



# PARENT HANDBOOK

Child & Youth Programs  
Marine Corps Community Services  
Okinawa, Japan  
April 2020



# WELCOME

Welcome to the Marine Corps Community Services Child & Youth Programs (CYP).

You have come to the right place for programs that are guided by the highest professional standards and tailored to meet the unique needs of Marine Corps families stationed on Okinawa.

One of the reasons you chose a life of military services is the Marine Corps' deep commitment to supporting families. You will see that commitment in action in our Programs through:

- Nationally accredited care for infants, early childhood and school age children.
- Affiliation with the Boys & Girls Club of America.
- Attention to detail, such as implementing practices that promote good nutrition, physical activity, and school preparedness.



Please read through this Parent Handbook carefully to learn more about our Programs and why our CYP Professionals are national leaders in child care and youth programming.

Thank you for choosing us!

# PHILOSOPHY

We provide high-quality educational and recreational programs that respect families' cultures and values. Caring, knowledgeable CYP Professionals plan and facilitate developmentally appropriate offerings that are responsive to the ages, abilities, and interests of children and youth. CYP Professionals are committed to serving children and youth of all races, ethnicities, and abilities, with an emphasis on respectful, positive interactions that foster each child or youth's development and growing independence. We support Marine children, families, CYP Professionals, and local communities, providing a safe environment for your child or youth to explore and learn.

Whether your child is an infant or a youth in high school, needs care all week or only for an hour after school, is typically developing or has identified needs that require thoughtful accommodations for inclusion – we are ready with trained professionals and outstanding programming to meet the unique child care needs and recreational interests of military families.

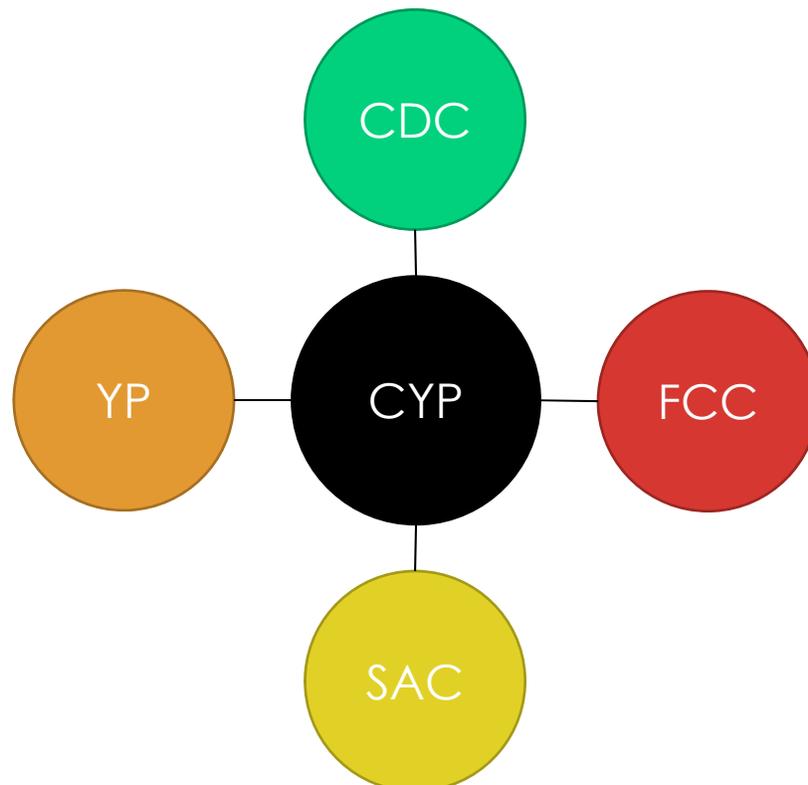
**MARINE** & *Family* | Child and Youth Programs



# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

CYP is a comprehensive system of care that offers a wide range of programs to meet the needs of military families. Children may be enrolled in just one program, but the whole system of connected programs, resources, and CYP Professionals support all children and their families. CYP is composed of the following components:

- Child Development Centers (CDCs)
- Family Child Care (FCC)
- School Age Care (SAC)
- Youth Programs (YPs).



# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

## Waitlist

MilitaryChildCare.com (MCC) is a secure Department of Defense (DoD) Web site that helps families find information on military-operated or military-approved child care programs world-wide. All requests for child care must be made through MCC. Families use the site to search for a wide range of child care options, submit requests for care, and accept offers of care when spaces become available. By creating profiles on MCC, families can communicate directly with programs and see the average wait times until space becomes available. Families can access MCC anytime from anywhere, allowing them to begin the process of finding child care immediately upon notification of a permanent change of station (PCS). CYP Professionals and the MCC Help Desk are available to answer questions about MCC and the process for requesting care through MCC.

We care for your children  
*while you protect America*

MilitaryChildCare.com is a central gateway that simplifies your child care search process by providing comprehensive information on military child care programs around the world. It enables you to search for and request care, manage your requests, and update your profile online. It's that easy.

1 CREATE ACCOUNT    2 SEARCH and REQUEST CARE    3 MANAGE MY REQUESTS    4 UPDATE MY PROFILE

**MILITARY**  
CHILDCARE .COM

Learn more at [MilitaryChildCare.com](http://MilitaryChildCare.com)

# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

## Eligibility for Care

To be eligible for care in CYP, your child must have a military or other eligible DoD affiliated sponsor. Eligible sponsors include active duty military, DoD civilians, reservists on active orders, active duty combat-related Wounded Warriors, and surviving spouses of military members who died in combat-related incidents. Children of retirees from active duty and children of service members with Wounded Warrior status are eligible for recreational programs and noncustodial activities; however, they are not eligible for full-time care except on a space available basis. CYPs with excess capacity may offer child care services to other military/family types on a space available basis.

DoD families must use MCC to request care at all child development centers (CDC) and school age care (SAC) programs and are required to show proof of eligibility when they enroll. Families are sequenced on the waitlist

and offered a child care space according to their military/family type and the request for care date. It is important to remember that families are responsible for informing us immediately if their military/family type changes in any way after enrollment.

If a family's eligibility status changes to a space available status, we will provide 90 days' notice to the family to transition out of the program unless the program is operating with no waitlist or potential for a waitlist.

An eligible sponsor's children include adopted children, recognized natural children, stepchildren, and foster children who live with the sponsor. If family members are geographically separated or the parents are divorced, their children are eligible if they live with the sponsor at least 25 percent of the time in the month the children receive care.

# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

## Fees

Our goal is to make high-quality programs available for all families, regardless of income. We offer child care and school age care services on a sliding fee scale, which is established by the DoD. To ensure continuity of care for your child, it is very important to keep current with parent fee documents and fee payments. Fees must be paid in advance of receiving services.

### Pay Fees on Time!

We must receive your payment in advance of providing care or programming for your child.

If you are late paying your fees, we may be forced to **exclude your child from the program** until the fees are paid in full.

We may also notify your Chain of Command or request to deduct overdue fees from your paycheck.

## Annual Parent Fee Letter

When you register, and every year your child is enrolled in CYP, you will receive an annual Parent Fee Letter that lists the new DoD fees for your child's program for the upcoming year. You will need to submit a new DD Form 2652, Application For Department of Defense Child Care Fees, along with your most current Leave and Earnings Statement (LES). This allows us to calculate your family's current fees using an income-based sliding scale. We may exclude a child from care if the parent fee documentation and registration forms are outdated. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your fees, please contact our Resource & Referral office at 645-4117 or drop by our office located at Bldg 495, Room 100, Camp Foster.

# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

## How and When to Pay Fees

CYP offers three methods for families to pay their child care fees:

- Authorize automatic debit payments.
- Credit card payments at any CYP facility.
- Cash or check payments at any CYP facility.

You have the option of paying on paying on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, or every week.

With automatic debit, payments are always on time, ensuring your child's care is never interrupted. At this time, auto-debit is available for weekly payments only.

Please be aware that late payments may result in denial of child care or School Age Care (SAC).



# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

## Vacation

CDCs and SAC programs provide up to 10 days of vacation time for families. To receive this benefit, families must notify the CYP at least two weeks in advance and take the time off in a block of either 5 or 10 consecutive days, Monday through Friday. CYPs are unable to offer the vacation discount for a block of fewer than 5 days, but the vacation period can begin any day of the week.



