



# OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

**HANDBOOK**

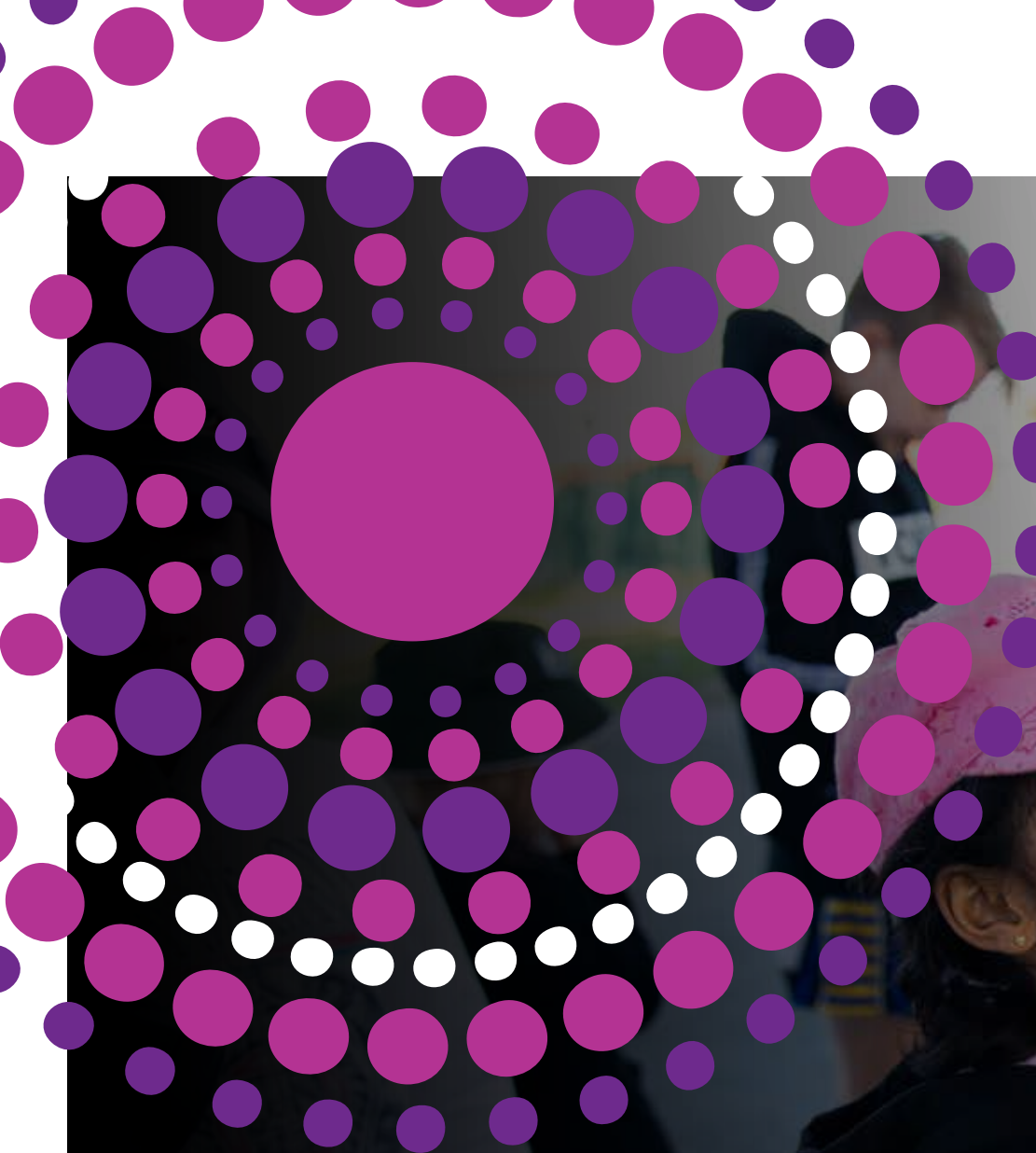
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*They'll want to come back again tomorrow...*







The Y NSW acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which we come together to learn, share and grow.

