YMCA OF GREATER BOSTON CODE OF CONDUCT & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

To protect YMCA staff, volunteers, and program participants and their parents, the YMCA of Greater Boston requires each individual staff person and program volunteer to carefully read and sign this Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct outlines behaviors and procedures to protect children and to protect individuals interacting with children in YMCA programs and facilities.

1. A child will never be left unsupervised.

2. An individual will not be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As individuals supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff or volunteers can see them.

3. A child’s right to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no will be respected. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.

4. Rest rooms must be checked to be sure they are not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. The individual supervising will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the supervising individual. While assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip.

5. Staff and volunteers should conduct or supervise private activities such as diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. in pairs. When this is not feasible, individual staff should be positioned so that he/she is visible to others.

6. Staff and volunteers will not abuse children including:

* No corporal punishment or any type of physical discipline inflicted in any manner upon the body including spanking, shaking or slapping. * No cruel, unusual or severe punishment, humiliation, verbal abuse, ridicule, threats or shaming. * No inappropriate touching or sexual verbal exchange. * No denial of food, drink, rest or bathroom facilities as punishment. * No punishment for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. * No punishment related to eating or not eating food.

Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and is cause for immediate dismissal and subsequent state intervention (51A).

7. Positive techniques of guidance, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism will be used to direct children. Age appropriate expectations, guidelines and environments will be established that minimize the need for discipline. Supportive holds
will be used by a qualified staff only in situations necessary to protect the child or other children from harm, administered in a prescribed manner and documented in writing when used.

8. Each child’s appearance will be observed daily, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Any questionable marks or behavior will be noted in writing and given to a program supervisor.

9. Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration, and treat all participants equally regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, or ability to pay. Care will be given to respect children’s diverse learning styles and/or special needs.

10. Individuals will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards other adults in the presence of children, parents, and staff.

11. While the YMCA does not discriminate against an individual’s lifestyle, it does require that in the performance of their job they will abide by the standards set forth by the YMCA.

12. Individuals must appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired including ID badge during hours of operation.

13. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or any substance that affects performance, during working hours is prohibited.

14. Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited.

15. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one’s personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.

16. Individuals must be free of physical, psychological conditions or be under the care of a medical professional for conditions that might adversely affect children’s physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.

17. Staff and volunteers will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.

18. Individuals may not be alone with a child they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers and inviting children home. There are no exceptions to this rule.

19. Children are not to be transported in personal vehicles. No exception will be allowed.

20. Adult staff and volunteers may not date program participants under 18 years of age.

21. Under no circumstances should children be released to anyone other than the parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the custodial parent or guardian in writing. In extenuating circumstances a parent may give verbal authorizations for release. Staff must secure identifications for all unknown persons picking up.
22. Staff and volunteers are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by their supervisor.

**YMCA OF GREATER BOSTON CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

It is the policy of the YMCA of Greater Boston that all necessary measures will be taken to ensure a safe environment for all children and to ensure professional conduct of all staff and volunteers. This policy covers the required steps involved in the hiring, training and supervision of staff and volunteers; appropriate conduct related to the supervision of children; reporting procedures of suspected abuses and responsibilities to parents.

I. BOARD COMMITMENT:

A. The General Board of the YMCA of Greater Boston has approved this policy and will review a staff report of its implementation annually.

B. Branch Boards will review this policy and a staff report of the branch’s implementation of the policy annually.

II. EMPLOYEE HIRING AND TRAINING:

A. Pre-hiring Screening: The following must be completed, documented and on file prior to staff beginning work:

1. Each candidate must complete an employment application and read and sign the YMCA of Greater Boston Code of Conduct and Procedures for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

2. A CORI (Criminal Offenders Records Inquiry) and SORI is submitted for all pending employees.

3. A minimum of three reference checks are conducted and documented, including the immediate past employer and any employment involving supervision of children.

4. Each employee is given an I.D. badge to verify compliance on these items. These I.D. badges must be worn during program operation.

B. Training:

1. Within the first week of employment, individuals working directly with children will be oriented by their supervisor regarding:

   • YMCA policies related to swimming pool safety, transportation and prevention of child abuse.

   • YMCA emergency procedures.
III. VOLUNTEER HIRING AND TRAINING:

A. Definition of a Volunteer

1. Regular Volunteer: A regular volunteer is anyone who volunteers in a YMCA program 5 or more times per year without compensation or expectation of compensation and does not qualify as a Special Case Volunteer. A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by the YMCA of Greater Boston prior to performance of any task.