## Maternity, Convalescent, and Other Leave

Children enrolled in CYP may continue to receive care without interruption for the same fees while families take maternity, convalescent, or other types of leave. However, if you want to remove your child from CYP during leave, you may use the annual vacation benefit. If you wish to remove your child from services beyond 10 days, you must either continue to pay the fees to keep the space or withdraw your child. If or when you decide to re-enroll your child, you must submit a new request for care through MCC.

Patrons going on emergency leave to the United States may have their child's space held and fees waived for up to 30 days. In such cases, supporting documentation such as an American Red Cross notification or letter from the sponsor's Command is required.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CYP policies and procedures enable smooth daily operations and ensure that CYPs achieve their long-term goals of meeting and sustaining the highest quality of child care and youth programming for military families.

## Child Supervision

Child safety starts with proper supervision. CYPs demonstrate commitment to your child's safety through clear and comprehensive policies and procedures regarding child supervision. CYPs ensure developmentally appropriate supervision for each age group of children, including established sign-in and sign-out policies that facilitate proper supervision both inside and outside CYPs.

## Self-Care Policy

The DoD requires every installation to establish its own self-care policy (sometimes called the "home alone policy"). The Installation decides the minimum age children must reach before they may be left at home by themselves, for how long, during what times of day, and how long a youth can supervise a younger child. CYP Professionals can explain the local self-care policy and help you find resources to keep your child safe and properly supervised.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Sign In and Out

Children younger than the minimum age set by the installation's self-care policy **must** be signed in and signed out of programs by an authorized adult.

When dropping off or picking up your child, you must shut off and secure your vehicle in the parking lot. Children should never be left unattended in the parking lot. These accountability measures are in place for your child's safety.

Children may be able to sign themselves in and out of SAC if they have reached the minimum age specified in the installation's self-care policy **and** a parent has given permission for the child to self-release from the program. Parents of a child who is eligible for self-release must sign a Self-Release Form during initial enrollment and each year during annual registration.

Youth who have reached the minimum age specified in the Installation's self-care policy may sign themselves in and out of Youth Programs (YPs). Since YPs are open recreational programs, if your child requires custodial care, please enroll your child in SAC.

### CYMS

CYPs use an automated system called the Child and Youth Management System (CYMS) for a variety of recordkeeping tasks, including daily attendance.

Please enter your code when entering or leaving a CYP facility.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Parent Responsibility for Child Release

At registration, families must provide contact information for at least two local adults who are designated as emergency notification and/or nonemergency authorized contacts. We need these contacts in case the program needs help reaching you or in the event that your child needs to be picked up at a time when you are unreachable. We will release your child only to you, the individuals you designated on the registration form, and any other adult who has legal custody of your child. We adhere to the following release rules:

- Every person signing out children must show a photo ID at the entrance. Front desk employees verify that the IDs match the information on the family's release documentation.
- Children may be signed out by older siblings or babysitters who are old enough according to the Installation's self-care policy, and only if you have given written permission.
- Written permission for release is typically required, but verbal permission is acceptable in some limited circumstances. If your plans change between drop-off and pick-up, you can call the CYP to give temporary permission (for no more than 24 hours) to release your child to a specific adult (age 18 or older). The verbally authorized adult must show a photo ID. If you need the adult to sign out your child more than once, talk with a CYP Professional about adding the person to your emergency or nonemergency authorized contacts list.
- If anyone (including a parent) signing out a child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or acts in a manner that CYP Professionals believe presents a potential danger to the child's safety, CYP Professionals must call the Provost Marshall Office and the Family Advocacy Program for assistance in ensuring the child's safety.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Child Custody

If a military family is experiencing a legal situation involving child custody, the CYP is a neutral party. We may not deny a parent or guardian access to his or her child unless there is an active restraining order, court order, or court-ordered visitation schedule on file that legally directs the program to deny access. If you have concerns about a child custody situation, please talk with the CYP Director.



## CYP Professionals as Nonemergency Contacts

In some limited circumstances, a family may need to ask a CYP Professional to be their nonemergency authorized contact. This arrangement is allowed with the following guidelines:

- A CYP Professional may be your nonemergency contact only during the CYP Professional's off-duty hours. This designation cannot pull him or her away from job responsibilities.
- CYP Professionals may not be listed as emergency contacts because they cannot leave work to respond in an emergency situation.
- If you arrange for a CYP Professional to be your nonemergency authorized contact, the arrangement is strictly between you and the CYP Professional. CYPs are not responsible or legally liable for CYP Professionals' behaviors or actions outside of work hours.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Late Arrivals and Absences

If a change in plans affects your child's attendance or arrival time, please let the CYP know. Notify your program of any absence in advance or as soon as possible after your child's typical arrival time. If your family is going on vacation, please follow the vacation guidelines in the Program Administration section of this Parent Handbook.

You must notify the CYP when you know that your child will be late to the program. If your child does not arrive when expected and you have not contacted the program within a reasonable amount of time, the CYP is obligated to ensure that your child is not in distress. The program will attempt to contact you, then your spouse, and then individuals listed on your emergency contact list. If CYP Professionals are still unable to verify the safety of your child, they will contact your Chain of Command and the Provost Marshall Office, if necessary, until your child is located.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Late Pickup

Timely child pickups enable CYPs to function much more effectively.

If you are late picking up your child at closing time, you place yourself at risk of having your service agreement cancelled. CYP Professionals will try to reach you and then your spouse, if applicable. The program will then reach out to the emergency contacts on your child's registration form. If CYP Professionals have not yet reached anyone within 30 minutes past closing, they must contact the Provost Marshall for assistance in locating you.

Children may be in care in a CYP facility or program for a maximum of 12 hours. If your child exceeds 12 hours in any one stay; if your family exceeds the 12-hour rule three times, your child may be subject to disenrollment. Exceptions to this rule may be made in rare circumstances, such as in an emergency or due to a mission requirement with a letter from the Command.

### On Time, Every Time

CYP Professionals rely on you to pick up your child on time.

Please, no late pickups.

If a late pickup is unavoidable, you must call and inform the program.

Thank you for your help.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Permanent Withdrawal

If your child is enrolled in full-time or part-time care in a CDC or SAC you must give a 2-week notice, at a minimum, to permanently withdraw your child, so that your program is better able to plan for your child's departure. If you give less than a 2-week notice, you are subject to pay fees for those 2 weeks from the date you give notice.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Temporary Withdrawal for TAD/TDY

If you are assigned to Temporary Additional Duty/Temporary Duty (TAD/TDY) at a location off Okinawa, CYP may be able to hold your child's space without charging child care fees under the following circumstances:

- Your child is age 6 weeks to 12 years and is enrolled in full -time care in a CDC or SAC.
- You take your child with you and enroll your child in a CYP at your TDY location. If you decline a viable child care space offered to you at the temporary location, CYP cannot reserve your space at your regular location.
- Your TAD/TDY lasts 90 or fewer days (longer periods require command approval).

If your situation meets these guidelines, you must show the following documents in order to reserve your child's space without incurring child care fees:

- Your official TAD/TDY orders.
- Proof of your child's transportation (e.g., airline ticket) showing your child accompanied you to the temporary location.
- Receipts from your child care fees at the temporary location.

If you need to leave for a temporary period (longer than 2 weeks) but your situation does not meet these guidelines, you can permanently withdraw and later request for care again on MCC, or you can pay your fees while you are gone to hold your space. Let us know if you need assistance finding child care in your temporary location.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Hourly Care

Sometimes families need child care for just 1 or 2 hours to deal with an emergency, attend a doctor's appointment, or take care of other responsibilities. If programs have hourly care spaces available in CDCs and SAC, those spaces are offered on a "first come, first served" basis during normal operating hours. (An exception to this policy exists for Wounded Warriors who have priority for available hourly care spaces to attend medical appointments.) Families can make reservations by calling the center up to two weeks in advance of care. To receive care, you must complete the hourly registration packet. If you have any questions about the CYP's hourly care policies and procedures, please contact Resource & Referral at 645-4117.

