

Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

The Summit Area YMCA advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement, redirection, prevention and the development of self discipline. At no time will the following disciplinary techniques be tolerated: physical punishment, striking, biting, kicking, squeezing, shaming, withholding food or rest room privileges, confining children in small locked rooms or verbal or emotional abuse.

An affectionate touch and the warm feelings it brings is an important factor in helping a child grow into a loving and peaceful adult. However, Y staff and volunteers need to be sensitive to each person's need for personal space (i.e., not everyone wants to be hugged). The Y encourages age appropriate touch that helps children develop feelings of trust, security and self esteem. However, at the same time, it prohibits inappropriate touch – touch that exploits a child or touch initiated by an adult for the adult's gratification, or other means of sexually exploiting children.

In the event that there is an accusation of child abuse, the Y will take prompt and immediate action as follows:

1. At the first report or probable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred, the employed staff person it has been reported to (supervisor) will notify the program director, who will then review the incident with the Y's Executive Director or his/her designate. However, if the program director is not immediately available, this review by the supervisor cannot in any way deter the reporting of child abuse by the mandated reporters. Most states mandate each teacher or child care provider to report information they have learned in their professional role regarding suspected child abuse. In most states, mandated reporters are granted immunity from prosecution.
2. The Y will make a report in accordance with relevant state or local child abuse reporting requirements and will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved.
3. In the event the reported incident(s) involve a program volunteer or employed staff, the Executive Director will, without exception, suspend the volunteer or staff person from the Y.
4. The parents or legal guardian of the child(ren) involved in the alleged incident will be promptly notified in accordance with the directions of the relevant state or local agency.
5. Whether the incident or alleged offense takes place on or off Y premises, it will be considered job related because of the youth-involved nature of the Y.
6. Reinstatement of the program volunteer or employee staff person will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the persons named in #1 above.
7. All Y staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of this information, and therefore, should only discuss the incident with the persons named in #1 above.