



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA of Greater Cleveland Code of Conduct for YMCA Members, Participants, and Guests

The term “consumer” refers to any person of any age (adult or youth) visiting or involved in YMCA facilities, programs, and services.

The YMCA of Greater Cleveland is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Abuse or Mistreatment

Our association’s top priority is keeping consumers safe. Any form of abuse or mistreatment of consumers, employees, and volunteers is prohibited. Use of abusive, obscene, or profane language, including racial, religious, gender identity, or sexual references will not be tolerated.

Bullying

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms including physical bullying, verbal bullying, nonverbal or relational bullying, cyberbullying, sexualized bullying, and hazing.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This applies to all consumers, employees, and volunteers.

Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

Use of alcoholic beverages, drugs, and tobacco/vaping products while at the Y is prohibited. Consumers who appear to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or illicit substances will not be permitted to participate in any program and will be asked to leave the premises.

Weapons

Weapons, and items that may be considered weapons, are prohibited. This includes laser pointers. Anyone found to be in possession of such items will be required to leave and the items may be confiscated. The authorities may be notified as appropriate.

Violence

Violence and threats of violence will not be tolerated at the Y, on our grounds, in our facilities, in other facilities being utilized or visited by our association, or during association-sponsored activities and events. Employees are available to assist in the resolution of differences.

Sexually-Explicit Materials

Everyone in the YMCA is prohibited from accessing, displaying, producing, and/or distributing pornography or sexually-explicit materials on our association's property or involved in our services.

Disruptive Behavior

Our association seeks to provide a safe environment for individuals in our community. The following behavior is not permitted:

- Inappropriate or disruptive behavior, including, but is not limited to, graffiti, littering, spitting, or throwing objects that could intentionally or unintentionally harm others or cause disorder.
- Wearing inappropriate clothing. Suitable family attire must be worn at all times. Clothing must be modest, cover the midriff, and may not have offensive words or pictures. Refer to our Member Handbook for specifics.
- Angry or vulgar language, including swearing, name-calling, or shouting.
- Physical conduct with another person in an angry or threatening way.
- Any performance of sexual activity/contact with another person.
- Harassment or intimidation by words, gestures, body language, or any other menacing behavior.
- Theft
- Behavior that results in the destruction of property.

Photos and Audio/Video Recording

The use of audio, camera and video recording devices, including the recording and photography functions of cell phones, are prohibited in all YMCA facilities owned or leased unless there is implied authorization.

- The use of these devices is strictly prohibited in the Child Watch area, Wellness Center, free weight room, gymnasium, locker rooms, restrooms, and pool areas.
- Implied authorization is when a person is taking a picture, using an audio device, or taking video of a member of their family, family friends, or others from whom prior permission has been obtained.

PROTECTING OUR YOUTH

Because our association is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for child abuse, it is imperative that everyone actively participates in the protection of our youth.

If you observe, suspect, or learn of any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations on the part of employees, volunteers, or other consumers, it is your personal responsibility to immediately report your observations.

Report any suspicions

- **to the branch Executive Director, and/or**
- **to the Vice President of Youth Development at 216-386-7149, and/or**
- **to the State of Ohio anonymous line at 855-642-4453 (855-OH-CHILD), and/or**
- **by completing the anonymous form on <https://www.clevelandymca.org/youth-protection>, and/or**
- **by contacting the local or state authorities.**

Examples of suspicious or inappropriate behaviors between employees/volunteers and youth:

- Violation of any abuse prevention policies outlined by our association

- Buying gifts for an individual youth
- Making suggestive comments to the youth
- Picking favorites

One-on-One Interactions with Youth

Most child abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a youth, or when a youth is alone with another youth. Our association aims to reduce or eliminate these situations, and thus we prohibit private one-on-one interactions unless approved in advance by the association administration and parent. If you observe one-on-one interactions between employees/volunteers and youth, you should report this. Any romantic or otherwise sexual relationship between a youth or teen and an employee/ volunteer is strictly prohibited.

Electronic Communication with Youth

Individual direct calls or text messaging between youth and employees/volunteers is not allowed, unless approved in writing by a program supervisor and parent. Employees/volunteers will only message youth via methods that include parents/guardians (such as the app "Remind"). Employees and volunteers are not permitted to befriend/follow youth on social networking or social media sites or be involved with youth in any variation of online gaming. Youth will comply with the association's policies governing the use of personal mobile communication devices while in programming.

Our Youth Protection Policies and Procedures are published in our website – <https://www.clevelandymca.org/youth-protection>

Remember, at our Y, the policies apply to everyone.



Praesidium Accreditation® publicly demonstrates to consumers that the YMCA of Greater Cleveland has achieved the highest industry standards in abuse prevention.