Payments for hourly care must be made prior to dropping off your child for your scheduled reservation. If you have reserved hourly care for your child but you do not drop off your child, you will still be charged for the hours reserved. If your child is in hourly care and you are late to pick up your child from your agreed reservation time, you will continue to be charged the hourly rate for each hour, or a fraction thereof, until you pick up your child. For example, if your reservation is until 11 a.m., and you arrive for pickup at 11:10 a.m., the program must charge you for a full hour of hourly care beyond your reserved end time. Your child's continued presence in the program past the agreed-upon reservation causes difficulties in maintaining supervision ratios, so your on-time pickup is vitally important.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Visiting and Volunteering

CYPs welcome and encourage parents to visit at any time. If a visit is very short (for example, to drop off or pick up your child or to drop off supplies), then signing in and out as a visitor is not required. If a visit is any longer (for example, to volunteer or participate in a program), then you will be asked to sign in and out. Families attending special events, such as a holiday luncheon, are not considered visitors and do not wear a visitor badge or sign in for the duration of this type of event only.



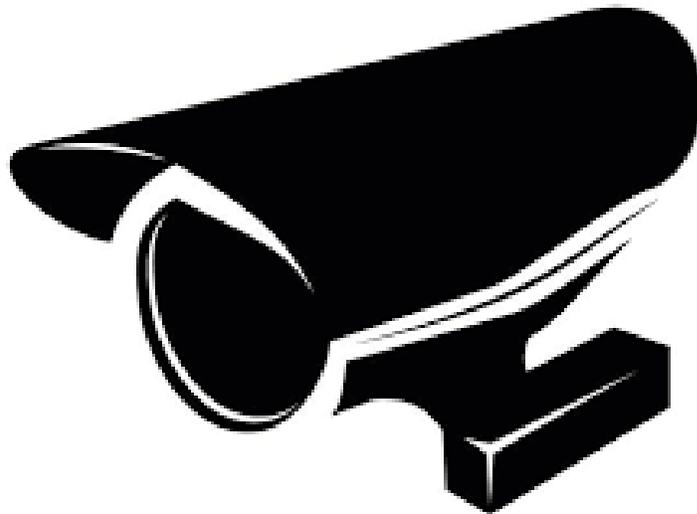
Many parents enjoy volunteering in CYP facilities. Whether you volunteer regularly or once in a while, the CYP welcomes you and thanks you for your participation. Talk with a CYP Professional for more information about the opportunities for volunteering and the rules specific to these situations.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)

CYP facilities are equipped with a closed circuit television system (CCTV). CYPs use CCTV for two purposes. First, it is an effective tool in the deterrence and prevention of child abuse and neglect. Second, it provides you the opportunity to observe your child in the care environment in real time without interrupting the daily routine and activities. You are always welcome to observe your child on the live CCTV monitors in the facility.

Video recordings of the CCTV system are not available. If you have a special circumstance requiring access to a CYP video recording, contact the CYP Director about obtaining authorization from the appropriate Command authority.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Bad Weather and Emergencies

In case of earthquake, tsunami, typhoon, or other unusual conditions such as utility outages or excessive heat, or in the event of a local or national emergency, the Command may decide to close CYPs, delay openings, shelter-in-place, lock down, or send children home early.



You will be notified of utility outages and advised on the situation, in order to determine if you want your child to remain in our care.

All CYP facilities close when Tropical Cyclone Condition One Caution (TC-1C) is declared and you must pickup your child within an hour after it is declared. CYP facilities reopen as soon as possible after a typhoon closure if it is safe to do so. Please call your child's facility for opening times and conditions.

In the event we must evacuate the facility, you will be notified where to pickup your child. Please listen to AFN FM 89.1 for emergency announcements or check the MCCS Okinawa Facebook page.

# PROGRAM STANDARDS

Congress passed the Military Child Care Act (MCCA) in 1989 to make child services more affordable and available and to establish higher standards for professional training and program operations. Today, CYPs are highly respected for the tremendous impact they have had on the entire early childhood and youth services field. Military CYPs serve as role models for other programs by consistently implementing quality program standards.

## An Amazing Transformation

“People have referred to what happened with military child care as a Cinderella story, because you had this system going from a system in crisis to a **model for the nation.**”

— Deborah Phillips, Professor of Psychology, Georgetown University, and first Executive Director of the Board on Children, Youth, and Families of the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, as quoted in the PBS News Hour segment “High Quality Child Care Gives Military Families Peace of Mind,”

3/7/2017

# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Quality Assurance

We are committed to sustaining outstanding quality of care and programming. Our CYP Professionals embrace and promote a culture of continuous quality improvement through the following:

- Constantly looking for ways to strengthen and enhance the services provided to Marine children, youth, and families.
- Not believing that “good enough” is acceptable—but continually raising the bar for program quality.
- Implementing rigorous and effective quality control systems.

In addition to maintaining DoD and Marine Corps quality standards, we seek and maintain accreditation from nationally recognized accrediting agencies.

Our CYP facilities are regularly monitored and inspected by headquarters and multidisciplinary teams on a full spectrum of quality assurance measures, including fire, safety, sanitation, and quality programming. This combination of continuous monitoring, frequent inspections, and an ongoing culture of excellence ensures safety and quality throughout every CYP service and offering.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Inclusion

CYPs welcome children of all abilities and offer outstanding programs to all. CYP Professionals are committed to the full inclusion of children with disabilities, differing abilities, and special needs. They collaborate with families and the Inclusion Action Team (IAT) to support children across all of our programs.



## Inclusion Action Team

The Inclusion Action Team (IAT) is a team of professionals that collaborates to support the full inclusion of children with diagnosed or undiagnosed disabilities, differing abilities, or special needs. These experts in the fields of medicine, therapy, family services, special education, and general education help us locate resources for families and identify reasonable accommodations that can be implemented to support a child's success in our program. If CYP Professionals feel your child may benefit from a referral for IAT support, you are always consulted first and encouraged to participate in the discussion. You—the parent—are the expert on your child, and as such, you are the most valuable member of the IAT.

# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Exceptional Family Member Program

If your child has been diagnosed with a disability or identified as having a special need before you enroll in CYP, please let us know when you register to ensure that appropriate planning begins as soon as possible.

Alternatively, previously unidentified special needs may become known while your child is enrolled in CYP. In either circumstance, your child may be eligible for the DoD Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), which can provide access to further resources to support your child and family. We are committed to making all reasonable accommodations to facilitate the participation of children enrolled in EFMP.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

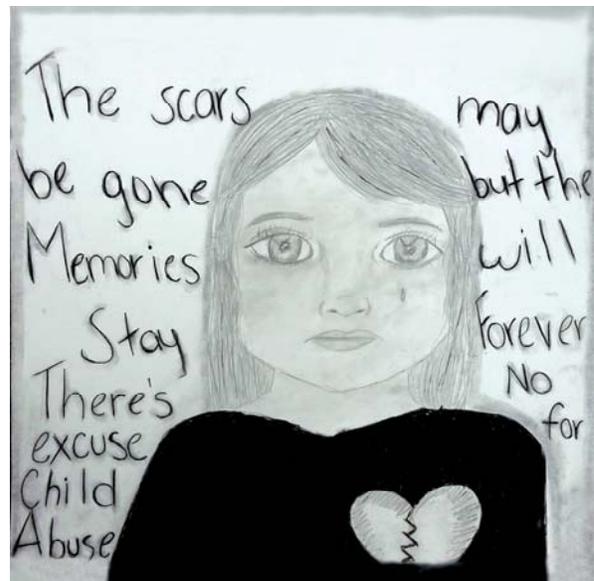
## Child Abuse Prevention, Education, and Reporting

The safety of the children participating in CYP services is the top priority. CYP Professionals follow best practices in the prevention, education, and reporting of child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect.

CYPs prevent incidents of child abuse through strict line of sight supervision; appropriate staffing ratios; and fostering positive, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate interactions among children, youth, and CYP Professionals.

CYPs educate all CYP Professionals as well as create educational opportunities for families and other community members to learn about children's developmental needs, risk factors for abuse, and resources available to support CYP Professionals, family members, and other adults in children's lives.