2. Special Case Volunteer: A special case volunteer is anyone who:

   - Volunteers in a YMCA program fewer than 5 times per year OR
   - Is a parent of a participating child and volunteers not more than 1 hour per week in the child’s program while YMCA staff are present. Special Case Volunteers require special supervision due to their limited familiarity with the YMCA. Special case volunteers are not required to be interviewed, given an orientation, or attend the Child Abuse Prevention Policy unless they wish to do so.

B. Volunteer Selection and Orientation

1. Regular Volunteer Interviews

All regular volunteers are interviewed to discover their strengths, interests, skills and in what capacity they are interested in volunteering. The interview is also a time to explain the YMCA mission, Character Development, Child Abuse Prevention Policy, and in general our expectations of regular volunteers. All prospective regular volunteers will be asked for three references.

2. Special Case Volunteers

All Special Case Volunteers must read and sign the Volunteer Commitment Statement, sign in on the Volunteer Tracking sheet and get a volunteer ID badge before beginning their volunteer service.

3. Regular Volunteer Orientation

Once the regular volunteer’s file is complete, the new volunteer will be given an orientation. The orientation will include:

   - Tour of the facility
   - Mission and philosophy of the YMCA of Greater Boston
   - Emergency & evacuation policy
   - Volunteer Commitment Statement
• Child Protection Policy & selection of a training date
• Specific program information and requirements
• Character Development
• Volunteer Support, Tracking of Hours and Recognition

4. Regular Volunteer Training

All regular volunteers and employees must complete the on-line Child Abuse Prevention Training (CAP) within the first 30 days of their volunteer service.

IV. SUPERVISION:

A. Program Administrator supervising decentralized sites of operation will make unannounced visits at least two times per month. YMCA site observation forms are to be filled out and filed at the main branch.

B. Executive Director or designate, other than staff referred to above, will visit each child care and day camp operating site at least two times a year.

C. Individuals may not be alone with a child in an area or location where they cannot be observed by other staff or volunteers. Van and bus runs would be an exception to this requirement. Drivers must notify supervisor at departure and return times. Mileage logs will be kept in all vehicles.

D. Staff and volunteers will refrain from any interactions outside of the program activities with children under eighteen years of age that are participants in programs of the YMCA of Greater Boston. There are no exceptions to this policy.

E. Each decentralized site of operation for children’s programs will have a minimum of two staff/volunteers assigned and have access to a telephone on location during operating hours.

F. Disciplinary actions with children must avoid all abusive actions. Constructive methods must be used for handling individual and group behavior and must not be associated with food, rest, isolation, or toilet training. Corporal punishment and other humiliating or frightening techniques are prohibited.

V. DOCUMENTATION:

A. A complete file containing all required verification and signed documents for staff will be maintained at the Human Resource Department of the Metro office.

B. A complete file for all regular volunteers and employees will be kept in the Operations Department of the Metro office. The following forms must be included in each volunteer file:

• Employment application
• Completed interview evaluation form
• 3 positive reference checks
• Completed On-Line Google search form
• CORI /SORI application
• Regular Volunteer /Employee Job Description
• A copy of this policy will be published and a sign-off sheet signed by each employee and volunteer during the annual performance evaluation process.

VI. REPORTING:

A. All YMCA employees and volunteers are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse and must report any and all incidents to their immediate supervisor. Failure to report suspected child abuse may be grounds for dismissal.

B. All incidents will be reported to the proper agency, state, and or police authorities for investigation.

C. A written report must be sent to the Metro Operations office within 24 hours where a complete file of all reports will be maintained.

D. Any employee named in a child abuse incident will be suspended immediately with pay until a determination is made by the investigating authority.

E. Any volunteer named in a child abuse incident will be suspended from service immediately until a determination is made by the investigating authority.

F. Reinstatement of a staff or volunteer will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of YMCA management.

G. Notification of the family will follow the guidelines outlined in the YMCA of Greater Boston: Procedures for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse Cases.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Communications between child care staff and parents will be ongoing with periodically scheduled training/information meetings.

B. Supervisors and staff will document and post schedules of all programs/activities/staffing.
VIII. RESPONSIBILITY:

A. The President is accountable, either directly or through those individuals with delegated authority, to report and investigate any and all incidents, accidents, complaints, accusations and/or charges and to initiate appropriate actions.

B. Branch Executives are accountable to their supervisors to ensure that this YMCA policy related to staff and volunteer interactions with children is communicated, implemented and enforced.
Code of Conduct & Child Protection Policy sign-off sheet

I ________________________________________ have read and understand the YMCA of Greater Boston’s Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy.

Name: _____________________________________________  Date: __________________

Branch: ____________________________________________

Supervisor or Manager: ________________________________