



We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

## CHILD SAFETY AT CAMP

Dear Parent:

We thank you for placing your trust in the Metro YMCAs of the Oranges and West Essex YMCA Day Camps. Our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are part of everything we do. Because of this, we place great value on creating the most child-safe environment possible. The purpose of this letter is to educate and engage you in our approach to child safety.

To keep children safe in our programs, we utilize the following steps in our pre-employment screening and employment practices for all staff:

- Detailed employment application and voluntary disclosure forms
- Comprehensive reference checking and interview process
- Criminal and sexual background records checks
- Comprehensive training including child abuse prevention, camp, playground, transportation, and aquatic safety.
- Confidential reporting system for grievances, safety concerns, etc.

Safety is our primary concern at the Metro YMCAs of the Oranges. We have policies in place so that all interactions between staff and children are monitored and supervised by others. It is important for you to know that our staff sign and are accountable to our Code of Conduct.

Our Code of Conduct requires that Staff and Volunteers:

- Are never to be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others.
- Should never leave a child unsupervised.
- Are not allowed to transport children in their own vehicles.
- May not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside the YMCA (this includes babysitting, sleepovers, inviting children to homes).
- Should not give excessive gifts (ex. Video games, tv, jewelry) to youth nor be exclusive.
- Shall not abuse or neglect a child in any way, physically, verbally, sexually or mentally.

With this being said, I am asking you to assist us in maintaining the safe environment we have long enjoyed at our YMCA.

First, educate your children about appropriate and inappropriate physical, verbal and emotional contact whether it be peer-to-peer or adult-to-child. Make sure that your child knows that if they experience any inappropriate actions at our YMCA (or elsewhere) including e-mail, blogging, texting or phone calls, that they should alert you immediately. Please let your child know it is important to tell you about these kinds of activities and that they will be believed and will not be considered to be at fault.

Next, if you know of or if your child relates to you any behavior you consider to be inappropriate, please call Helen Flores, Executive Director at the West Essex YMCA at 973-992-7500 and we will treat the matter confidentially and urgently.

We pride ourselves on open and honest communication. To that end we want to give all responsible adults an opportunity to reinforce with our children what is and what is not appropriate behavior.

Thank you for entrusting us with the care of your child. We hope to provide you both with a wonderful and safe experience this summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Gorab".

Rick Gorab  
President/CEO