CYPs report any suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of a child. CYP Professionals are mandated reporters, meaning that they are required by law to make a report when abuse or neglect is suspected or alleged. CYP Professionals immediately and directly report child abuse or neglect suspicions to the installation Family Advocacy Program (FAP) and, in some cases, to PMO.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

In a mandated reporting situation, CYP Professionals may release family information to appropriate authorities without parent consent.

As a parent, you partner with the CYP to keep children safe. If you suspect child abuse or neglect, report it immediately to the proper authorities. The CYP Director can assist you in making a report to the FAP and to PMO. You can also report alleged child abuse and neglect directly to the DoD child abuse and safety hotline. If calling from the United States or from U.S. Territories, call 1-877-790-1197. If calling from a foreign location, call collect 571-372-5348. These hotline numbers are also posted on parent information boards in all CYP facilities.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Appropriate Touch

Appropriate touch is an essential aspect of providing care for children. CYP Professionals are trained to respect the personal space of others and to use appropriate touch with all children. CYP's Guidance and Touch Policy is available at Appendix A.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Child Guidance

CYPs use positive guidance strategies. Research shows that the most effective and long lasting strategies are those that guide children to engage in positive behaviors. CYP Professionals receive annual and ongoing training in child guidance and use a variety of positive guidance strategies to promote appropriate behaviors, including the following:

- Getting to know individual children in care and responding to their individual needs with respect, acceptance, and appreciation.
- Keeping a consistent and reliable daily schedule.
- Giving clear, simple instructions and setting clear limits.
- Focusing on building trust, community, and self-esteem.
- Organizing activities to reduce waiting and down time, so that children are engaged in positive activities.
- Encouraging children to learn and use conflict resolution strategies while staying present to assist, discuss, and work out solutions.
- Teaching social and emotional skills while closely supervising children to intervene during peer interactions and prevent, whenever possible, a behavioral incident before it happens.

"Horseplay"—rough, physical play that can cause harm—is not permitted.

# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Reasonable Expectations for Behavior

CYPs are designed to support all children to grow as individuals. Because programs serve diverse families and communities, they must be responsive to a wide range of learning styles and needs while celebrating the individuality of each child.

Within that framework of respect for differences, CYPs have high standards for acceptable behavior for children in care. Standards for behavior differ based on the age of the child; very young children can sometimes experiment with biting, hitting, scratching, or throwing objects without aggressive intent. CYP Professionals are trained to gently guide very young children to more appropriate behaviors. Older children are expected to act respectfully to themselves, staff and others, and to stay safe with no aggressive actions of any kind. Learning socially acceptable behaviors is part of growing up, and the children in care are in the process of developing the social and emotional skills that result in good behavioral choices. CYP Professionals are trained to support the overall development of children of all ages, including the development of appropriate social and emotional skills.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Behavioral Interventions

When behavioral incidents occur, CYP Professionals often respond through redirection and other developmentally appropriate behavior teaching strategies. If the behavioral incident poses an emerging pattern of challenging behavior that is not resolving based on initial CYP modification efforts, then the program will respond appropriately to maintain safety and inform parents and engage them in collaborating on strategies for resolving the concerning behavior. Whether your child is very young and still learning appropriate behaviors, or your child is older and made a poor choice, CYP Professionals are available to discuss positive strategies with you to prevent further incidents.

If your child presents a direct safety threat to self or others, suspension is a possible consequence. The level of the CYP Professional's response depends on the seriousness of the incident and the responsiveness of the child to positive redirection.

CYPs encourage families to refrain from discussing incidents with other families and to trust CYP Professionals to handle incidents appropriately.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Addressing Persistent Behavioral Needs

If a child continually struggles with behavioral issues, the first step is to determine what need is being communicated through his or her behavior. CYP Professionals will request a family conference to review and discuss the reports regarding behavioral incidents. If the child's safety or the safety of others is a concern, or if one-on-one supervision is required to prevent behavioral issues, then the CYP may refer the concern to the Inclusion Action Team (IAT) described in the Inclusion section of this Parent Handbook. The IAT meets with the family to develop a plan to support the child's behavioral development. This written plan clearly states the family's and CYP's responsibilities in addressing behavioral needs. The IAT evaluates children's needs in the context of the program. IAT recommendations can include additional support, resources, and strategies, and occasionally suggestions for alternatives in care environments. Together, the IAT, parents, and CYP Professionals will create a plan that best meets the needs of the child. If all attempts to improve behavior have been exhausted and your child continues to present a direct safety threat to self or others, your child may be removed and an alternative type of child care may be suggested.



# PROGRAM STANDARDS

## Bullying

CYPs are responsible for creating safe, caring, respectful environments for children.

Bullying—including cyberbullying—is strictly prohibited. CYP defines bullying as:

Any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim.

A real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor(s) and victim.

Any action that is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma based on a real or perceived characteristic, such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; or mental, physical, or sensory disability.

CYP Professionals are trained to prevent, look for signs of, and intervene in bullying situations. If children engage in bullying behaviors, CYP Professionals respond with behavioral interventions that are appropriate to the seriousness of the situation. Families and CYP Professionals must work together to keep all children safe from bullying.



# FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

We believe in working as a team with parents. From years of research, child development professionals have learned that children are more successful and programs are higher quality when parents are involved. While CYPs bring a depth of experience and professional knowledge about child development, you are the expert on your child. Our role is to supplement—never replace—your caregiving.

Family involvement includes a range of practices such as open and ongoing communication, family focus groups, volunteer opportunities, special events, and much more. There are many ways to stay involved in your child's CYP experience.

We practice an open door policy with families. You are welcome to visit at any time, announced or unannounced. Your input and questions are always welcome.

Please talk with your program's CYP Professionals about your own ideas for family engagement. They want to hear what you have in mind.



# FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

## Family Communication

As children navigate and explore their CYP environments, they stretch their physical skills and test their limits. Consequently, children sometimes fall or are injured, either on their own or during interactions with others. These types of incidents do not always result in an injury and are simply natural consequences of their development, interactions, and activities. If your child is injured while in care that results in a physical injury (such as a bump on the head or cut on the arm), the program will provide you with the Incident Report with details of the situation. The program will also provide you with the Incident Report any time your child becomes ill or shows symptoms of illness significant enough to require support beyond what the program can provide. If the form does not answer

your questions, you are always welcome to contact your CYP Professional for follow-up information.

If a child engages in behaviors that pose a significant risk of injury to him/herself or to others, or if the behavior is part of an emerging pattern of challenging behavior that is not resolving based on initial CYP modification efforts, then we will initiate a parent conference.



# FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

One of the simplest and best ways to stay involved with your child's CYP experience is through allowing a little extra time at pickup or drop-off to talk with CYP Professionals. They share what they observed while caring for your child, and you can share details about your child's health, developmental progress, and much more.

All CYPs offer Parent Information Boards at the front desk or lobby. Your program may create newsletters to communicate about special events, new opportunities, and family education classes. Connect with a CYP Professional to get the latest news from your child's specific program.

Email and text messaging are helpful communication tools. Emails and texts are particularly useful for sharing vital communication such as updates on delays and closings due to bad weather and emergencies or reminders about upcoming events and activities. Many programs maintain distribution lists of all enrolled families for sharing information through mass emails or group texts. CYPs always send emails or texts as blind copies to all recipients to ensure your individual email address or number remains private. Please make sure the CYP has your most current email address and mobile phone number.

CYP Professionals do not engage in one-on-one online relationships with any child, including sending emails or texts or connecting on social media sites or gaming sites. CYP Professionals may create a group account to update families on the latest activities and opportunities in their program.



## Need to Talk?

CYP Professionals are always available for formal conferences or informal discussions. Let them know what is on your mind.

# FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

## Parent Satisfaction and Concerns

### Satisfaction Surveys

Families are invited to participate in the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey. You can share your anonymous feedback. We use the information gathered through these surveys in planning and decision-making that enhance CYP programming. Please take advantage of the opportunity to share your valued feedback.



### Parent Concern Procedures

We do our best to provide exceptional service and programming. Occasionally, we may miss the mark. When that happens, please bring your concern to the Program Manager or designated supervisor-in-charge. We'll do our best to resolve the issue at the lowest level possible; and if it is not, your concern can be elevated to the next level by calling our administrative office at 645-4505 and asking to speak to the CYP Assistant Administrator.

