.

For safety reasons:

- Children **cannot be left unsupervised** by either a parent/guardian or an educator.
- Children **may not be dropped off** in a parking lot, from a vehicle, in a foyer, hallway, or elevator.

School Day Drop-Off –

Bus Children (Crossings BASC)

On school days, children arriving to go on the bus must be **dropped off no later than 7:50 a.m.** to ensure they are properly signed in and accounted for.

School Location Children (West Coulee)

On school days, children arriving to the before school program must be **dropped off no later than 8:25a.m.** After this time, parents are responsible for **taking children directly to their classroom**.

Children arriving **after the cut-off time** may be **turned away from drop-off** to maintain safety and program supervision standards.

Non-school days (including full-day KinderCare, PD days, and other non-school days for ALL Programs), children are to be **dropped off no later than 10:00 a.m.** If you anticipate being **late**, you must **contact the Program no later than 9:30 a.m. on the day of attendance**.

This ensures that every child is **safe, accounted for, and ready to participate** in programming activities.

Pick-up

All people, including parents and guardians, authorized to pick up a child must present **valid government-issued photo identification**.

Parents/guardians must provide a list of all authorized people who can pick up the child from the YMCA or serve as emergency contact. Authorized individuals must be **16 years of age or older**, unless they are the parent/guardian of the child, in which case there is **no age minimum**. This information must be provided in writing. Identification will be verified against the information listed on the **Child Record Form** prior to the child being released.

An **exception** may be made only when the Program Supervisor receives **written notification in advance** (via Lillio), and the authorized individual provides **valid government-issued photo identification** at the time of pick-up.

Under no circumstances will children be delivered by YMCA staff to a waiting vehicle or offsite location or activity. Children must be fully exited from their licensed area prior to the end of the licensed hours.

School Drop-Off

Crossings OSC

- YMCA educators may **walk children** to their meeting areas or assigned school doors and leave them under the **supervision of school staff**.
- **Kindergarten children** will be walked directly to the front doors of the school.
- YMCA educators **will never leave a child unattended** and will always ensure they are **under school supervision** before leaving.

West Coulee Station OSC

- **September & October:** YMCA educators will **walk children to their locker areas** to arrive **within 5 minutes before the bell**, ensuring children are not too early for teachers.
- **November onward:** Children are dismissed from the room/gym **when the bell rings**. Regular school doors open at **8:30 a.m.** The gym must be **cleaned and empty** when leaving.
- **Kindergarten children will be walked directly to their classrooms until both YMCA educators and school staff agree that the child is ready to walk independently.**

This ensures that children are **safely supervised** during transitions between YMCA care and the school day.

School Pickup & Cancellation Policy

How to Identify YMCA Staff:

- All YMCA staff wear YMCA shirts/sweaters and YMCA name tags or lanyards for easy identification.

To help the program run smoothly:

- You must **cancel your child's daily pickup** if they will not be attending, no later than 3:00 PM on the day of cancellation.
- If your child is **absent from school**, you must **notify the Centre directly** via the **Lillio app**, as we **do not have access to school attendance records**.
- Failure to cancel may result in a **non-cancellation fee**, as educators must delay transitions to contact families, which can **affect all children in program**.
- If your child is cancelled from care they **must check in** with their educator before leaving the school. If they go to Mike Mountain Horse or Coalbanks they will wait in the office for their pickup to ensure that they are always supervised.

Activities

Extracurricular Activities

Children enrolled in YMCA OSC **cannot leave the program on their own** to attend extracurricular activities. Participation is only allowed if:

- An **authorized pick-up person** signs the child out and transports them to the activity.
- At **school-based OSC locations**, families complete an **authorization form** allowing school staff to escort the child to school-planned extracurricular activities.

Children **returning to OSC** after extracurricular activities must be **dropped off by a responsible adult, signed back in**, and these late drop offs' **must be communicated** to the OSC Supervisor or Director **well in advance**.

Morning activities: Children cannot be left unattended in any part of the school. They must be **signed into OSC** and wait for an authorized pick-up. If no authorized pick-up is provided, the child **will not be released**.

These rules ensure children are **always supervised** and that responsibility for care is clear.

Offsite Activities

Before any child participates in an **offsite activity** outside licensed BASC spaces, a **consent form** must be completed and submitted.

