YMCA Taranaki Inc * PO Box 474 * 83 Liardet Street New Plymouth 4310
Ph 06 758 3666 * mail@ymcataranaki.org.nz

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

YMCA OSCAR programmes are designed to provide children with an enjoyable, secure and safe place where they will be treated with dignity and respect. To ensure that the YMCA Taranaki can present an atmosphere in accordance with the YMCA core values there must be strategies in place to manage inappropriate behaviour.

It is the strong belief of the YMCA Taranaki that the OSCAR programmes should be significantly different from school. We aim to promote ourselves as a place children want to come to have fun in a non-regimented and friendly environment. For this reason, we have developed policies to help regulate behaviour. The YMCA Taranaki has guidelines in place aimed not to restrict the enjoyment of the child but to make their time at the YMCA as safe as possible.

Inevitably there will always be children who find they cannot abide by set guidelines, and where possible we try to take a fairly informal approach when advising children that their actions are inappropriate. However, if their behaviour becomes dangerous to themselves or others or begins to impinge on others enjoyment of the programme, steps must be taken to change their behaviour, including calling a parent or caregiver to collect their child. Any behaviour where a child endangers themselves or another person is taken very seriously.

The YMCA promotes positive behaviour by using positive reinforcement such as encouragement and recognition. We focus on using strategies to prevent and deal with challenging behaviour such as preventative and de-escalation strategies and following individual behaviour plans if a child has one. There are also steps in place outlined below to deal with behaviour that disrupts the programme or causes risk to the safety of staff, clients and members of the public. The physical restraint of children is not to be used on the programme.

However there may be cases where de-escalation and preventative strategies have been exhausted and there is imminent risk to a client, staff member or members of the public. In these cases staff must follow the emergency procedure **2.8.1**

At no time will a child be isolated or punitive discipline used, this includes punishing children by physically hitting, withholding food or drink, demeaning or condescending comments (e.g. verbal and emotional abuse). At all times, staff will maintain fairness, consistency and a positive approach.

Behaviour Management System

The behaviour management system consists of a 3 step process - although as already mentioned more serious forms of inappropriate behaviour may give cause to skip some steps.

Step 1. If a child misbehaves, they will be spoken to in the first instance and advised not to repeat the behaviour. They will be given a non-threatening explanation of what they did wrong to ensure they understand.

Step 2 If the child misbehaves again they will not be allowed to continue to participate in the activity with the rest of the group for a period of time. They will be diverted to another activity. Depending on their behaviour or how their response has been to being warned, the length of time they may not be able to re-join the prior activity for is up to the discretion of the leader and will be for no longer than 10 minutes. At this stage the supervisor, if not already aware of the situation, should be made aware. The staff member who was directly involved should talk to the child about why their behaviour was inappropriate before they are let back into the group, this is to give the child is given an opportunity to reflect on their behaviour by themselves. If the behaviour continues the supervisor will speak to the child calmly and clearly to explain why the behaviour is unacceptable. The child will be informed that any further incidents of the identified behaviour will lead to a written warning in the Incident and Accident Booklet which requires them to take responsibility for their actions. The parent/caregiver will be spoken to.

Step 3 If an issue is written in the Incident and Accident Booklet, a parent or caregiver will be notified and asked to sign in acknowledgement of this notification. The staff and the caregiver will have a discussion about possible strategies for dealing with any possible future incidents of a similar nature.

Step 4 If the behaviour is repeated in future, a meeting between the Supervisor, YMCA Out of School Care Manager and the child's parents/caregivers may be arranged to discuss behavioural issues and any strategies to encourage positive behaviour in the individual. Dismissal from the programme is a last resort but will be done in serious cases.