Our commitment to you is to address all concerns promptly and we appreciate you giving us the opportunity to work through them.

# FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

## Parent Advisory Board

Each program operates a Parent Advisory Board (PAB) to further support CYP operations in meeting the needs of children, youth, and their families. Every family enrolled in the CYP is automatically a PAB member. PAB members meet quarterly to provide recommendations for improving services, help plan special events, and discuss other opportunities for family participation. Parents who participate on the PAB support the continued well-being of all children in the program. Please consider participating in your program's PAB.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

CYP is committed to supporting the physical, mental, social, and emotional health and well-being of your child. CYPs play an important role in the fight against childhood obesity. Good nutrition and physical activity are cornerstones of all programs. Your child not only has the opportunity to eat well and participate in regular physical activity, but he or she can also learn skills and develop attitudes that build the foundation for a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, CYPs limit screen time according to American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidelines to help children get up and keep moving. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy offer tips for healthy military children.

CYP Professionals ensure healthy and safe program environments. You help by ensuring that each day you bring your child to a CYP, he or she is free from obvious illness and is in good health. We are unable to provide care for any child who is acutely ill.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Health and Safety Practices

CYP health and safety practices follow the guidelines in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education*, 4th ed., published jointly by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. The foundation of these practices is ongoing, high-quality professional development for all CYP Professionals in health and safety, including first aid and CPR training, thorough background checks, ongoing monitoring, health and safety inspections, and fire and emergency drills conducted on a regular basis.

In addition, each program is prepared in the event of an emergency situation with an individual emergency response plan in place. If any emergency should take place in which children, youth, and CYP Professionals must leave the facility, you are notified as soon as possible. We will always keep you informed of your child's safety and location during emergencies.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Immunizations

Children enrolling in any CYP who have not yet started school (e.g., infants through 6 years old) or homeschooled children of any age must have written documentation from a qualified health care provider that they are fully immunized prior to enrollment in the CYP.

Additionally, when your child ages into a new immunization requirement, you must provide documentation when it is completed. Families must submit updated immunization documentation within 30 days of the due date. CYPs are required to exclude a child from care whose immunizations have lapsed.

In addition to the age-appropriate immunization requirements, all children from 6 months old and up must show proof of an annual, i.e., seasonal, flu vaccine.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

If your child is enrolled in a Department of Defense Educational Activity (DODEA) school where proof of current vaccination is required, then no additional immunization documentation is required for CYP, except for the annual (AKA seasonal) influenza immunization. Current immunization requirements can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>. DoD recognizes there may be circumstances in which a child cannot receive one or more of the required immunizations, such as a medical condition or a family's religious beliefs. If this applies to your child, you must submit an immunization waiver request. Unless an approved waiver is on file documenting an exemption from an immunization, or documentation is on file of an authorized delay, the immunization requirements apply.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Child Illness or Serious Injury

Your child must be free from illness or serious injury to attend the CYP. For children ages 5 years and younger, a CYP Professional conducts a daily health check through direct observation and asking your child questions. Older children and youth are asked how they are feeling if they appear unwell. If your child shows signs or symptoms of an illness that requires temporary exclusion from the program, you will be notified to pick up your child immediately. If your child is not well enough to participate in all activities (including outdoor time), he or she should stay home. Depending on the type and seriousness of the illness or injury, your child may need clearance from a physician to return to care.



To learn what symptoms and signs of illness indicate that your child should stay home, refer to the Signs and Symptoms Chart in the National Resource Center's *Caring for Our Children*, 4th ed., found at the following link:

<http://nrckids.org/files/appendix/AppendixA.pdf>

**Note that the Signs and Symptoms Chart is not exhaustive; your child must be well enough to participate in all activities to attend.**

# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Medication

When needed, you will be asked to sign a permission form authorizing CYPs to apply topical, nonprescription products on an as-needed basis, such as sunscreen, dry skin lotion, or diaper rash ointment. We do not administer any ingestible nonprescription products or medications, such as pain relief medication or antihistamines, without a doctor's prescription.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Prescription Medications

The best place for your child to take a prescription medication is at home. If the dosage schedule and your work schedule make it impossible to administer a medicine only at home, then the CYP Professionals will work with you on a case-by-case basis to determine if they can administer the medicine at the program. Only CYP Professionals who have completed medication administration training, conducted by a health care professional, will provide medicine to your child.

Administration of a medication is allowable only under the following conditions:

- The medication must be prescribed by a licensed health care provider, even if it is available over-the-counter.
- Parents must submit a Medication Authorization Form that includes a signed statement from the prescribing physician specifying the medication type and full instructions for dosage, times, and application.
- Parents must administer the first dose of a new medicine at home.
- The medication must be in its original container with its original label.
- The label clearly shows the following:
  - ❖ The child's first and last name
  - ❖ Date prescription was filled
  - ❖ Expiration date
  - ❖ Name of the prescribing health care provider
  - ❖ Instructions for administration and storage
  - ❖ Name and strength of medication

Medication will be stored properly and returned to parents when the period for administration ends.

# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Infection Control

CYPs minimize the possibility of spreading infection through proper hygiene practices. All CYP Professionals use and teach proper procedures to wash hands and are also trained in general infection control, safe food handling, and diapering and toileting procedures. The easiest and most effective way to stop the spread of infection is through careful hand washing. Everyone, including CYP Professionals, children, youth, parents, and other visitors, must wash their hands upon entering a FCC Provider's home, program area, or classroom, even if they just came from another program area or classroom.

These types of safe hygiene practices reduce the risk of infectious disease or illness and help to ensure the health and safety of your child.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Injury Prevention

CYP facilities are safe places for children. All CYP Professionals are certified in CPR and first aid and are trained to help prevent accidents and injuries from occurring. CYP Professionals treat minor injuries using standard first aid procedures and provide you with an Incident Report. If a more serious injury occurs while your child is in care, CYP Professionals provide immediate care and then contact you and emergency services (if needed). Depending on the severity of the injury, you may be asked to provide a clearance from a physician before your child returns to care to ensure the appropriate accommodations are made for your child. Keep your child's emergency contact information current so you can be reached as soon as possible when needed. If an injury involves another child, CYP Professionals maintain confidentiality regarding the identity of the other child and the outcomes of the injury.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Emergency Preparedness

CYPs practice all established emergency procedures so that everyone in the program or facility has a calm, clear plan of action in the event of an emergency. CYP Professionals model a matter-of-fact approach to emergency procedure drills. In case of an actual emergency that requires a sudden need to change operating hours, the CYP will notify families immediately. No matter what the unexpected situation, the safety and supervision of children remains the CYP's top priority.

## No Smoking Policy

Federal regulations prohibit smoking or using other tobacco products in CYP facilities. CYP Professionals, families, visitors, children, and youth must NOT smoke (including electronic cigarettes or other nicotine-vaporizing devices) or use smokeless tobacco products in or near any CYP facility or playground at any time.

**LockOUT**



**LockDOWN**



**Evacuate**



**Shelter**



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Nutrition

CYPs offer nutritious meals and snacks based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Programs provide children a clean and pleasant environment in which to enjoy their food. Food preparation areas are inspected regularly to ensure they meet high health and sanitation standards.

Menus are reviewed annually and we invite parents to provide input into improving our menu selections.



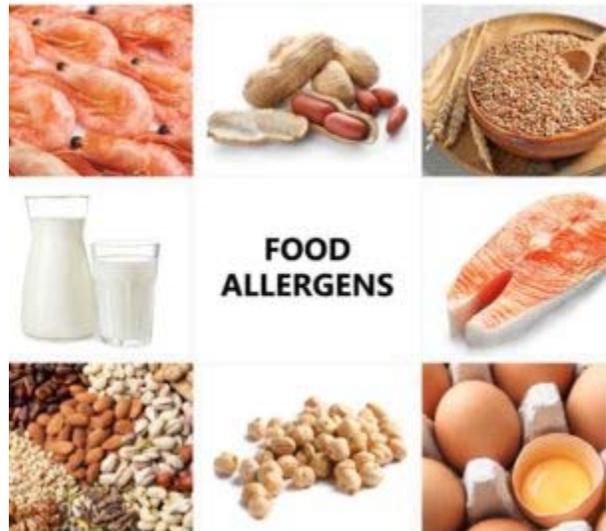
# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Allergies

CYP Professionals work with families to plan healthful, appealing meals and snacks that accommodate every child's needs. At registration, please let the CYP Professionals know if your child has any food allergies or other special dietary needs. If your child is unable to eat a certain food for medical reasons, you must provide a written statement signed by your health care provider identifying the food(s) to avoid and the suggested substitution. CYP Professionals who prepare food will use this documentation to make every attempt to identify an appropriate substitute food for your child. CYPs post menus in advance so that families can make informed food decisions.