As the earth's most ancient culture, we respect their historical and continuing spiritual connections to country.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and to young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for they hold the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices in their hands.

We believe in the power of inspired young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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# WELCOME TO THE Y NSW

The Y NSW is a vibrant, for-purpose organisation delivering cause-driven programs and valuable community services that help strengthen young people's lives, their families and the communities in which they live. The Y is part of the oldest and largest youth organisation in the world – YMCA – which reaches across 120 countries.

**We promote our core values to children and families:**

**Caring – Honesty – Respect – Responsibility – Safety**

We have been creating positive change and supporting communities for more than 175 years. Our diverse range of services includes Outside School Hours Care, gymnastics, learn to swim, aquatics, camping, indoor sports, health and fitness, and youth and community programs. Each year, more than 8000 children attend our Outside School Hours Care services and more than two million people visit our fitness and aquatic centres.

Our focus on children and young people living their best lives sees us working across the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of children. At a Y OSHC, we ensure children are developing healthy habits and learn to love being active, which helps foster new skills, social connection with others, a strengthened sense of belonging and improved holistic wellbeing.



## OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE (OSHC)



### Before school, after school and vacation care

At the Y NSW, we seek to provide an OSHC environment where children can strive to succeed, feel safe and experience a range of activities that both stimulate and educate in a caring environment. Our service and promise to you is based upon the following foundations:

- An engaging and varied program of activities, with a mix of creative, athletic and educational pursuits
- A nurturing and inspiring environment, where children are encouraged to “Be, Belong and Become”, supported by staff and systems that take the time to understand their individual needs
- A truly child-safe environment, independently reviewed by the Australian Childhood Foundation, where children are protected from harm, bullying and exploitation, supported by robust risk assessment and mitigation procedures
- Committed and experienced educators who have been thoroughly vetted and love what they do
- The provision of nutritious and varied menus that consider preferences, allergens, dietary and cultural factors, ensuring children are empowered to make healthy food choices.

At the Y NSW, we recognise the benefits of high-quality care and the difference it can make in a family's life. Ensuring an inclusive and safe environment for children and young people is our highest priority. We value and respect families as our partners in the care and education of their children.



## Our educational programs

At the Y, we focus on ideas that will enrich our daily program for children and families and offer a range of learning experiences based on children's interests. We listen to children's voices and integrate their aspirations into our program planning. We offer a diverse range of experiences that ensure children have the opportunity to explore, learn and develop their life skills while forming new friendships and striving to succeed.

The Y NSW recognises the uniqueness of each service and community. We ensure that we provide a program that offers a balance of fun activities aimed at promoting a range of skills and interests for all children focussed on **mind, body and spirit**. The service is committed to providing quality outcomes for children through ensuring that Educators' practices reflect the service's philosophy, goals and quality principles as outlined in the **My Time, Our Place (MTOF)** Framework for School Age Care which forms part of the [National Quality Framework](#).

Our programs are child-led project-based learning experiences. This is a process that is directed by the children and the ideas that are captivating them at that time. As well as being an enormous amount of fun, child-led learning leads to great educational and developmental outcomes. Children are engaged with learning that stems directly from their own ideas and is meaningful. The Y program accommodates their creativity, imagination and encourages them to share their ideas and thoughts. It allows them to investigate, be curious and challenge and clarify their thinking. These learning opportunities tend to draw in all children in a group, cater to their individual personalities and foster their sense of being, belonging and becoming.

The Y NSW recognises the importance of belonging and strives to ensure our programs are inclusive of all children irrespective of culture, gender or level of ability.