It is the responsibility of the **parent/guardian** to review the activity details and decide whether their child should participate. When making this decision, consider factors such as:

- **Transportation** arrangements
- **Supervision** provided
- **Weather conditions**
- Nature of the **activity**

This ensures that families are fully informed and that children participate safely in all offsite experiences.

Program Hours

Programming hours are Monday to Friday.

- Crossings Out of School Care- Located in the Cor Van Raay building
 - From 6:45am-6:00pm
- West Coulee Station Out of School Care- Located in the West Coulee Station Elementary School
 - from 7:15 A.M to 6:00 P.M.

Children arriving **before 6:45 a.m.** at Crossings OSC or **7:15 a.m.** at WCS OSC will be denied entry. All children must have their belongings collected and be fully exited from the licensed program space by **6:00 p.m.**

Late pickups may result in late fees as outlined in the **Schedule of Fees** on your service agreement. If a child has not been picked up by closing time, all contacts on file—including emergency contacts—will be notified. If no contact can be reached, the YMCA reserves the right to notify the appropriate authorities.

Fees & Payment Policies

Affordability Grant

The Affordability Grant applies to **kindergarten-aged children** registered in our full KinderCare Program. At this time, the parent/guardian portion of the fee is **\$326.25**, subject to change based on government funding.

Eligibility for the Affordability Grant is based on **attendance hours**. If your child attends **0 hours a month**, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the full Affordability Grant amount.

Parents/guardians are responsible for paying the full program fees if:

- Required attendance hours are not met, or
- Any other conditions of the Affordability Grant are not met.

If the Affordability Grant is not paid in full or is discontinued, parents/guardians agree to pay the outstanding balance immediately.

If care requirements change because of Affordability Grant status, parents/guardians must follow the **Terminating Services** policy.

Breach of Contract

If the Centre provides a parent/guardian with **written notice** that they are in breach of contract, the contract will **immediately become null and void**, and the family will no longer be considered a client of the Centre.

Should the child(ren) arrive at the Centre after the contract has been cancelled, the Centre will make every effort to **contact the parent/guardian or emergency contacts** to arrange immediate removal of the child(ren).

If the child(ren) cannot be promptly removed, they will be considered **abandoned**, and the Centre will notify the appropriate authorities.

Any costs incurred by the Centre for **administration or care of the child(ren)** under these circumstances will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Fee Adjustments

Program fees are **not adjusted** for child absenteeism, including but not limited to:

- Illness
- Vacation
- Suspension of services due to breach of contract
- Centre closures communicated in advance
- Emergency closures

This ensures that **staffing and program operations** remain consistent for all children in care.

Fee Change Notification

Any changes to program fees will be **communicated in writing with 30 days' notice**.

If fees change, **pre-authorized payment forms may need to be re-signed** to reflect the updated amount.

Financial Assistance

If a **third-party organization** (e.g., AB Works, AISH, or the school) will be paying for all, or a portion of your fees, you will be required to **sign additional paperwork**.

Late Pick-up Fee

Children must be **signed out and out of the program space by 6:00 P.M.**, the Centre's licensed closing time.

If a child is picked up **after 6:00 P.M.**, a **late fee of \$25.00** will be charged for **every 15 minutes** of care provided. Payment of the late pick-up fee must be made through **pre-authorized payment** before childcare services can resume. Please plan to arrive **before 6:00 P.M.** to ensure your child is safely signed out on time.

Non-Cancellation Fee

A **\$25.00 fee** will be charged if your child does **not attend programming** without prior notice, including days when **children are not in attendance at school**.

To avoid this fee, please notify the Centre by the following cutoff times:

- **Crossings OSC:** 2:30 PM Monday–Thursday | 10:30 AM Friday
- **West Coulee OSC:** 3:00 PM Monday–Thursday | 11:30 AM Friday

Providing timely notice helps the Centre **plan appropriately** and ensures all children are **safely accounted for**.

Non-Completed or Returned Payments

A **\$40.00 fee** will be charged for any **non-completed or returned payments**. This fee must be **paid through pre-authorized payment** before childcare services can resume.

The YMCA reserves the right to **terminate a childcare agreement immediately** if the payment is not completed or is returned.

