



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®**  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

## Parent Education Guide

### THE Y AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

As part of a national movement, the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA is for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. We focus our work in these three key areas, because nurturing the potential of kids, helping people live healthier, and supporting our neighbors is fundamental to strengthening communities.

In partnership with you, a parent of a child in our program, the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA has developed this Parent Education Guide for Child Abuse Prevention. We value the trust you have in our organization; and we are committed to working with your child by creating a safe, caring environment for them to dream, learn, grow and work toward achieving their fullest potential in spirit, mind and body.

The Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA takes the prevention of child abuse very seriously. The Y understands that child abuse and inappropriate contact of children is a pervasive problem throughout the United States that must be managed in a proactive manner if we are to protect those in our care. The Y's leadership has enacted a Comprehensive Child Abuse Prevention

Plan to manage our programs and minimize the potential for an abuse incident to occur.

The Parent Education Guide for Child Abuse Prevention contains the following information:

1. Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers. As a part of this comprehensive plan, the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA has put into place the Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers designed to raise red flags to prevent child abuse. Please read the Code of Conduct to understand the expectations of staff and volunteers—and as a parent of a child in our program—help us to prevent potential abuse by reporting any violation of the policies listed in the Code of Conduct (See Section, WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE).
2. Warning Signs of Child Abuse.
3. How to Recognize the Patterns of Child Sexual Abuse.
4. What To Do If You Suspect Abuse.



## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

1. Except in the event of an emergency, at no time during a Y program may staff or volunteer be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be observed by others. Staff or volunteers should position themselves in such a way that other staff can see them.
2. A child may not be left unsupervised.
3. Staff or volunteers shall not abuse or mistreat children in any way, including:
  - Physical abuse—striking, spanking, shaking, slapping
  - Verbal abuse—humiliating, degrading, threatening
  - Sexual abuse—touching or speaking inappropriately or showing children inappropriate materials
  - Mental abuse—shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, belittling; and neglect—withholding food, water, or basic care.
4. No type of child abuse will be tolerated. Any abuse by staff or volunteers will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
5. Staff or volunteers may not have a relationship with a child who they meet through Y programs outside of the activities related to that program (i.e. babysitting, sleepovers). Exceptions may be granted when a staff or volunteer have a relationship that predates meeting at the Y or a relationship other than through the Y. Requests for an exception should be directed to the CHRO or COO.

NOTE: Youth Sports coaches are exempt from this policy if they have a child in the program who befriends other children in the program, and they wish to participate together in activities outside the Y.
6. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, displays of intimate affection, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children, parents, volunteers, or other staff is prohibited.
7. Using YMCA computers to access pornographic sites, send emails with sexual overtones or otherwise inappropriate messages, or developing personal online relationships is not allowed. Staff or volunteers utilizing personal social networking sites shall not post content, including text and pictures regarding the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA that can be reasonably deemed as inappropriate or offensive to the Y, its members, staff or the community.
8. Staff or volunteers may not have non-YMCA related personal interactions with youth members or program participants through electronic messaging such as forming relationships on social networking sites, exchanging personal emails, text messaging, or any private electronic contact between staff or volunteer and a youth member or program participant. Staff or volunteers utilizing personal non- authorized YMCA social networking sites shall not post content, including text and pictures, regarding YMCA youth members or program participants.
9. Staff or volunteers may not single out children for favored attention and may not give individual or personal gifts to youth or their parents.
10. Program rules and boundaries must be followed, including appropriate touch guidelines. Children may be informed, in an age appropriate manner, of their right to set their own "touching" limits for personal safety.
11. Children may not be disciplined by use of physical punishment, physical exercise, or by failing to provide the necessities of care.
12. Staff or volunteers 18 years or older may not date program participants who are under the age of 18.
13. Under no circumstances should staff or volunteers release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (authorization on file with the Y).
14. Staff or volunteers are to make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff or volunteers will stand in the doorway of the restroom while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff or volunteers (i.e., not being alone with a child). If staff or volunteers are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should be allowed to enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or at other off site locations. If the space contains a single toilet or restroom, staff or volunteers may allow a child to go alone within sight, sound and supervision of the child. During youth sports activities, parents should take their children to the restroom.
15. Staff or volunteers should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs—diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, and so on. When this is not feasible, staff or volunteers should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
16. Staff or volunteers are to immediately report any other staff or volunteer who violates any of the policies listed in this Code of Conduct to a supervisor.
17. If child abuse is disclosed to or suspected by staff or volunteers, they are required to take prompt and immediate action following guidelines set forth in the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA Child Abuse Reporting Procedures.