We also seek to ensure the program:

- Demonstrates flexibility by incorporating children's ideas, culture and interests to ensure the experiences are relevant and engaging
- Promotes the children's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing by taking an interest in the individual needs, interests, diversity, views and abilities of the children
- Provides a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences, open-ended resources, natural elements and materials suited to the age, developmental ranges and diversity of all children attending the service
- Provides appropriate opportunities for children as individuals and small groups to follow and extend their interests
- Provides appropriate opportunities for children to develop a range of life skills, such as establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships, working collaboratively with others and self-regulating their own behaviour
- Provides appropriate opportunities for children to participate in physical play, accepting and acknowledging each child's level of participation according to their abilities and interest
- Provides appropriate opportunities for children to express themselves through creative and imaginative play, including elements of music, dance and drama
- Provides appropriate opportunities for children to broaden their understanding of the world in which they live by reflecting the broad multicultural and multilingual nature of the local community and demonstrating a positive approach towards diversity and Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage
- Encourages and provides appropriate opportunities for families to participate in shared decision-making and give feedback about the program and their child's learning.

## Our inclusion and diversity practices

The Y NSW embraces and celebrates diversity that exists within and between our communities. We respect diversity, ensuring children are supported to create positive relationships and a strong sense of identity. Inclusive OSHC programs acknowledge that all children have different life experiences and such programs support children to value and celebrate similarities and differences. We invite and welcome you to share your culture, background and life experiences with us. You will find that your centre will engage in various celebrations throughout the year that value people and cultures from all backgrounds and we encourage you to share and take part in these celebrations.

Our Y Educators work closely with families, specialists and agencies to support access and participation for all children. It is important you let us know what is unique to your child to feel welcome, safe and able to participate in our OSHC service. During the enrolment process, you will be asked to provide information regarding your child's additional support needs so that our educators have a thorough understanding of your child and their needs, ensuring they have a positive experience at the Y.

## Our policies and procedures

At the Y NSW, our Educators follow well-researched, evidence-based policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure that your child's experiences at the centre promote and enhance their safety, wellbeing, participation and inclusion.

The Y NSW policies and associated documents address a broad range of issues and we encourage you to view key policies at your local Y service.

## About our staff

The Y NSW staff are skilled and experienced professionals who are passionate about providing a high-quality service. Our Educators engage in regular training and professional development to ensure we maintain currency with best practice standards.

The Y NSW staff are aware of their child safety responsibilities and undergo regular safeguarding and child protection training. They also hold current Working With Children Checks and police clearances. Additionally, Educators are equipped with First Aid qualifications.

A qualified Coordinator will lead a team of permanent and casual staff at each Y OSHC. Each service has an educational leader based at the service to develop and mentor the implementation of quality education and care programs. These team members will be guided and mentored by the Children's Services Manager and Senior Managers within the Y, offered support and resources as required and helped to develop our commitment to continuous improvement.

To our staff, working at the Y NSW is more than a job. We believe that we can have a positive impact on the community.





# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



At the Y, we care about children and young people and supporting them to lead active and fulfilled roles within our community. That is why we are committed to listening to and amplifying their voices. We have developed our own Feel Safe, Be Safe Framework which aims to ensure that all children and young people are safe and feel safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities. We embed Safeguarding into everything we do to make sure children and young people are kept at the front of our minds in all our programs and services.

## Safeguarding commitment from families

The Y NSW is committed to the highest standards of legal, ethical and moral behaviour and ensuring compliance in all aspects of the organisation. By reporting concerns, misconduct and child protection breaches, you can help ensure the Y NSW's people and patrons are safe and secure in the Y NSW environment.

## Statement of commitment

The Y and its Board of Directors have a zero-tolerance approach towards any form of child abuse or neglect. We are committed to the rights of children and young people to feel safe and be safe when participating in our organisation's activities, including those from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, in out-of-home care, with a disability, mental illness or in the LGBTQIA+ community.

All of the Y's Safeguarding policies and procedures can be viewed at [ymcansw.org.au/about-us/safeguarding/](https://ymcansw.org.au/about-us/safeguarding/)



## Our safeguarding framework aims to develop:

A safe **culture** nationally which empowers children and young people by promoting children and young person focused leadership and governance;

Safe **operations** to ensure Y People have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe; and

Safe **environments** at the Y and in communities which empower children and young people to thrive.







