



# CREATION STATION

A KINDERGARTEN READINESS PROGRAM

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025



YMCA OF GREATER NASHUA



Dear Parents,

## **Welcome to the Creation Station!**

Welcome to the new school year! We're excited that you've chosen Creation Station for your child(ren). Our YMCA's Creation Station program is designed to build a strong foundation for future academic success.

The first six years of a child's life are crucial for rapid mental and social development, which is greatly influenced by their educational environment.

Our Creation Station program at the Y uses guided self-discovery and experiential learning to support your child's cognitive, social, physical, and emotional growth. Each day, your child will benefit from uniquely designed, expertly crafted curriculum.

We believe every child is unique, and we strive to build positive relationships based on our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

We welcome and value your feedback, as it helps us improve our programs. We encourage you to build a relationship with your child's site director and staff. If any concerns arise, please reach out to your site director first; however, I am also available to assist as needed.

We hope this handbook will address any questions you might have about our procedures and practices. Please use this handbook as your reference, but remember we are always here to help if needed. Thank you for entrusting your children to our care. We are excited to serve you and look forward to a fun and enjoyable year ahead!

Warm regards,

Carlisa Choate M.Ed.  
Executive Director of Education  
[cchoate@nymymca.org](mailto:cchoate@nymymca.org)  
(603) 689-2430

## PROGRAM BASICS

### CREATION STATION – WHAT IS IT?

Creation Station is a kindergarten readiness program designed for children ages 3–4 years old. It is a half day program that runs from 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM.

## COMMUNICATION

We utilize Brightwheel for communication between parents and staff. Brightwheel is an application (app) that allows us to send real-time messages, emergency alerts, and newsletters all from one platform.

Staff are encouraged to communicate with parents/guardians during program hours. Please note that **staff are not available on weekends or after 6:00 PM on weekdays**. They have family and other outside commitments, however they will respond to you as promptly as possible. You can also send messages via Brightwheel or email.

For urgent matters, please notify the Site Director on Brightwheel or email, which are the most effective ways to reach our directors.

Click here to download Brightwheel: [www.mybrightwheel.com](http://www.mybrightwheel.com).

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Creation Station’s Site Director: Amy Millard – [amillard@nmymca.org](mailto:amillard@nmymca.org)**

Please contact Amy should you have any questions regarding the program or your child’s progress, to update physical & immunization records, a change of home address, or add to your authorized pick up list.

**Child Care Business Manager: Aline Connors – [aconnors@nmymca.org](mailto:aconnors@nmymca.org)**

Please contact Aline should you have any billing questions.

**Executive Director of Education: Carlisa Choate – [cchoate@nmymca.org](mailto:cchoate@nmymca.org)**

Please contact Carlisa with any issues about the program or with any issues that Amy is unable to address.

**Note:** Email is the best way to reach contact Aline or Carlisa.

## TUITION & PAYMENT

Creation Station's tuition is based on attendance, with program options for 5, 3, or 2 days per week. Payments are automatically drafted from your authorized payment method every Wednesday, prior to the service week. For your child(ren) to remain enrolled, your payment method and tuition payments must remain up to date. If a payment is missed, the Child Care Business Manager or Finance Department will contact you to arrange payment.

A two-week written notice is required for any account changes or withdrawals. Please note that no credits are given for holidays, inclement weather days, or illness-related absences.

## REGISTRATION & PROGRAM INFORMATION

**New Hampshire Bureau of Child Care Licensing mandates that all children have a completed physical examination and updated immunization records on file.**

Parents or guardians are responsible for keeping registration records up-to-date. If there are changes to phone numbers, contact information, or authorized pick-ups, please inform the staff as soon as possible.

### REGISTRATION

All families are required to register their children every program year. A \$30.00 nonrefundable registration fee is assessed each year. This fee covers:

- **Administrative Costs:** Processing paperwork, setting up accounts, and managing registrations.
- **Program Enrollment:** Securing a spot for the participant in the desired program or class.
- **Initial Supplies:** Covering costs for any necessary materials or equipment needed at the start of the program.
- **Background Checks:** Ensuring staff and volunteers meet safety and compliance standards.
- **Orientation and Training:** Providing initial orientation or training for participants or their families.

All registrations are subject to availability.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### Y Cares Financial Assistance Program

In an effort that every child can participate, the YMCA provides financial aid through our Y Cares Financial Assistance Program. For more details please visit one of our YMCA Welcome Centers, or visit our website at: <https://nymymca.org/membership/financial-assistance/>.

### New Hampshire Child Care Scholarship Program

New Hampshire Child Care Scholarship and the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Scholarship is available for income-eligible families.

Complete the Child Care Assistance Request through the State of New Hampshire. Apply online at: <https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/apply-benefits>

## SCHEDULE CHANGES

If you need to adjust the days your child is registered, please check with your Site Director for availability.

Availability is not guaranteed, and changes require a two-week written notice.

