

**Tom A. Finch Community YMCA
NC Pre-K/Preschool
PARENT
HANDBOOK**



**1010 Mendenhall Street
Thomasville, North Carolina 27360
Phone: 336-475-8380
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Updated 8/4/25

WELCOME TO TOM A. FINCH COMMUNITY YMCA SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

YMCA Mission Statement: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, & body for all.

Child Care Mission Statement: The child care staff of Tom A. Finch Community YMCA seek to provide a high-quality school age program for children, grades kindergarten through eighth grade, in an environment where all parents and children feel valued and accepted. The staff recognizes the unique qualities of each child and youth and seeks to provide individual opportunities for physical, mental, and spiritual growth and development in a warm, safe, secure, and fun atmosphere. Acceptance of and genuine care for all children, regardless of age, gender, race, or religious preference is the basis of all aspects of the program.

TOM A. FINCH COMMUNITY YMCA
1010 Mendenhall Street, Thomasville, NC 27360
Phone: (336) 475-8380
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NC Pre-K/Preschool Lead Teacher: Emily Palmer
Direct Line: (336) 474-5248 Email: Emily.Palmer@MyYNow.org
ClassDojo App

NC Pre-K/Preschool Assistant Teacher: Nathalie Talavera
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ClassDojo App

NC Pre-K/Preschool Administrator: Tracy Ballard
Direct Line: (336) 474-5240 Email: Tracy.Ballard@MyYNow.org

The Tom A. Finch YMCA child care program is a FIVE-star state licensed program. Children who attend this program may seek day care subsidy from the Department of Social Services.



DAYS AND HOURS OF PROGRAMMING

The NC Pre-K/Preschool will follow the Davidson County Schools (DCS) calendar. Normal hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 2:30 pm. Please use the DCS school calendar to reference any no-school days.

ITEMS TO BE PROVIDED BY PARENTS:

Parents are required to send an extra set of clothing (underwear, socks, pants, and shirt), to be left in the child's cubby for use when soiled clothing occurs. Please put the child's name on each item, and label the bag. On swim days, please send a swimsuit and a towel.

ITEMS TO BE LEFT AT HOME:

Toys, cell phones, cameras, electronic games, playing cards, iPods, special jewelry or keepsakes, chewing gum or candy, money, or any items that can be misplaced, lost, or broken.

- The staff will not be held responsible for any lost or stolen items.
- If these items are brought to the YMCA, staff will take the item, and the parent will need to speak with the teacher to get the item back.

CELL PHONES:

Children in our program are NOT allowed to use their cell phones while attending our program. As a licensed program with the state, screen time is limited each day, and content must be monitored. To protect all families in our program and to adhere to our licensing requirements, we will not allow usage while in our program. We realize many of our older participants may have cell phones, and these can be kept in their bookbags. Below is the policy we will follow regarding breaking the cell phone rule:

1st offense- Child will be asked to put phone away (bookbag)

2nd offense- Teacher will take the cell phone, and the child can get it back from administrative staff when the child leaves at the end of the day.

3rd- offense- Teacher will give the cell phone to the administrative staff, and the parent will have to come pick up the phone.

YMCA HOLIDAY CLOSINGS:

New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the Friday following Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and one additional day (either the day before Christmas Eve or the day following Christmas Day).

The NC Pre-K/Preschool program will also be closed on all teacher workdays, following the Davidson County Schools calendar.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

YMCA CLOSINGS and DELAYED OPENING POLICY DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER: YMCA closings will be announced on local TV: WFMY, WXII, FOX 8 (We will also update our Facebook page.)

Please also refer to ClassDojo for any closings or delays.

- **If schools close early due to Inclement Weather:**

The NC Pre-K/Preschool program will follow the DCS policy for early closings due to inclement weather. For updates and important announcements, please refer to local TV stations or check ClassDojo.

- **If schools do not open due to Inclement Weather:**

The NC Pre-K/Preschool program will follow the DCS policy for closings due to inclement weather. For the most up-to-date information, please check local TV stations or ClassDojo for announcements and updates.

- **If schools open late:**

The NC Pre-K/Preschool program will follow the DCS policy for delayed openings due to inclement weather. For the latest updates and announcements, please check local TV stations or ClassDojo.



CHILDREN SERVED:

Children must be four years old and potty-trained to enter the Tom A. Finch NC Pre-K/Preschool program.

RATIO OF STAFF TO CHILDREN:

The safety and well-being of each child is the primary concern of each staff member. NC Pre-K/Preschool ratios are one teacher to every 9 students. The staff-to-child ratios will be maintained on the playground, in the classroom, and during swim times at the YMCA pool. One lifeguard per 25 children is the standard for the YMCA pool. The YMCA requires that for every 13 children, there must also be a counselor in the pool and an additional staff member on the pool deck.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

We will accept children with special needs into our program and make a reasonable effort to accommodate the child without fundamentally altering the preschool program.