Payment for Child Care Services

Payment for contracted child care services **after the first month of service** must be made through **pre-authorized credit card payments** on the **first business day of each month**.

- If payment information is **not on file**, services will be **terminated** on the first business day of the unpaid month.
- If fees are not paid in full, the YMCA reserves the right to suspend child care services until the outstanding balance is paid, at the discretion of the Program Manager.
- Services that begin **after the 8th of the month** will be **prorated**.
- For questions or to discuss **alternative payment options**, please contact the **Program Manager**.
This ensures that your child's care is **secure and uninterrupted**.

Receipt of Payment

An **electronic receipt** will be issued upon request.

If you require **duplicate receipts**, please contact the **Centre Director**. All receipts are kept on file by the Centre **until the end of the calendar year**.

Registration Fee

A **one-time, non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00** is required for **new families only**.

Payment for Contracted Child Care Services.

Subsidy

Subsidy approval must be **provided at the time of registration**. Without confirmed subsidy, full payment is required.

This policy applies to children in **Grades K–6**. Kindergarten-aged children may be eligible for subsidy if they are enrolled **only in Before School, After School, or Before & After School care**, and not in the full KinderCare program.

The **Lethbridge YMCA is not responsible** for applying for, submitting, or renewing subsidies.

Parents/guardians are responsible for paying their **full fees** if:

- The child does not meet the **minimum hours**, or
- Any other conditions of the subsidy are not met.

If a subsidy is **not paid**, the parent/guardian agrees to pay the **remaining balance immediately**.

If care needs change due to subsidy, it is the responsibility of the caregiver to follow the Terminating Services.

School Year Programs:

We offer the following care options during the school year:

- **Before School Only (Grade K-6):**
Includes care before school only.
Does not include PD Days or school breaks.
- **Before and After School (Grade K-6):**
Includes care before and after school.
Also includes care on PD Days and school breaks.
- **After School Only (Grade K-6):**
Includes care after school.
Also includes care on PD Days and school breaks.

Kindergarten Note: Before School Only, Before and After School and After School only, is only available to kindergarten children that attend kindergarten for full days.

- **KinderCare (starting summer 2026 will be located at the YMCA main building):**
Includes care Before and after school and on non-school days.
Also includes care on PD Days and school breaks.

Summer Program:

We offer **full-time care (5 days per week)** during the summer months. Located at the YMCA main building.

Part-time care is not available. Drop-in Care is not available.

Termination or Change of Services

If you no longer wish for your child to attend the YMCA Out of School Care (OSC) Program or wish to change your child's program, **30 days' written notice is required**.

- Scheduled fees will continue to apply during the notice period, **regardless of attendance**.
- Parents/guardians are required to complete a **Cancellation of Service Form** to finalize withdrawal from the program.

Monthly Fees

All fees listed below are **per month** and shown **before subsidy**. Kindergarten fees reflect the **Affordability Grant** where applicable.

Out of School Care- 2026/27

Program	Child Care Cost per Month (Before Affordability Grant & Subsidy)	Parent Fee per Month (After Affordability Grant – KG only, Excluding Subsidy Grades 1–6)
KinderCare	\$985.32	\$326.25
WCS Only Kindergarten (OSC additional fee)	\$50.00	\$50.00 (Onetime fee-upon registration)
Before School Only	\$275.00	\$275.00
After School Only	\$555.00	\$555.00
Before & After School	\$605.00	\$605.00

Summer 2026

Program	Child Care Cost per Month (Before Affordability Grant & Subsidy)	Parent Fee per Month (After Affordability Grant – KG only, Excluding Subsidy Grades 1–6)
KinderCare	\$985.32	\$326.25
Grades 1–6 Summer 2026	\$966.00	\$966.00

Food and Nutrition

Lunch & Snack Policy

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing their child with **healthy lunches and snacks** to support them throughout the day. Tables will be set up for the children to sit to eat their food items.

Snack Times:

- **School days (Monday–Thursday):** 8:30–9:30 a.m. and 3:45–4:45 p.m.
- **Non-school days and Fridays:** 8:30–9:30 a.m. and 3:00–4:00 p.m.

Lunch Time:

- **School Days and Non-school days:** 12:00–1:00 p.m.

