



## YMCA of Canberra Children's Services

### Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities Policy

#### Policy Statement:

The YMCA is committed to open, honest, respectful communication between families, communities, children and educators. Collaborative relationships contribute to building a strong and inclusive community. We acknowledge that shared decision making with families and the community demonstrates respect for all stakeholders and supports consistency between the family, community and their experiences in the care environment.

#### Objective:

- To promote a friendly, collaborative and cooperative relationship between management, educators, children, families and the community.
- To define the communication opportunities available to the families of YMCA's Early Learning Centres.
- To provide an environment that is sensitive to the cultural and social values of families in the community.
- To provide a supportive environment where families are respected, listened to, and their opinion and suggestions are valued.

#### Procedures

##### Communication in relation to management...

- Current information on community and support services will be available to families and the community on display and/or provided on request.
- All relevant legislation information will be displayed for families and the community. This will include but not be limited to...
  - a) Provider Approval
  - b) Service Approval
  - c) Nominated Supervisor
  - d) Service Rating
  - e) Service or Temporary Waivers
  - f) Service Operation
  - g) Workplace Health and Safety

*(Prescribed Information to be displayed National Law: Section 172 / National Regulations: Regulation 173)*



- YMCA Early Learning Services Newsletters will be distributed monthly to all families as a method of sharing community information, educational articles, children's interests and learning, events and celebrations.
- Information evenings will be available both formally and on individual request throughout the year.
- Family Advisory Groups will be scheduled to meet at least three times per calendar year, or as needed.
- Access to interpreters, translated materials and other resources will be provided as required.
- Current and relevant information will be available and / or provided for families on the service operations by a variety of methods but not limited to; YMCA website, information and notice boards, policies and procedures, family handbooks, newsletters and verbally.
- YMCA Early Learning Services will network, liaise and collaborate with organisations and support services to enhance children's learning and wellbeing e.g. Inclusion Support, Behavioural Support
- YMCA teams will build relationships within the community via introductions, invitations to events, excursions and by having an open door policy.
- Any policy changes will be communicated to families prior to implementation through email, newsletters, notices.

### Communication in relation to educators...

- Children's learning, routine changes and interest are shared with families by the educators daily.
- The family's expertise is recognised by educators as they collaborate to support the education and wellbeing of the child.
- Educators will maintain individual children's records through the Family's Portfolios which will be available for families to view and add feedback at any time.
- A variety of communication methods including verbal, written and electronic media will be used to effectively share information with families in many contexts.
- Educators will communicate in ways that acknowledge and respect racial, cultural, linguistic and economic diversity.
- Will ensure their communication is respectful, effective and efficient when discussing and sharing information with families, the community and team members.
- Educators will contribute to the family newsletters; including children's interests, learning and topical information.
- Educators will provide access for families to the Early Learning Service at any time their child is attending.
- Educators will acknowledge and include individual family's lifestyles and child rearing practices.



- The team will consult with families about the development of the curriculum and the philosophy in which it is based.
- YMCA Early Learning Services will offer a variety of opportunities for families to participate in the children's daily experiences, including spending time with children, providing suitable experiences, assisting with experiences, excursions and special events.
- Educators will greet the families and positively acknowledge the strengths of a child's day.
- If an educator needs to discuss an area of concern with a family, they will...
  - Acknowledge the child's strengths first.
  - Discuss observations on the behaviour and experiences of the child.
  - Share strategies to improve the situation.

### **Communication in relation to families...**

- Families will exchange information regularly regarding their child's learning, routine changes, family background and child/family interests.
- Families will inform educators of their child's arrival and departure throughout the day.
- Families will share information with educators on any special events in their child's life e.g. arrival of a baby, wedding, holiday.
- Families are asked to collect and read information shared by the Early Learning Service via Family Pockets, children's bags, email etc.
- Families are encouraged to ask to meet with an educator at any time that is mutually suitable if they feel it is required.
- Families will ensure their communication is friendly, respectful, effective and efficient when providing feedback and sharing information with educators.
- Families will be required to contribute, evaluate and provide feedback to the centre by way of: individual documentation and observations, policies and procedures, providing suggestions and ideas for spontaneous experiences, cultural practises and celebrations.
- Families will be invited to attend all scheduled Family Information Sessions held by the YMCA Early Learning Centres.
- Families are asked to provide feedback to management by completing surveys and being involved in policy reviews when required.
- Families are invited to contribute their knowledge, ideas and feedback to the curriculum, philosophy, policies and procedures through a variety of methods, including family Portfolios, surveys, feedback sheets, email, information sharing evening and verbally.



## **Related Policies and Procedures:**

- Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy
- Fee Policy YMCA Early Learning
- Family Handbook
- YMCA Enrolments Policy

## **Standards/ Legislation/References:**

**Educational and Care Services National Regulations, 2011 –**  
73,75,76,80,86,99,102,111,157,168,171,173

**Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2012:** Sections 172, 175

**National Quality Standards:** Quality Area 6, Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities

**Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics** – sourced Dec, 2011

**Raising Children Network -**

[http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/involving\\_parents\\_in\\_school\\_and\\_childcare.html](http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/involving_parents_in_school_and_childcare.html)

Sourced, Dec 2011

**Putting Children First**, NCAC Fact Sheet– Building a partnership with your childcare service by Merise Bickley