PAYMENTS

*All balances from other YMCA programs must be paid before starting another YMCA program.

*Payments can be made online and are **due by the 19th of the month.**

*A \$50 late fee will be added to balances on the 20th of each month.

*Bank draft is the preferred method of payment. Credit cards can also be drafted. Please ask Emily or Tracy for bank draft information papers.

***Payments must be kept current. Any account with 2 weeks balance will be dropped from the program.**

*The charge for a returned check (NSF: non-sufficient funds) is **\$30.00.**



WRAP AROUND CARE:

- *Only for children enrolled in this program.
- *Late pick up fee: Parents will be charged \$5.00 for every 15 minutes after 6:00 pm per child.
- *If schools close early due to inclement weather, wrap-around care will NOT be open.
- *Credit cannot be given for days missed due to weather.
- *Credit cannot be given for days missed from the program due to personal reasons.

PRESCHOOL:

- *Preschool payments are due by the 19th of each month.
- *Child(ren) will not be allowed to participate in the program until balance/fees are paid. NO EXCEPTIONS!

VOUCHERS:

Vouchers, from the Department of Social Services, are accepted at the YMCA child care program. Parents are encouraged to contact Social Services to determine whether or not they meet the qualifications for subsidized child care. Vouchers must be turned in at the time of registration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- Parents are required to give a written two-week notice to the preschool administrator when removing their child from the program. Payment of fees is expected to continue until the two-week notice is served.
- The YMCA offers financial assistance, funded by United Way of Davidson County, on a limited basis.
 - Parent must first apply for vouchers through Social Services
 - Parent will not receive a discount on additional children
 - Child must be a YMCA member
 - Parent understands the YMCA will occasionally review their financial status

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:

- Parents can report absences ahead of time by sending a message on ClassDojo or emailing Emily.Palmer@myynow.org
 - Notice of absences is greatly appreciated.
- Children will not be admitted tardy (after 8:00) into the program unless one of the following items can be provided:
 - Medical note (doctor, dentist, specialist, etc.), religious observances, court appearances, funerals, etc.
- **In the event of a family emergency- such as car trouble, illness, or injury- parents/guardians must notify the teacher via ClassDojo before the 8:00 AM drop-off cut-off time. If the teacher receives the message in time, arrangements can be made for the child to be admitted. Without prior notice before 8:00, the child will not be able to attend school that day.**
- Parents must park and come into the child care center to sign in and out their child. **Only the names of persons listed on the registration form may pick up the child.** Staff will ask to see the Driver's License of the person picking up the child.

Parents who have total custody* of their child/children must furnish papers to that effect. This legal information will be kept in the child's file. If the non-custodial parent arrives to pick up a child without permission from the custodial parent, the following procedure will be followed:

- The non-custodial parents will be informed by the staff that he/she does not have permission to pick up the child.
- The custodial parent will be notified immediately.
- The NC Pre-K/Preschool Administrator will be immediately informed about the situation.
- The police will be called if there is any threat of harm or if the non-custodial parent refuses to comply with the policy.

*Parents who have joint custody must furnish papers to that effect. YMCA staff will adhere to orders outlined in those documents.



DROP OFF & PICK UP Times:

Program activity hours are 8:00 am–2:30 pm.

- Drop off is inside childcare for all children from 7:45–8:00.
- Pick up is inside childcare for all children 2:15–2:30.

Please note: Staff members may not transport program participants in their personal cars for any reason or babysit children that they meet while working for the YMCA.

PARENT VISITATION POLICY:

Parents may attend special programs with their child/children. Parents are asked to check in at the desk, where they will then ask, at that time, for the identification of parents with whom they are not familiar. Parents will require that their child still abide by the same rules as the other children during special programs. All visitors are required to sign the visitor's sheet.

VISITORS AT LUNCH:

We will not be allowing visitors to join students for lunch. This period is important for children to adjust to the school environment, learn routines, and build social connections with their classmates.

CONFERENCES:

Parent/guardian conferences with the lead teacher are an important opportunity to discuss your child's progress, growth, behavior, assessment results, kindergarten readiness, and more. We will hold a minimum of two conferences each school year, with additional meetings scheduled if needed. If necessary, the preschool administrator and other support staff may also attend to help support your child's success.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

In case of a major medical emergency (such as broken bones, puncture wounds, etc.), the child will be taken by ambulance to the emergency medical facility that is stated by the parent on the registration form. The YMCA will notify a parent immediately of any injury that requires emergency care.