# ENROLLING AT THE Y NSW

At the Y NSW, families can enrol for Before School, After School and Vacation Care through our online booking system.

Through this system you can:

- Request new permanent enrolment bookings
- Create casual bookings
- Notify absences
- Add and manage family profiles and bookings
- Manage direct debit details and payments
- View statements and account information
- Receive push notifications and alerts.

To send through an online enquiry for our OSHC services, please visit [ymcansw.org.au/childrens-services/enquiry](https://ymcansw.org.au/childrens-services/enquiry)

## Need help?

Please contact the Child Care Team on **1300 009 679** for further assistance.



## Attending the centre

We work to ensure that arrivals and departures to our centres are safe and seamless for children and families. It is also a valuable time for exchanging information between families and staff. It is a national law requirement that upon arrival and departure each day, children are signed in and out by an authorised person. If staff do not know the authorised person by appearance, the person must be able to produce photo identification before a child will be released into their care.

At the Y NSW we use a digital system which enables authorised persons to securely sign children in or out.

Through creating an environment of trust and support, our Educators ensure that the transition from home to service, and service to home, is at all times a pleasant and positive experience for you and your child.



## Absences

It is important that we know your child is safe, so please ensure you notify an absence prior to the session starting if your child is unable to attend for any reason. You can do this via the Guardian Portal/ App or by contacting the Service Coordinator.

When a child fails to turn up to a meeting point or the service and we have not received notification that a child will be absent, it is the responsibility of the Educators to locate the child. This may mean that Educators have to search the school grounds, speak with school staff and contact parents to ascertain the child's whereabouts and safety. In this instance, a Search Fee may apply.

Unattended sessions will be charged for and recorded as an absence.





# IMPORTANT INFORMATION: GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES



## Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

The Australian Government provides a number of subsidies and programs to help with the cost of child care. The Child Care Subsidy is the main type of assistance that most families will use.

The Y NSW is an approved provider of the Child Care Subsidy for Outside School Hours Care (OSHC). For eligible families enrolled, the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) will assist with reducing out of pocket child care costs and help to make child care more affordable.

Please note that if your Child Care Subsidy has not yet been approved and finalised by Centrelink, full fee payment will be required. The service can backdate attendances up to 28 days only. To find out more about what you may be eligible for, please visit the [Services Australia](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au) website.

For Vacation Care only enrolments, the CCS Enrolment automatically ceases after 26 weeks of inactivity and will need to be reconfirmed for each Vacation Care period.

## Additional Child Care Subsidy

The Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) is a top-up payment in addition to the Child Care Subsidy which provides targeted additional fee assistance to families and children facing barriers in accessing affordable child care.

## Inclusion Support Program

The Inclusion Support Program assists the Y NSW to provide inclusive practices and address barriers to participation for children with ongoing high support needs.

## Entitlements when your child is absent

The Government's Child Care Subsidy and Additional Child Care Subsidy are payable for up to 42 initial absence days for a child in a financial year. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays. For all absences beyond the initial 42 days, full fees will be charged as the Child Care Subsidy cannot be applied.

If you are able to provide evidence to demonstrate the absence has occurred under permitted circumstances as defined by the Family Assistance Law, additional absence days may be approved. There is no limit on these days, but you will be required to provide documentation to support each absence.

## Commencing care

If a child is booked in to commence care and does not start on that day, the Child Care Subsidy cannot be applied and full fees will be charged. The subsidy will not be paid until the child physically attends a session of care.

## Withdrawal from care

If cancelling a permanent booking, a child care service is taken to have permanently ceased providing care for a child on the day the child last physically attends a session of care. This means that Child Care Subsidy will not be paid for absences submitted after a child last physically attends a session of care.