Due to **severe allergies**, the YMCA does **not permit nut products** in lunches or snacks. Meals containing nut products may be **sent home**, and parents/guardians may be contacted to provide a replacement.

While the YMCA takes precautions to reduce exposure, it **cannot guarantee a 100% nut-free environment**.

Please note: Families are asked **not to bring treats for children on a regular basis**, as many children have **gluten allergies, milk allergies, sugar intolerances, or other dietary restrictions**. Regular treats can prevent **inclusive participation** and make it difficult for all children to feel safe and included.

Health, Safety & Medication

Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an **emergency evacuation**, the daily attendance record is taken by an educator to the designated **muster point** to ensure all children are accounted for.

The **Centre Supervisor**, or their designate, is responsible for:

- Ensuring that **emergency evacuation procedures** are shared with all staff, volunteers, and, where developmentally appropriate, with children during their orientation.
- Posting **emergency contact information** in accessible locations on the program premises.
- Conducting **monthly emergency drills**, recording evacuation times, identifying improvements, and updating policies as needed.

All **educators, volunteers, and children** participate in these monthly drills. When appropriate, children are **informed in advance** about the drill and the expectations so they can **ask questions and understand the process**.

These procedures help ensure that every child is **safe, prepared, and confident** in the event of an emergency.

Medication

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing any **necessary life-saving emergency or prescription medications** for their child. All medication administered while in the program must be **documented and signed off** by the **Program Staff**.

Please **notify the Program Manager** of any medical wearables (e.g., insulin pumps, pediatric pacemakers, assistive devices) so that all educators can be trained to **support your child safely**.

If your child requires **additional healthcare support** or has **diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions**, please meet with the **Program Manager** to create a **support plan** prior to attendance. YMCA Out of School Care Programs may not have the resources to accommodate all needs but will work with families to access **additional support** if required.

Important: Emergency medications must be **on site with the child** to remain in the program. Children **cannot be signed in to program** without them.

Medical & Developmental Assessments

The YMCA is committed to supporting children and families when assessments, reports, or documentation are requested by a child's medical or allied health team (e.g., physicians, psychologists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists).

If an assessment, report, or form requires information from the YMCA, parents/guardians must provide the request and any related documentation directly to the **Centre Supervisor**. These requests should be discussed with the Supervisor in advance to ensure clarity around timelines, expectations, and the type of information being requested.

The Centre Supervisor will:

- Review the request and supporting documentation
- Gather relevant information from educators as appropriate
- Support educators with completing documentation, or determining next steps if additional consultation or support is required

To ensure accuracy, consistency, and confidentiality, educators are not responsible for completing assessments or reports independently without Supervisor involvement.

This process helps ensure families receive accurate information while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and supporting the needs of the child within the program.

Positive Child Guidance Principles

YMCA employees **never use degrading, hurtful, or humiliating discipline**. Instead, we use **positive and respectful approaches** to support children in becoming **self-responsible, competent, independent, and cooperative**.

Under no circumstances will a child be:

- Deprived of **food or water**
- Isolated from others
- Subjected to **corporal punishment**

When a child demonstrates undesirable behaviour, it is often a way to **gain attention, satisfy a need, or express**

emotions. Adult responses immediately before and after the behaviour **influence whether the behaviour will continue.**

The **Centre Director** will discuss any behavioural challenges with families and welcomes parent input in an **open and safe environment.**

If a child demonstrates behaviours that **risk the health and safety of themselves or others**, the YMCA will make **all reasonable attempts** to work with the child and family to reach a successful outcome. If these attempts are unsuccessful, the YMCA reserves the right to **terminate childcare immediately.**

Substance Use

No person is permitted to **smoke, vape, chew, or otherwise use tobacco, cannabis, or similar substances** on YMCA program premises, **except when used for Indigenous ceremonial practices.**

If an educator suspects that a person picking up a child is **unable to provide safe care**, staff will notify the child's **emergency contacts** on file. If the person leaves the YMCA **without the child** and no alternate arrangements have been made, the educator will **report the incident and child to the appropriate authorities.**

Supervision and Child Safety

Children are **never left unsupervised** while attending YMCA licensed programs.

Terminating Care for Safety

The YMCA is responsible for the health and safety of all program participants and staff.

