



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## The YMCA's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Standards for Early Childhood and Afterschool Programs

	<b>Early Childhood Program</b>	<b>Afterschool Programs</b>
<i>Parent Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage parents/care givers using informational materials and/or activities focused on healthy eating and physical activity a minimum of 4x year. Healthy Family Home could be used for this purpose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage parents/care givers using informational materials and/or activities focused on healthy eating and physical activity a minimum of 3x year. Healthy Family Home could be used for this purpose.</li> </ul>
<i>Physical Activity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities for light, moderate, and vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes per day while children are in care for a full-day program and 30 minutes for half-day day program.</li> <li>Provide daily outdoor time for physical activity when possible.</li> </ul> <p><u>For infants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide daily opportunities for infants to move freely under adult supervision to explore their indoor and outdoor environments;</li> <li>Engage with infants on the ground each day to optimize adult–infant interactions; and</li> <li>Provide daily “tummy time” (time in the prone position) for infants less than six months of age.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide children and youth with at least 30 minutes of physical activity per morning or afterschool program (60 minutes total per day if both morning and afterschool sessions are offered. Days when children are cared for all day (e.g. Teacher Planning/Institute Day, Holidays) should also provide 60 minutes of activity throughout the day. This time can be divided between morning and afternoon sessions, and can be broken down into smaller increments). Include a mixture of moderate and vigorous activity (that increase heart rate and make you breathe hard), as well as bone and muscle strengthening activities</li> <li>Play will take place outdoors whenever possible.</li> </ul>
<i>Screen Time</i> (television, cell phone, or digital media)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit screen time, including television, cell phone, or digital media, for preschoolers (aged two–five) to less than 30 minutes per day for children in half-day programs or less than one hour per day for those in full-day programs.</li> <li>Eliminate screen time for children under two years old.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not permit access to television or movies, and limit digital device time to less than one hour per day to allow for other activities.</li> <li>Digital device use is limited to homework or programs that actively engage children in activity.</li> </ul>
<i>Food</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serve fruits or vegetables at every meal and/or snack.</li> <li>Eat meals and/or snacks family-style when possible (“family style” means children serve themselves from common bowls and pitchers with limited help from adults).</li> <li>Prohibit fried foods. This includes prohibiting fried salty snacks such as</li> </ul>	<p><b>FOR PROGRAMS THAT SERVE FOOD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serve fruits and/or vegetables at all meals and snacks.</li> <li>Serve meals and/or snacks family style (“family style” means children serve themselves from common bowls and pitchers with limited help from adults).</li> <li>Prohibit foods that are deep fried, pan fried, or flash fried unless a healthy oil</li> </ul>

	potato or corn chips and prohibiting foods that are pre-fried and reheated (e.g., pre-fried French fries that are then baked).	(unsaturated or polyunsaturated oils such as olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil, or vegetable oil) is used in the frying process. This includes prohibiting fried salty snacks such as potato or corn chips regardless of type of oil used in cooking.
<i>Beverages</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that safe drinking water will be available and accessible to the children at all time.</li> <li>• Prohibit serving beverages with added sugars.</li> <li>• For children two and older, serve low-fat (1%) or non-fat milk, and limit fruit juice to no more than one 4-6 ounce 100% juice per day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water is accessible and available to children at all times, including at the table during snack and/or meal times.</li> <li>• Prohibit beverages with added sugars</li> <li>• Emphasize healthy beverages including low or nonfat milk. 100% fruit juice should be limited to one 6-8 oz. serving per day.</li> </ul>
<i>Infant Feeding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adults who work with infants and their families should promote and support exclusive breastfeeding for six months and continuation of breastfeeding in conjunction with complementary foods for 1 year or more.</li> </ul>	

These standards, when implemented fully throughout the Y, will be the basis on which the Y's commitment to being one of the largest and healthiest providers of early childhood education and afterschool programming in the nation is recognized.

These standards have been expanded and revised as of 11/30/12 to align with the Commitment that was made to first lady Michelle Obama and the Partnership for a Healthier America and updated for clarity on 2/26/2013. The difference between these standards and previous versions are relatively small. Previous versions of the Y's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA) Standards for Afterschool Programs have been augmented by adding parallel Early Childhood Education HEPA Standards, and new standards related to parent education and sugar-sweetened beverages.