## Severe Allergy Situations

Although CYP food substitution policies work for most food allergy situations, a child may have allergies too severe to eliminate every risk factor. If this applies to your child, please talk with a CYP Professional. Ultimately, parents must determine whether the risk of allergens in a group care setting makes that program the best choice for their child.



# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Food Preferences and Substitutions

If your family prefers to send a food from home as a substitution for a menu item due to religious reasons, please let your program know in advance. You are required to develop a written plan in collaboration with the CYP. Liability regarding the safety of home foods ultimately rests with the parent who packaged the food. Food must be brought in a clean, tightly sealed container, dated and labeled with your child's name and requires no refrigeration or reheating. Any leftover food will be discarded at the end of meal service and the unwashed container returned to you if it is not disposable. "Fast food" items will not be accepted as a meal replacement under any circumstances. Any request for changes to normal child feeding guidelines, such as a request for your child not to be served milk, must be accompanied by a physician's order.

There is no fee discount for food substitutions brought from home.

## Family Style Dining

Meals in the CDCs are served "family style." Family style dining teaches and positively reinforces family dining skills and engages children in conversation, which aids their development of social skills and oral language skills.



Parents are always welcome to join their child in family-style dining. Just let a CYP Professional know you're coming.

# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Infant Feeding

CYP Professionals are trained in best practices in infant feeding according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards. Some highlights of those high standards for infant nutrition and safety include the following:

- CYP Professionals hold infants as appropriate to their age and development as they drink from a bottle. Bottles are never propped up.
- All bottles or containers of breastmilk or formula must be labeled with your child's first and last name and the date and time they were prepared.
- For health and safety reasons, a bottle of formula or breastmilk must be discarded within a 1-hour window after it is first offered to your child.



We understand that infant feeding schedules, amounts, and foods vary from one infant and family to another. CYP Professionals will work with you to individualize your baby's feeding plan. Whether you are feeding through breastfeeding, by providing pumped breastmilk or formula, or a combination, your CYP Professionals are your partners in creating an infant feeding plan that is the right fit for your baby's nutritional needs and developmental stage.

# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Snacks in YP

YPs designed for preteens and teens may offer food and drink at no additional cost, such as meals during cooking class or pizza activity night, or snacks during a special event or program.

## Oral Hygiene



In CDCs and FCC Providers' homes, teeth brushing with individual, labeled toothbrushes is encouraged after meals and snacks. CYP Professionals teach teeth brushing skills in a relaxed, positive manner to help children learn to care for their teeth and to develop oral hygiene habits from an early age.

# HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

## Celebrations and Food From Home

CYPs respect the cultural backgrounds of all families and strive to include expressions of diversity in programming. Please share your cultural traditions or observances with a CYP Professional, who will work with you to share family celebrations with other children, youth, and families.

Birthdays are opportunities to acknowledge and reinforce each child's personal identity. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at the CYP, please talk with a CYP Professional in advance.

Food brought to the CYP for special occasions must be provided in the original sealed package with nutritional information clearly listed. CYP Professionals will let you know if there are foods to avoid due to allergies. Unfortunately, homemade baked goods or cooked foods are not permitted for sharing in CYP facilities.



# THE CDC EXPERIENCE

# YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE

The operations and programming at our CDCs take a comprehensive approach to quality. We use a carefully chosen curriculum, well-crafted lesson plans, and a rigorous training schedule that ensures CYP Professionals are current in Early Childhood Education (ECE) best practices. Every detail leads to one goal—a quality experience for your child that nurtures growth and development.

## TRANSITIONING FROM HOME TO THE CDC

Some children experience distress when separated from family members, while others separate from their families quite smoothly. Both reactions are developmentally appropriate when a child transitions from home to a care environment. To facilitate the transition process into care and help minimize the child's (potential) separation anxiety, families receive a daily schedule and program information, tour the child's classroom or activity area, and meet staff members and other children. Please feel free to discuss preferred communication methods with your CYP Professionals so that you may work together to make your child's transition a positive experience.

## TRANSITIONING TO A NEW CLASSROOM

Over time, children enrolled in CDCs may need to transition to new classrooms as they develop the need for new challenges and social interactions in their peer group. The timing of classroom transitions is based on many factors, including consultation with the family, the child's age and developmental readiness, and space availability. You are invited to visit your child's new classroom in advance of the transition to meet the new teachers and help make the transition smooth and enjoyable. Children are gently integrated into their new environment through a series of visits to the new classroom. CYP Professionals are always available to answer questions and discuss how your child's transition is going. If you have concerns about classroom changes or any other transitions, please talk with your CYP Professionals.

## YOUR CHILD'S CLASSROOM OR ACTIVITY AREA

All of our CDCs offer classrooms for infants, pretoddlers, toddlers, and preschool children. All classrooms have access to natural daylight, developmentally appropriate toileting facilities, and enough room for both energetic exploration and quieter play. Our CDCs offer both group learning experiences and independent learning.

## PERSONALIZED STORAGE FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Your child is provided a special place (such as a cubby) labeled with his or her name in which to keep personal belongings such as a coat and other clothing. Items of monetary or sentimental value are best left at home, although centers may make exceptions for special projects or special occasions. Please talk with your CYP Professional in advance.

## CHILD'S ATTIRE

Your child participates in a variety of activities both indoors and outdoors. Dress your child in comfortable and weather-appropriate clothes and shoes that are suitable for indoor and outdoor play, including sensory and sand activities and working with art materials. Shoes must have closed toes and heels, such as sneakers. Open-toed sandals and flip-flops are not allowed. Every child enrolled must have at least one full change of clothing at the center, including underwear and socks; two changes of clothing are recommended.

## TOILET TRAINING

Just as children learn to walk at different times, children learn toileting skills at different times. CYP Professionals partner with families to support each child's toilet learning and to accommodate the different stages of development. If there are unique circumstances for your child, please talk with a CYP Professional.

# CHILD SAFETY

CYP Professionals create safe environments through the selection, arrangement, and use of physical elements, such as age-appropriate furniture, supplies, and equipment. They complete daily safety checklists for all areas, including outdoor play spaces and playgrounds. CYP Professionals are trained to make safety a priority every day.

## BITING

Biting is a very common behavior in infants, pretoddlers, and toddlers and occasionally occurs with younger preschoolers. Infants mouth objects to learn about them. This tendency often leads to biting behaviors, especially when they feel teething pain, frustration, or confusion. As young children learn other ways to communicate, biting generally lessens and disappears.

Although common, biting can be upsetting and harmful. CYP Professionals are trained to prevent biting incidents, and they use positive strategies to redirect children to more appropriate situations or behaviors. However, some behaviors take time and consistent responses from caregivers to eliminate. If a child is injured due to the biting behavior of another child, CYP Professionals will treat the injury and provide the family with the Incident Report Form. Due to confidentiality requirements, the identity of a child who has bitten another child is not shared with the other family. If a child has a biting behavior that persists, a CYP Professional will contact the family to schedule a conference to discuss the concern. Together, a plan of positive strategies will be developed to help children learn more appropriate responses.

Children, 36 months and older, who bite will be excluded from the program for the remainder of the day. The safety of all the children in the program is of utmost concern; therefore, children who bite in this older age group will have services terminated after three bites.