FIRE, EMERGENCY & TORNADO DRILLS:

- The YMCA has an Emergency Evacuation Plan that is posted in all licensed areas.
- Fire Drills are held monthly, with documentation stating special problems that were encountered and the number of minutes that were required to move children to a safe location.
- An Emergency Medical Care Plan is posted in all licensed classrooms and other activity areas.
- Lockdown & Severe Weather drills are conducted 4 times a year.

NUTRITION:

To encourage the development of healthy eating habits for children, guidelines have been established for breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks.

- Students who bring their lunch from home are not allowed to eat the school lunch served that day.
- Non-nutritional snacks can be served only for special occasions and in addition to nutritious meals and snacks.
- Foods such as potato chips, candy, cakes, cookies, and fruit juices with less than 100% real fruit juice are not considered to have any nutritional value.
- Food served to children, such as cupcakes for a party, must come from an approved source, which means prepackaged items. We also request that you notify the teacher ahead of time for approval.
- Approved sources for food could be a local bakery or grocery store. Prepackaged food items are approved sources as well.
- Special conditions apply to children who are enrolled in the opt-out feeding program.

HANDWASHING:

The single most important practice that prevents the spread of germs in the childcare setting is good hand washing by staff, children, and others. Children are encouraged to wash their hands upon arrival, after using the restroom, before any meals, after touching animals, and after returning from playing outside.

CARE OF SICK CHILDREN:

If a child becomes ill while attending any child care program, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. If the parents cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed on the registration form will be contacted and asked to pick up the child.

A child will not be able to stay at the program or attend the program if he/she has:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Diarrhea (frequent or watery bowel movements)
- Vomiting
- Rash that has not been diagnosed by the doctor
- Impetigo (a skin infection consisting of blisters surrounded by a red rash. A medical doctor must be contacted for treatment before returning to the program.
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye: red eye with a yellowish discharge.) A medical doctor must be contacted for treatment before returning to the program.
- Strep Throat: A medical doctor must be contacted for treatment before returning to the program.
- Head Lice: It is necessary to effectively treat the child and then obtain a doctor's or health department's note stating that the child is free of nits and can return to the program.
- Chicken Pox: Child may return to the program when all blisters have crusted.
- Nose drainage: This is defined as yellow or green discharge from the nose. The child is considered contagious as long as the drainage is yellow/green. A medical doctor must be contacted for treatment before returning to the program. If the discharge is because of allergies, please bring a note from the child's doctor stating that the child is not contagious.
- Signs of a newly developing cold or uncontrollable coughing
- Unusual fatigue, irritability, or headache

We ask that children return to the program, following an illness, when they can actively participate in all activities, including outdoor play. By helping us observe good health standards, you will be protecting your child and other children in the program. We appreciate your cooperation.

PROCEDURE FOR ADMINISTERING MEDICATION:

- DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATION WITH YOUR CHILD.
- Medications must be given directly to the child's teacher and not placed in the child's lunchbox, bookbag, pocket, or pocketbook.
- Parents are required to complete an official form that allows staff to administer the medication.
- The parent must record the specific time and the proper dosage. "As needed" is not accepted.
- Medications must be in the correct prescription bottle with directions from the pharmacist. Staff will not be able to give medications that are in a different bottle or have someone else's name on it. Medications may not be sent in a baggie or some other container.
- Staff will NOT administer non-prescription medications, such as Tylenol, Cough Drops
- Medications must be stored in a locked box that prevents access by children. Only the lead teacher, assistant teacher, administrator, or properly licensed substitute will give medications.
- Medications that require refrigeration will be kept in a locked box inside the refrigerator that is located in the child care center's kitchen.
- The person administering the medication must complete the required documentation (name, time, and amount) after giving the medicine.
- Bug spray & sunscreen are all considered medications.

REQUIREMENTS FOR HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION UPDATES:

- Statement signed by parents/legal guardian that authorizes the YMCA to obtain medical attention for the child in an emergency.
- Emergency medical care information that gives the names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons to be contacted in case of an emergency; the responsible party's choice of health care provider; the preferred hospital; the preferred Dentist; and any medications that the child is receiving.
- Child medical report completed by the parent and the child's physician.
- Immunization record on file at the time of enrollment. Each time a child receives an immunization, the record must be updated.
- Failure to provide the YMCA with Immunizations within 30 days of the date of registration, the child(ren) will not be allowed to attend the program until immunizations are provided.



PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING COMPLAINTS:

If parents have complaints regarding the program or staff, please talk to the Lead NC Pre-K/Preschool teacher. This can be done in person or over the phone (ClassDojo, email, phone call). Complaints will be handled and problems solved as quickly as possible. It is important that parents feel that they are heard.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT:

- North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect to report the case to the Davidson County Department of Social Services. Anyone may also call the Division of Child Development to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child. Local law enforcement agencies may be contacted.
- If the abuse or neglect has occurred at a child care center, the Division of Child Development will initiate an investigation.
- All reports should be made in good faith whenever anyone suspects the abuse or neglect of a child. Persons reporting will not be held responsible for the investigations that are not proven or substantiated.
- If a child discloses information to staff that occurred at home, staff should call Davidson County Department of Social Services.

If parents observe an incident at the program facility, the parent should call the Division of Child Development at (1-919-662-4527) or (1-800-859-0829) and ask to speak to a Child Abuse/Neglect Intake Worker.

The following information is required when making a report:

- Child's name, age, home address, and telephone number
- Child's present location and address, giving directions to the location
- Child's grade and school or child care facility
- Child's parents' names, address, phone numbers, and place of employment (need phone numbers)
- Nature and extent of injury; other injuries that have been observed
- Name and address, if possible, of alleged abuser
- Have the doctor and/or law enforcement agency been called?
- Whether or not concerns have been discussed with parents or center directors
- Any additional information that may be helpful to investigators

- Reporter's name, address, and phone number. Please note that the reporter can remain anonymous, but it is helpful for the investigators to have the reporter's name in case questions should arise.

RECORDING AND REPORTING ACCIDENTS:

When incidents occur, staff will document them on an incident report form. If the incident resulted in a hospital, dentist, or doctor visit, staff will fill out an accident report provided by the NC Division of Child Development. Both forms must be signed by the person completing the report.

The incident form/accident form is maintained in the child's file. A copy of the accident report should be mailed to the licensing consultant within seven days after treatment by the director of child care.

An incident report and accident report must be completed each time a child receives medical treatment by a physician, nurse, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, dentist, community clinic, or local health department as a result of an incident occurring while the child is at the school-age program. (Child Care rule .0802) This also applies when the parent takes the child to the doctor, only to be evaluated, even if the child receives no medical treatment.

An incident log is maintained and completed each time an incident form is sent to the licensing consultant. A copy of this form is sent to the Division of Child Development. Another copy is maintained at the program location in a separate file that can be accessed by the licensing consultant.



YMCA CHILD CARE DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES:

Our disciplinary policy is focused on creating an inclusive and supportive environment that helps prevent suspension or expulsion, especially for children with unique needs and challenging behaviors. We aim to maintain a safe, structured space where all children can grow and succeed through proactive, evidence-based strategies and individualized support.

To support this goal, we implement the following strategies:

- Individualized Behavior Support Plans (BSPs):
 - Identify behavior triggers
 - Include calming techniques and de-escalation strategies
 - Use communication methods tailored to each child's needs
 - Collaborate with families and specialists
- Staff Training:
 - Trauma-informed care and culturally responsive practices
 - Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
 - De-escalation and conflict resolution techniques
 - Identifying developmental delays or sensory needs
- Supportive Classroom Practices:
 - Consistent routines and visual schedules
 - Sensory-friendly environments with calming areas and tools
 - Social-emotional learning activities focused on self-regulation and peer interaction

When challenging behaviors arise, we provide:

- Early Observation and Screening:
 - Regular documentation to spot behavior patterns
 - Developmental and sensory screenings
- Family Collaboration:
 - Ongoing communication and strategy sharing
 - Parent workshops and resources
- Specialist Involvement:
 - Access to behavioral therapists, psychologists, or developmental interventionists

- Development of IEPs or 504 plans when needed

To ensure safety for all:

- Crisis Management Plans:
 - Staff trained in safe intervention techniques
 - Procedures for de-escalation and securing a safe space for all children
 - Prompt notification of administrators and families
- Clear Safety Policies:
 - Suspension/expulsion considered for behaviors that cause harm to another student or staff member and harm to self
 - All incidents documented thoroughly

Suspension or expulsion is considered, but not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Fighting other children or staff
- Profanity
- Biting other children or staff
- Scratching other children or staff
- Hitting other children or staff
- Disrespect for property (vehicles, others' personal belongings, classrooms, classroom materials)
- Running away from the classroom and teachers
- Acting in any other unsafe/inappropriate way that puts the child, staff, or other children in danger

Continuous Improvement:

We regularly review our practices, use behavior data to adjust strategies, and collaborate with outside agencies to better support children with unique needs.

At any time, the Tom A. Finch Community YMCA reserves the right to suspend the child from the program based on the child's or parent/guardian's behavior. Parents/guardians will not be credited for days missed due to misbehavior.

Thank you for choosing the Y for your child care needs!