If a child demonstrates behaviours that put themselves, other children, or staff at risk, the YMCA will make all reasonable attempts, when feasible, to work with the child and family to achieve a successful outcome for everyone involved.

If the risk is assessed as requiring discontinuation of care to ensure the safety of others, the YMCA reserves the right to terminate the childcare agreement immediately

- All educators are certified to meet **Alberta licensed childcare requirements.**
- Children always have access to staff who are **first aid certified.**
- Children are **never left alone with a volunteer** and are **never permitted to enter a personal vehicle for transportation.**
- Children are **regularly counted** throughout all activities.

When attending **off-site activities**, educators carry **portable records** including each child's **emergency contacts, healthcare information, and all emergency life-saving medication.**

Wellness and Preparedness

Personal Belongings

The Lethbridge YMCA is not responsible for personal items brought into the program. To help prevent loss and confusion, families are asked to follow the guidelines below:

- All personal items must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- Items that remain unclaimed after 10 days will be donated.
- Clothing, toys, books, or other materials that promote or display violence, profanity, inappropriate sexual behaviour, racism, or acts of hatred are not permitted in the program.

These expectations help ensure a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all children.

To support a positive and engaging program experience, families are asked to have children leave personal toys and electronic devices at home. The OSC Program provides a wide range of curriculum-based materials and activities that

encourage creativity, cooperation, sharing, and kindness—without the challenges that often arise from personal items. Personal toys and electronics can create concerns related to loss, damage, fairness, and supervision. The YMCA is not responsible for personal items that are lost, damaged, or broken, and educators will not spend program time searching for them.

If a child brings toys, cell phones, or other electronic devices into the program, the items will be collected by an educator and returned to the parent/guardian at pick-up

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

Sunscreen will be applied to neck, ears, face, arms, hands, legs, torso, or any other exposed skin. Insect repellent will be applied as per the directions on the container. As we do not provide sunscreen or insect repellent, you will be notified when your items are running low. Unless approved by the Centre Supervisor, these items are not permitted to be in the child's locker and must be safely stored by the educator.

Weather and Clothing

Please ensure your child comes to BASC with **weather-appropriate clothing** for outdoor play and bus commutes, including:

- Footwear is suitable for the weather
- Hats, jackets, and rain gear as needed
- A **personal water bottle** daily

Children will have **daily outdoor time**, except when conditions are deemed unsafe, such as:

- Extreme cold or heat (bus will be cancelled when temperatures with windshield reach -40°C)
- Poor air quality
- Other hazardous weather conditions

For **swimming opportunities**, children must bring:

- **Swimsuit and towel**
- A **bag to carry all swim items**

Proper clothing and supplies help children **stay comfortable, safe, and fully participate** in all program activities.

Please make sure to label all your child's belongings.

Facility and Gym Guidelines

Gymnasium Guidelines- Crossings OSC (CVR Building)

- **Dividers** are available to section off each individual gym floor. The Centre requests that dividers be lowered to **ensure privacy and allow for proper supervision**. Children are required to **stay within the dividers**, as this is licensed space.
- Additional materials may be brought into the gym based on **children's needs and interests**, including balls, cars and trucks, books, and other gross motor equipment. Extra gross motor materials are **stored in the on-site storage room** for Centre use.

These guidelines help ensure **safe, organized, and engaging gym experiences** for all children.

Gymnasium Guidelines – West Coulee OSC

- The gym is divided into **two separate spaces** using a divider, helping staff **supervise children safely** and organize activities. Children are expected to **stay within their designated gym area**.
- **Materials and furniture** are brought out to the gym to support **planned curriculum activities** and children's learning. This may include gross motor equipment, creative materials, and activity-specific setups.
- The gym is used as an **extension of the classroom**, allowing children to engage in **developmentally appropriate play and learning** in a safe, structured environment.

These guidelines ensure that children can **fully participate in activities** while remaining safe and supported.