## SIDS PREVENTION

CYP Professionals are trained in best practices for minimizing the risks associated with sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and adhere to the following practices:

- All infants 12 months and younger are placed on their backs to sleep. If your child has a medical condition that requires a modified sleep position, please talk with your CYP Professional.
- Our CDCs only use cribs and firm infant sleeping surfaces that meet current standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).
- Our CDCs never use blankets in a crib.
- Soft toys or other soft items are not allowed in an infant's sleeping space.
- Our CDCs use only approved pacifiers with no cords, toys, or anything else attached to them.
- Infants who arrive asleep in car seats are immediately moved to an approved sleeping surface.

Families are strongly encouraged to follow the same SIDS prevention guidelines at home.

# CDC PROGRAMMING

CDC early childhood programming is thoughtfully planned, challenging, engaging, developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, and comprehensive to support school readiness and provide a foundation for lifelong learning. CYP Professionals plan the daily schedule with a variety of indoor and outdoor activities, culminating with quiet activities in the evening to help children prepare for a restful night's sleep.

## CURRICULUM

CDCs use The Creative Curriculum®, a nationally recognized, award-winning, comprehensive, research-based curriculum. CDCs use the version created for young children.

For children birth through age 5, our programs complement The Creative Curriculum®, which enables CYP Professionals to note your child's progress and advance school-preparedness through hands-on experiences and play.

## ENVIRONMENTS

Our CDCs offer indoor and outdoor experiences that are important to a child's growth and learning. All program environments are designed for your child to explore. Weather permitting, children of all ages have the opportunity to go outdoors every day to enjoy a safe play environment with age-appropriate equipment and materials that are in excellent condition.

## SCREEN-BASED MEDIA

Our CDCs offer computers or other computerized devices to foster technology learning. If computer activities are offered, they are integrated into lesson plans that offer other activities with hands-on materials, since hands-on learning is proven best for young children. The CDCs follow the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidelines on screen-based media time limits by age of the child.

## SCHEDULES

CYP Professionals create a balance between individual activities and group experiences during your child's time in care. Children learn and grow best when they have choices among quality activities and opportunities for both social engagement and quiet time.

Schedules for infants, such as for feeding and sleeping, are individualized and are planned in partnership with parents. As your child grows older, more learning opportunities in group settings are offered. Our centers are committed to making accommodations for children with scheduling needs as much as possible within the quality and safety guidelines.

## FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION

Depending on the location of your center, nearby resources, weather, and other factors, your center may offer field trips as part of routine programming to benefit your child's learning and development. Field trips may occur both on and off the installation. During enrollment, parents are asked to sign the annual CYP Permission & Authorization Form, which includes permission for field trips. Infants may take "buggy" field trips within a short distance from the center, and pretoddlers and toddlers may take short, age-appropriate walking field trips to enhance their learning. Only preschool children or older may take field trips in motor vehicles.

All vehicles used to transport your child on field trips meet the Installation's school bus safety standards and applicable local laws. All drivers are trained and licensed and meet local and Installation requirements. Our CDCs comply with all seatbelt and child safety seat regulations during field trips. CYP Professionals may not transport enrolled children in personal vehicles.

## FAMILY CONFERENCES

Our CDCs offer scheduled family conferences twice a year for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Conferences are opportunities for focused, two-way communication between you and your CYP Professionals, which allows them to create and share with you the developmental profile for your child. This profile helps CYP Professionals assess your child's progress toward typical developmental milestones. This tool is used to plan for your child's continued growth, accounting for any special help or accommodations, if needed. You will also have the opportunity to discuss any changes in your child's behaviors, learning styles, medical needs, upcoming transitions, and other topics as needed to best support your child and your family.

# THE YOUTH PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

# YOUR YOUTH'S EXPERIENCE

Youth Programs (YPs) include a wide variety of offerings on the Installation to meet your child care needs once youth start school and to provide recreational opportunities for your youth. YPs complement the school day, providing care or recreation when schools are typically not in session. Specific offerings at your location depend on the size of the Installation, local family needs, school schedules, and command requirements.

## YP GENERAL INFORMATION

YPs go far beyond keeping your youth “busy.” They offer quality programming that helps develop character. The School Age Care (SAC) program earns national accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA). Additionally, YPs maintain affiliation with a nationally recognized, high-quality organization to bring new experiences, challenges, and a wide variety of opportunities to youth in their out-of-school hours. Our YPs are affiliated with Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA). This affiliation, along with a robust programming schedule, show our commitment to providing a broad range of positive options for your youth to grow, learn, and thrive.

YPs offer your youth opportunities to build leadership skills, enhance educational experiences, learn and use technology, explore career choices, and expand health and life skills. CYP Professionals help youth incorporate sports, fitness, and the arts into their daily lives and provide quality experiences to expand their horizons.

Part of YP programming is designed to support youth in achieving academic goals by offering suitable environments for completing homework. In addition to spaces for recreation and socializing, YP facilities offer quiet spaces for study and concentration stocked with homework supplies, computers, and other research materials.

## ACCOMMODATING LEARNING STYLES

Youth develop through a variety of learning styles. CYP Professionals are trained to recognize learning differences and use strategies to accommodate the ways youth learn best. CYP Professionals at YPs build in opportunities as often as possible for self-paced exploration to nurture the development of new skills or knowledge.

## PERSONALIZED STORAGE FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS

If your youth attends a YP on a daily or near-daily basis, he or she will have a place in which to keep personal belongings. During summer programs, this may be a group location for backpacks and supplies; during the school year, this is an individualized space that is labeled by name, such as a locker or cubby. Items of monetary or sentimental value are best left at home.

## YOUTH ATTIRE

Please ensure your youth wears clothes (including shoes) that enable his or her participation in all YPs. Specialty clothing may be required depending on the program; for example, the SAC program may schedule a day at a local swimming pool that requires a swimsuit and towel. Your CYP Professionals supply you with a complete list of attire requirements at registration. Most importantly, clothing for all youth must be clean and appropriate.

## FIELD TRIPS

YPs may plan field trips to increase youth's firsthand knowledge of the world. During enrollment, parents are asked to sign the CYP Permission and Authorization Form, which includes permission for field trips. Typical destinations may include a ballfield, tennis courts, swimming pool, or a nearby gym. Your program may require parents to sign an additional field trip permission slip for trips off the Installation.

## SAFETY

Your youth's safety is the YP's top priority. Safety is the foremost consideration in all planned activities, the setting up of program environments, the selection of equipment and materials, and in the training of CYP Professionals who work with your youth.

# SAFETY

Your youth's safety is the YP's top priority. Safety is the foremost consideration in all planned activities, the setting up of program environments, the selection of equipment and materials, and in the training of CYP Professionals who work with your youth.

## BEHAVIOR AND PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Youth can show respect for themselves and others in a variety of social situations. As young people, they are still in the process of developing positive social and emotional skills. YPs facilitate behavioral growth and learning by setting clear expectations for behaviors that are clearly communicated and positively reinforced. Our YPs have established behavioral expectations similar to the following:

- Be safe and respectful.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Walk to stay safe and run only when it is safe.
- Stay inside established boundaries and stay with the group.
- Follow directions and communicate questions or disagreements politely.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Share and play with others.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Remember to take care of yourself.

# PROGRAMMING

YP programming is based on actively and continuously seeking input, ideas, and opinions from the youth participating in YP offerings. YPs' collaborative emphasis builds enthusiasm and engagement among youth and provides them with leadership, planning, and responsibility opportunities. YPs may seek input related to programming options through social media, surveys, meetings, and informal information gathering.

## SCHEDULES

Schedules are planned in advance to ensure families can plan for participation. If activities require specialty shoes or clothing (such as swimsuits for a beach trip), the YP will inform you in advance. Schedules communicate not only upcoming activities, but also the goals and learning objectives of specific activities. Schedules also provide ideas about how you can volunteer in or support the program and how you can extend your youth's learning at home.

## ENVIRONMENTS

Programming spaces vary across YP facilities. We offer some of the following: space for group activities, socializing, and enjoying snacks or meals; recreational space; screen-based media and gaming space; sound-recording space equipped with instruments; and peaceful space for reading, homework, or just relaxing. Other environments may be offered; talk with your CYP Professionals for more information.

YP Professionals "think outside the box" regarding environments that can support the learning and skills development of your youth. Often, activities may start indoors and then move outdoors. Programs may explore different parks and recreation areas as part of an experiment or project.