**Extra Days:** If you should need to add an extra day or two for care in a particular week, please check with your Site Director for availability. We cannot guarantee accommodations. Do not send your child on unscheduled days. Any **approved** additional days will incur an extra charge of \$37.00/day and will be manually invoiced and charged to your authorized payment method on file.

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

**The YMCA of Greater Nashua requires a two-week written notice for withdrawals. Notify your Site Director and the Child Care Business Manager. Refunds will not be granted for withdrawals without written notification.**

## SIGN IN / OUT PROCEDURES / AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS

We ask that all Parent(s)/Guardian(s) check in with the Welcome Center upon entering the YMCA. Each child is signed in and out using Brightwheel and a paper roster. Our program staff will only release children to adults listed on the authorized pick-up list. A sibling must be 16 years or older to be considered an authorized pick-up. During the first few weeks of the program, you must present a photo ID each time you pick up your child, to ensure their safety, until all staff are comfortable recognizing you.

To add someone to the authorized pick-up list, contact the Site Director with the new person's full name and phone number. Please inform your authorized pick-up that a photo ID will be required for them to pick-up your child(ren).

## AUTHORIZED PICKUP EXCEPTIONS

### Impaired Persons

If someone attempting to pick up a child appears impaired by alcohol or drugs, our staff will not release the child to them. The Site Director will be informed, and an alternate emergency pick-up will be contacted. If the impaired individual is the parent or guardian and insists on taking the child, the police will be notified.

### Parental Restrictions

All parents have equal access to their child as permitted by law. The YMCA cannot restrict one parent's access based on the other parent's request without a certified court order. If one parent wants to prevent the other from seeing the child, they should keep the child with them until a court order is obtained. For any issues, please notify the Site Director immediately so staff can be informed.

### Guardian / Court Orders

If a child is under guardianship or court-ordered care by someone other than a parent, provide copies of the court orders to our Executive Director of Education before the child starts the program. Similarly, if there are any court orders restricting contact with the child, such as no-contact, domestic violence, or restraining orders, those documents should also be submitted to the Executive Director of Education prior to the start of the program.

## PERSONAL TOYS

Personal toys are the source of a lot of tears.....**Please leave them at home.** At times teachers may allow "personal toys" in for a special activity, however, you will be notified in advance.

## SNACKS/LUNCH

Creation Station does not provide snacks. Snacks will be provided by each individual family. If your child has a hearty appetite, you may wish to provide your child with additional snacks.

**Allergy Alert:** classrooms are nut-free zones. Please do not pack any snack items that contain peanuts/peanut butter, tree nuts or avocados.

## **PARKING LOT**

The parking lot is very busy during morning and afternoon pickups. Please drive slowly and be attentive to our little friends. Also, please supervise your children walking to and from the building.

## **CLOTHING**

**(Please label jackets, backpacks and lunchboxes)**

As we do live in New England, please dress your children appropriately for the weather (very difficult at times). We will go outside everyday possible so layers work well. Also, be mindful of footwear. Be sure that your child can run and climb safely.

## **EMERGENCIES/DRILLS**

We will practice Fire Drills with our little friends. We want to ensure that in the event of an emergency they know what to do at Creation Station. They may be a little nervous at first when hearing the alarms but our staff is superb at reassuring them that we are practicing being safe.

In the event of an emergency, you will be notified as quickly as possible. We have an emergency plan in place and our first priority will be to make sure our children are safe, then, the proper authorities have been contacted, and next, we will contact you.

Safety is our priority here at Creation Station. All staff members are CPR and First Aid certified in the event of an incident. All injuries requiring first aid will be reported and filed in our injury/incident log. Parents/Guardians will be notified by phone and will be required to sign an injury.

## **SICKNESS**

We practice hand washing skills and classroom sanitation daily. Please monitor children. If your child is sick, has a fever, lethargic or has any symptoms that will prevent them from functioning with his/her peers for the day, they should be kept home. We will call you to pick up your child if they should have any of these symptoms. A child should be symptom free for at least 24 hours with no medicines. With sickness and all absences, please notify the director if your child will be out.

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

All medications must be given to the Site Director or staff personnel and the parent will be required to complete a Medication Authorization Form. **Under no circumstances should medicine be left in a child's backpack.** All medicine must be in its original container, with the child's name, physician's name, name of medication and dosage instructions.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of inclement weather there will be no Creation Station. You will be notified on Brightwheel or on the YMCA's website. There is no adjustment to tuition in this instance.

## **HOLIDAYS/VACATIONS**

Creation Station will be closed on all holidays and school vacations. The Site Director will provide you with a calendar of closure dates. Tuition will be pro-rated for preset closure days. There will be no costs for vacation week.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Creation Station makes every attempt to create an environment that is fun, appropriately stimulated and respectful of our children's needs. Various methods are used for different situations. Positive reinforcement and redirection are very constructive.

**We hope these guidelines were helpful. You may always contact the Site Director with any additional questions or concerns.**