Indoor Safety Guidelines

To ensure a **safe environment** for all children, families and staff are asked to follow these guidelines:

- **Scissors, tools, and knives** must be returned to the proper **safety container** after use.
- **Children are not allowed in the kitchen.**
- Any **broken toys or equipment** must be reported to a **supervisor** for repair or disposal.
- **Cleaning materials** must be stored in a **locked or high cupboard**, out of reach of children.
- **Unused toys or materials** must be stored in **storage rooms or cabinets** to prevent clutter and tripping hazards.
- Children must be **seated while eating** and **seated or standing still while drinking**.
- All **equipment and toys** in each program area are **developmentally appropriate** for the children using them.
- Program educators and volunteers will **always follow child supervision guidelines**. Activities that may be safe at home may **not be safe in the Centre**.

These practices help maintain a **safe, organized, and developmentally appropriate environment** for all children.

Program Premises, Parking & Walking Safety

The YMCA Out of School Care (OSC) Program shares facilities with the community. To ensure the safety of all children, families, and staff, families are expected to:

- Use only the designated OSC entrance and exit doors in a school program.
- Avoid entering areas of the school not used by the OSC Program.
- Ensure that children and siblings are not left unattended in the hallways or common areas.
- Park only in designated pick-up and drop-off areas and follow all location parking guidelines and signage.
- Use designated walkways when entering or leaving the program.
- Do not block driveways, fire lanes, or staff parking areas.

By following these expectations, families help maintain a safe, respectful, and cooperative environment for children, staff, the OSC Program, the school, and the wider community.

Communication

Birthday Invitations

If you are sending birthday invitations, please **leave them in the program's common area or in each child's locker**, clearly labeled with the child's name and your contact information to take home.

Please note: Educators are **not responsible** for distributing invitations or any other non-program communications and can not give out contact information to anyone.

Contacting the Centre

Authorized parent(s)/guardian(s) may contact the Centre during **business hours** using the Teams telephone number. **Emergency contact information** is posted at each Centre for **after-hours emergencies**.

YMCA educators also use the **Lillio app** (former Himama) to communicate with families. You can **download the app** or visit www.himama.com/childcare-app for more information

Feedback

We welcome and encourage **parent/guardian involvement** in our programs. Families are welcome to join us on off-site activities or stop by the Centre. Please be mindful of visit timing, as transitions and departures after visits can sometimes be challenging for children.

If separation is difficult at the beginning of the day, we encourage families to allow their child time to **settle with their educator**, supporting the development of a strong and trusting relationship.

If you have any concerns, please discuss it first with your child's **Early Childhood Educator** and the **Program Supervisor**. Your feedback is important to us, and parents/guardians are encouraged to **present concerns in writing** when appropriate.

Messy Play & Clothing

Children in our Out of School Care (OSC) programs engage in a variety of activities that encourage creativity, exploration, and hands-on learning. Many of these activities, including arts, crafts, sensory play, and outdoor exploration, may **result in clothing becoming dirty or stained**.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to **dress children in clothing that is appropriate for messy play**. Please avoid sending children in outfits that you do not want to get dirty or damaged. This helps children participate freely and confidently in all planned activities without worry.

Planned vs. Unplanned School Closures

Planned vs. Unplanned School Closures

Child Care Licensing in Alberta **does not allow out-of-school care programs to operate during regularly scheduled school hours**. Our program provides care **outside regular school hours**, including before and after school, and on certain planned school closure days. All our Programs follow the Lethbridge School Division yearly calendar for planned closures.

Planned School Closures

- These are **dates listed on the official yearly school calendar** provided by your school board (e.g., PD Days, statutory holidays).
- We offer **full-day care on planned school closures**.

West Coulee Station KinderCare (WCS):

- Non-school days: Children attend YMCA.
- Regular school days: YMCA staff drop off/pick up children from school and take to OSC at WCS.
- PD Days: Follow regular/non-school schedule above based on your child's kindergarten days.

Unplanned / Short-Notice School Closures

- These are **closures that are not listed on the school calendar** (e.g., last-minute school closures, early dismissals, or situations where staffing cannot be arranged).
- Care **may not be available** during these closures due to **staffing and licensing requirements**.
- Fees will **not be adjusted** for unplanned closures.

This distinction helps families understand when care is available and supports **staffing and program planning**.

Respectful Communication Statement

The Lethbridge YMCA believes that everyone has the right to exist in an environment **free from harassment, abuse, or threats**. The YMCA maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** for:

- Explicit language
- Name-calling
- Physical violence or threats of violence
- Any behavior that threatens the safety, well-being, or freedom of others

If communications between parents/guardians or with staff **violate this policy**, the conversation will be **immediately ended** and may be resumed at an appropriate time.