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE PATTERNS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The grooming process for a preferential pedophile child abuser tends to be almost the same every time. We don't catch abusers abusing, we catch them breaking the rules. Child abuse is pervasive—Experts estimate that one in four girls and one in six boys are sexually abused before they are 18. Trust is involved in more than 90% of sexual abuse cases; the child and the child's family know and trust the abuser. In recognition of these statistics we are educating you as the parent to **WATCH FOR THESE RED FLAGS & REPORT THEM:**

1. **Inappropriate touching or tickling**—Abusers touch or handle children in ways that are inappropriate to test limits and push boundaries—the Y sets clear rules on touch. See #3, #11 and #16 of Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.
2. **Gifts or preferential treatment**—Abusers single out children that might be susceptible and offer them gifts to gain trust and favor, and set expectations that gifts could go away—

the Y does not allow staff to give gifts that show preference of one child over others. See #10 of Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.

3. **Creating one-on-one time**—Abusers create opportunities where they have time alone with children at the facility—the Y makes sure one-on-one time is in a public, observable space. As a parent, set a good example by avoiding one adult, one child situations with children other than your own. See #1 and #16 of Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.
4. **Opportunities for outside contact**—Abusers seek privacy in order to abuse children, and privacy is easier to get off site, such as at the abuser's home or the child's home—the Y prohibits outside contact with children in our programs. See #5, #6, #8 and #9 of Child Abuse Prevention Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.

## WARNING SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

1. Frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries
2. Unkempt or malnourished appearance
3. Bathing frequently; obsessive cleanliness
4. Disturbed sleeping or eating patterns
5. Inability to stay awake or concentrate for extended periods
6. Abrupt changes in behavior, anxiety, clinging, aggressiveness or withdrawal
7. Sudden, dramatic change in activities or personality
8. Fear of a certain person or place
9. Discomfort with physical contact
10. Fearfulness or depression
11. Aggression toward adults or other children
12. Abuse of other children
13. Nervousness around adults
14. Low self esteem
15. Acting out sexually or showing interest in sex that is inappropriate for that age
16. Sexually transmitted diseases and infections

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

Should you suspect or have concerns or questions about any possible abuse situation, please contact:

- Davetta Rinehart, Chief Human Resources Officer, 757.223.7925, ext. 205
- Stacia Roeth, Chief Operations Officer, 757.223.7925, ext. 201

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Virginia Child Protection Services (CPS) - 1.804.786.8536 or 1.800.552.7096
- Praesidium Helpline 855.347.0751

Our child care programs are licensed by the State of Virginia.

If you have any questions regarding licensing, please call the

YMCA or contact:

Peninsula Licensing Office

2600 Washington Avenue, Suite 202

Newport News, Virginia 23607

757.247.8020

Richmond Licensing Office (Henrico)

1604 Santa Rosa Road

Wythe Building, Suite 130

Richmond, Virginia 23229

804.662.9743



## BRANCHES OF THE PENINSULA METROPOLITAN YMCA

### Facility Locations:

#### FORT MONROE YMCA

8 Ruckman Road  
Fort Monroe, VA 23651

#### GLOUCESTER FAMILY YMCA

6898 Main Street  
Gloucester, VA 23061

#### GREATER WEST POINT FAMILY YMCA

3135 King William Avenue  
West Point, VA 23181

#### HAMPTON FAMILY YMCA

1 YMCA Way  
Hampton, VA 23669

#### LUTER FAMILY YMCA

259 James Street  
Smithfield, VA 23430

#### MATHEWS FAMILY YMCA

10746 Buckley Hall Road  
Mathews, VA 23109

#### MIDDLESEX FAMILY YMCA

11487 General Puller Highway  
Hartfield, VA 23071

#### TOM AND ANN HUNNICUTT FAMILY YMCA

7827 Warwick Boulevard  
Newport News, VA 23607

#### NORTHERN NECK FAMILY YMCA

39 William B. Graham Court  
Kilmarnock, VA 22482

#### NORTHUMBERLAND FAMILY YMCA

6348 Northumberland Hwy.  
Heathsville, VA 22473

#### R.F. WILKINSON FAMILY YMCA

301 Sentara Circle  
Williamsburg, VA 23188

#### RICHMOND COUNTY FAMILY YMCA

45 George Brown Lane  
Warsaw, VA 22572

#### VICTORY FAMILY YMCA

101 Long Green Boulevard  
Yorktown, VA 23693

### Program Locations:

#### STAR ACHIEVERS ACADEMY YMCA

P.O. Box 7593  
Hampton, VA 23666

#### THE FIRST TEE OF THE VIRGINIA PENINSULA

1003 Brick Kiln Blvd.  
Newport News, VA 23602

#### WESTMORELAND FAMILY YMCA

18849 Kings Highway  
Montross, VA 22520

#### YMCA / APYC CAMP KEKOKA

1083 Boys Camp Road  
Kilmarnock, VA 22482

#### YMCA WILEY CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

458 Harris Road  
Kilmarnock, VA 22482