## TRANSPORTATION

The SAC programs provide transportation to/from local schools. The vehicles used to transport youth meet the Installation's school bus safety standards and applicable local laws. CYP drivers are trained and licensed and meet state, local, and Installation requirements. YPs comply with all seatbelt laws during field trips. CYP Professionals may not transport enrolled youth in personal vehicles.

## SCREEN-BASED MEDIA

Computers are widely available in the facilities for older youth to foster learning. Offering your youth opportunities to explore interests and engage with technology allows CYP Professionals to guide him or her toward meaningful educational and positive recreational uses for screen-based media. YPs encourage research and information retrieval, socialization and networking, communicating with duty-deployed family members, connecting with loved ones and friends separated due to PCS, and connecting with CYPs on Installations where your youth may be moving, such as with the Youth Sponsorship program. All CYPs follow the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidelines for screen use limitations for youth.

YPs want to partner with you to ensure your youth is safe and building healthy screen-based media habits. You and your youth must sign an agreement to use screen-based media (such as computers, tablets, or gaming devices) while participating in CYP. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your youth's screen-based media use, please talk with a CYP Professional.

## YOUTH SPONSORSHIP

Many youth not only experience the usual challenges of transitioning from childhood to adulthood but also are working through unique challenges associated with military life, such as frequent moves and being away from their friends and family through Permanent Change of Station (PCS) and deployments. Connecting to people is what makes the difference between a smooth transition and a rocky one. We can connect your youth with sponsorship programs at each Installation. Youth Sponsorship, aimed primarily at preteens and teens, helps youth integrate into a new community of friends and mentors when they move to a new Installation. CYP Professionals identify incoming youth, connect them with youth currently on the installation, and provide information about programs and activities on the Installation and in the surrounding community.

## FAMILY CONFERENCES

While YPs do not schedule family conferences at regular intervals during the year, feel free to contact your CYP Professionals for a conference, either formal or informal, any time you feel it is needed for the continued success of your youth. Likewise, your CYP Professionals may request a conference with you as the need arises. Conferences are opportunities for focused, two-way communication between you and your CYP Professionals. They look forward to collaborating with you to provide the best possible support for your youth.

# APPENDIX A

## CYP GUIDANCE AND TOUCH POLICY

The intent of the CYP Guidance and Touch Policy is to inform CYP Professionals about their responsibilities for ensuring appropriate adult:child interactions across all programs. The Marine Corps requires a positive approach to guidance that teaches children and youth conflict resolution, facilitates their understanding of boundaries, and builds self-esteem. Guidance is positive discipline and should be consistent so children and youth know what is expected, and over time expected and desired behaviors become automatic. This ensures children and youth are safe and protected, provides a positive climate that promotes healthy social and emotional development, and teaches and models appropriate behavior.

Across CYP, adult:child interactions that cause harm to or put children and youth in danger may be considered child maltreatment or abuse, which is prohibited and considered a condition for immediate dismissal. CYP Professionals must be aware of and understand the types of discipline that are considered inappropriate. The following interactions are considered inappropriate and are prohibited forms of CYP Professional guidance:

- Corporal punishment or any humiliating, frightening, or threatening language or punishment. Corporal punishment includes spanking, hitting or punching, slapping, pinching, shaking (this is life-threatening behavior toward infants), exposure to extreme temperatures or other measures producing physical pain, and any form of physical punishment. Corporal punishment is not allowed in any CYP setting by any individual, including family members;
- Verbal abuse, threats, abusive or profane language, criticism, or derogatory remarks about a child or family;

- Physical restraint; binding; restricting the movements of or placing the child or youth in a confined space as a form of punishment; forcing the child or youth to stay in a restricted space, corner, bathroom, cot, or any area of the room where he/she is separated from the rest of the group;
- Any form of emotional abuse, including any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment;
- Rejecting, terrorizing, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, and/or exploiting a child or youth;
- Withholding or forcing naps, meals, or snacks; to include the denial of "seconds" until a child has finished everything on his/her plate;
- Punishing for toileting accidents or a lapse in toilet training;
- Withholding outdoor play as a form of punishment; and
- Bodily harm from forceful pulling/jerking and/or "grabbing" a child or youth from any position. (Note: A physical response may be needed for a child with unsafe behavior because there is observable action that puts the child or others at risk for immediate harm and it is probable that the action will lead to actual injury. For example, if a child unexpectedly dashes into a parking lot, the CYP Professional may need to quickly remove the child or youth for his/her own safety.)

# TYPES OF TOUCH BY AGE CATEGORY

Age Category	Appropriate Touch	Inappropriate Touch
Infant, Pretoddler, and Toddler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cuddling</li> <li>• Holding</li> <li>• Rocking</li> <li>• Gently patting a child's back for a short period at rest time</li> <li>• Sitting in the CYP Professional's lap</li> <li>• Hugging</li> <li>• Hand holding</li> <li>• Stroking the hair to assist in resting</li> <li>• Changing diapers and assisting with toileting (i.e., wiping child, putting on diaper rash cream, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pinching, hitting or punching, squeezing, slapping, shaking, arm twisting, or grabbing*</li> <li>• Physically restraining a child**</li> <li>• Any form of physical punishment</li> <li>• Violating laws against adult/child physical or sexual contact</li> <li>• Forcing of hugs, kisses, or other touches on the child</li> <li>• Kissing a child on the lips</li> <li>• Tickling</li> <li>• Holding a child down on his/her cot to force napping</li> </ul>

\*Grabbing is inappropriate unless it protects the child or youth from immediate danger, protecting his/her safety.

\*\* A physical response may be needed for a child or youth with unsafe behavior because there is observable action that puts the child or youth or others at risk for immediate harm and it is probable that the action will lead to actual injury.

# TYPES OF TOUCH BY AGE CATEGORY

Age Category	Appropriate Touch	Inappropriate Touch
Preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand holding</li> <li>• Assisting child with activities</li> <li>• Child initiated hugs</li> <li>• Assisting with toileting accidents, if necessary</li> <li>• Assisting a child with unsafe behavior by physically responding to protect everyone's health and safety**</li> <li>• Sitting on CYP Professional's lap at the request of the child (i.e., verbal or nonverbal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forced goodbyes</li> <li>• Tickling</li> <li>• Pinching, hitting, punching, squeezing, slapping, shaking, arm twisting, or grabbing*</li> <li>• Restricting a child's movement by any means in any way</li> <li>• Physically restraining a child**</li> <li>• Any form of physical punishment Violating laws against adult/child physical or sexual contact</li> <li>• Forcing of hugs, kisses, or other touches on the child</li> <li>• Kissing a child on the lips</li> <li>• Holding a child down on his/her cot to force napping</li> </ul>

\*Grabbing is inappropriate unless it protects the child or youth from immediate danger, protecting his/her safety.

\*\* A physical response may be needed for a child or youth with unsafe behavior because there is observable action that puts the child or youth or others at risk for immediate harm and it is probable that the action will lead to actual injury.

# TYPES OF TOUCH BY AGE CATEGORY

Age Category	Appropriate Touch	Inappropriate Touch
Youth and Teens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sitting side-by-side with youth</li> <li>• Touches on the shoulder</li> <li>• Pats on the back</li> <li>• Handshakes</li> <li>• Assistance in taking care of injuries</li> <li>• Application of sunscreen to face, neck, and back only</li> <li>• Hugging when initiated by the youth/teen</li> <li>• Assisting a youth/teen with unsafe behavior to calm down by physically responding to protect everyone's safety**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth sitting on a CYP Professional's lap</li> <li>• Kissing</li> <li>• Pinching, hitting, punching, squeezing, slapping, shaking, arm twisting, or grabbing*</li> <li>• Any form of physical punishment</li> <li>• Physically restraining a youth/teen</li> <li>• Violating laws against adult/child physical or sexual contact</li> <li>• Forcing of hugs, kisses, or other touches on the youth</li> </ul>

\*Grabbing is inappropriate unless it protects the child or youth from immediate danger, protecting his/her safety.

\*\* A physical response may be needed for a child or youth with unsafe behavior because there is observable action that puts the child or youth or others at risk for immediate harm and it is probable that the action will lead to actual injury.