Threats of any kind may result in the immediate suspension or termination of childcare services.

School Profession Development Day / School Closure Attendance Form

Each month, families will receive a **PD Day / School Closure Attendance Form** listing all upcoming PD Days and school closures.

- **Check the date(s) your child will NOT require care.** Leave blank if your child will attend.
- **All families should complete the form,** even if their child will attend all PD Days.
- Plans can change — please **notify us as soon as possible** if your child's attendance changes.
- Last-minute care requests will be accommodated **when staffing and ratios allow.**

This process helps us plan **childcare needs, staffing, and quality programming.**

Licensing and Child Safety and Protection Policies

Child Abuse Reporting

Children have the right to be **protected from neglect and abuse.**

Under **Section 1 of the Canadian Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act**, there is a **legal responsibility** to report any suspected abuse. Reports can be made by calling **1-800-387-5437**.

If an educator suspects abuse, they are required to **contact authorities** to discuss the situation, allowing them to investigate and determine the next steps.

At no point will a **child, parent, guardian, volunteer, or employee** face **retaliation** for making a report.

Educator Qualifications

All staff employed by the YMCA Out of School Care Programs are **certified Early Childhood Educators** through the **Government of Alberta**. Staff training and post-secondary education in Early Childhood Education are assessed, and educators are certified at **Level 1, 2, or 3** accordingly.

In addition, all YMCA staff hold **current certifications** in:

- **CPR & First Aid**
- **Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults**
- **Globally Harmonized Standards (WHMIS)**

These qualifications ensure that your child is **cared for by trained professionals** in a **safe and supportive environment**

Incident Reporting

Even under **direct supervision**, children may experience injuries. Incident reports are completed **within 48 hours** of any injury, including:

- Small scrapes or bruises
- Minor falls
- Instances when a child is sent home due to illness

Parents/guardians will receive a **copy of the incident report** to review and sign and will have the opportunity to **discuss the incident with the educator.**

For **more serious injuries**—including any injury to the **neck or head**, or injuries requiring **emergency medical care**—incident reports are also completed within 48 hours. Parents/guardians and emergency contacts will be **notified once the child has received appropriate medical care.**

Private Child Care

YMCA educators are not permitted to offer **childcare services to any children** in the OSC Programs without prior discussions with the **Program Manager.**

Staff-to-Child Ratios

The YMCA Out of School Care Program follows all provincial licensing requirements to ensure the health, safety, and supervision of children at all times.

Staff-to-child ratios are as follows:

- Kindergarten (KinderCare): 1 educator to 15 children
- Grades 1–6: 1 educator to 15 children

At no time will there be more than 30 children in one group or in one area at any given time. Groups will be divided as needed to maintain appropriate supervision, safety, and a positive program experience.



YMCA Child Care Wellness Checklist

My child is ill. When can they return?

New or worsening cough, sore throat, or runny nose, congestion

- stay home until symptoms improve

Chills and/or fever greater than 38.0°C (100.4°F)

- stay home until fever is gone for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication

Diarrhea or Vomiting

- stay home until symptom-free for at least 24 hours

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

- stay home until appropriately medicated/treated (24 hours after first drops have been given) and symptoms have improved

Infections: head lice, throat, ringworm, scabies, scarlet fever, pinworm, etc

- stay home until appropriately medicated/treated, no longer contagious and symptoms have improved

Skin infections, new or unexplained rash or signs of any contagious disease

- Stay home until symptoms have resolved or have been examined by a doctor and have received medical clearance

Chicken Pox (varicella), Measles, Mumps, Hand Foot and Mouth

- stay home until scabs have fully formed, symptoms have resolved or a doctor has cleared the child to return

**Whooping Cough / Pneumonia
Tonsillitis / Bronchitis**

- stay home until symptoms have resolved or a doctor has cleared the child to return

Children may return to YMCA Childcare when they no longer pose a health risk to others, and they can fully participate in the program and activities. The YMCA reserves the right to contact parents/guardians to pick up their child immediately if they feel the child is too ill to participate in the program and activities.

We will continue to follow outbreak prevention practices and will follow all outbreak control measures when required.