Care can be cancelled via written notice by email to [childcare@ymcansw.org.au](mailto:childcare@ymcansw.org.au) or by using the [OSHC Account Cancellation Request](#).

**Please note:** Two weeks' written notice is required to cancel permanent bookings and a minimum of 48 hours is required to cancel casual bookings. Vacation Care once booked cannot be cancelled.



# FEES & PAYMENTS

## Before school, after school and vacation care fees

Fees vary for each service. For fee information for your local service, please contact the Y NSW Child Care Team on **1300 009 679** or email us at [childcare@ymcansw.org.au](mailto:childcare@ymcansw.org.au).

## Annual administration fee

The Y NSW charges a non-refundable administration fee per family per calendar year. For new families, the fee is payable upon enrolment. For families with ongoing enrolments, the fee is charged at a set time in Term 1 in line with the Direct Debit date. The fee is based on pro rata depending on when enrolment commences during the year.



## Direct debit

The Y NSW's fortnightly direct debit payment system is designed to make payments easy. Fees for care are direct debited fortnightly from your nominated bank account or credit card. OSHC fees are paid two weeks in advance for the duration of the child's enrolment. Statements are issued prior to the debit each fortnight. If at any time there is an outstanding balance on your account, the amount will be billed in the following fortnight's debit run. The Y NSW Outside School Hours Care Direct Debit Calendar will help you keep track of key dates. For your convenience, it also highlights public holidays and school holidays.

## Public holidays

Services are closed on public holidays; however, fees still apply if any of your usual days of attendance fall on these days. Missed attendances for public holidays are recorded as an absence. The Child Care Subsidy will apply, unless the child's initial 42 absence days have already been used.

## Late pick-up

Services are not licensed to provide care after the program's operating hours. A non-subsidised late fee per child per 15 minutes or part thereof will be charged.

## Casual booking surcharge

The Y NSW charges a casual booking surcharge per session, per child.

## Search fee

If we have not received notification that a child will be absent prior to the session starting, a search fee may be charged.

## Overdue accounts

If at any time there is an outstanding balance on your account, the amount will be billed in the following fortnight's direct debit. For families experiencing financial hardship, we will endeavour to assist you to make suitable arrangements to pay outstanding amounts. In circumstances where we are unable to make suitable arrangements with families to recover outstanding debts, we will take the next appropriate steps which may include suspension or cancellation of care. Beyond this, at our discretion, we will engage an accredited commercial debt collection agency to act on our behalf to recover outstanding debts – unfortunately, through this process, additional charges will be incurred.



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION: FOR FAMILIES

## FAQs

All our FAQs are available on [the Y website](#).

## Feedback

We value all feedback. There are several avenues for you to provide feedback, provide a compliment or make a complaint.

This can be done anonymously, verbally, via email or via our customer feedback form.

You are welcome to provide feedback to:

- OSHC Coordinator, Children's Services Manager or Regional Operations Manager
- Complete a feedback form at your local Y service or at [ymcansw.org.au](#)
- **Contact the Y NSW.**

### Head Office

25 Argyle Street Parramatta NSW 2150

**02 9687 6233**

[contactus.nsw@ymcansw.org.au](mailto:contactus.nsw@ymcansw.org.au)

### Child Care Team

Monday to Friday, 6.30am - 6.30pm

**1300 009 679**

[childcare@ymcansw.org.au](mailto:childcare@ymcansw.org.au)

- **NSW Early Childhood Education Directorate, NSW Department of Education**

**1800 619 113** (toll free) | [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)

For more information please see the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority website: [acecqa.gov.au](http://acecqa.gov.au)

All feedback will receive a response within seven business days to ensure the highest quality of service is reached. Feedback received from these sources allows constant review of service levels, increased customer satisfaction and, therefore, increased positive feedback within the community.





25 Argyle St, Parramatta NSW 2150  
9687 6233  
**[ymcansw.org.au](http://ymcansw.org.au)**

*We believe in the power of inspired young people*