POLICY NAME	CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION POLICY
POLICY TYPE	BOARD POLICIES & GUIDELINES
POLICY NUMBER	1310
VERSION NUMBER	Version 4
APPROVAL DATE	2026-09-22
EFFECTIVE DATE	2026-09-22
REVIEW CYCLE	1 Year
NEXT REVIEW DATE	2027-09-22

1. Policy Statement

1.1. The Association is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognizes its responsibility to promote safe practices and to protect children from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

1.2. The Association is committed to promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in all aspects of our child safety policy to ensure that every child is treated with respect and dignity.

1.3. The Association is committed to:

- Having systems in place that keep children safe when under the Association's supervision.
- Having a system in place that is followed when an employee or volunteer identifies an allegation or suspicion that a child is in need of protection.

1.4. In pursuit of these aims, the Association will do the following:

- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy and related guidelines and adapt them whenever there is a significant change in the Association.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise employees and volunteers to adopt best practices to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to employees and volunteers working with children.
- Require employees and volunteers to abide by this Child Safety and Protection Policy and related guidelines.
- Established guidelines for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against employees or volunteers.
- Promote and implement appropriate guidelines to safeguard the well-being of children and to protect them from abuse while participating in Association activities and programs.
- Create a Facility Access Plan for every location in which the Association operates.

1.5. The Association will refer concerns that a child might be at risk of harm to the appropriate authorities.

1.6. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will designate an appropriate individual to be the Child Safety and Protection Lead for the Association, who will act as the lead employee responsible for issues related to the protection of children. The CEO will also identify an appropriate back-up who will be known as the designate in this policy.

2. Purpose

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the Association has a framework for its responsibilities with respect to children's safety.

3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and visitors of the Association. Compliance with the principles outlined in this policy will be treated as essential for contract compliance with contractors and consultants.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to:

- Review this policy annually.
- Ensure that they, as individual Board Members, are aware of and acknowledge their responsibilities for child safety and protection.
- Be informed of all Critical Child Protection Incidents, including any investigation outcomes, in accordance with this policy.

4.2. It is the responsibility of the CEO to:

- Appoint appropriate Association employees to be the Child Safety and Protection Lead and their designate. Ensure that arrangements are made for out of office coverage so that a trained designate is available during operational hours.
- Provide adequate resources to ensure the training of employees and volunteers in regard to this policy and related guidelines.
- Ensure that all Board members are trained in our Child Safety and Protection Policy and related guidelines during their orientation, and that this training is documented.
- Report to the Board all critical incidents of child safety and protection and how they were resolved.
- Present, annually, the results of the Child Safety and Protection Audit and Peer Review to the Board, and to ensure minutes capturing such a presentation are retained.
- Ensure that any incidents that may give rise to a claim are reported to the Association's insurance broker.
- Ensure that the Association has abuse liability coverage in accordance with the Insurance Policy.
- Review and approve or deny documented requests for exceptions to this policy. These exceptions may be requests to: (1) schedule a New Hire to work before a required Criminal Record Check or Child Intervention Check is returned, or (2) to waive reference checks for a Returning Employee. In all requests, ensure that any approved exception includes appropriate supervision requirements and documentation.
- Ensure the Association's compliance with this policy and related guidelines.

4.3. It is the responsibility of the Child Safety and Protection Lead to:

- Advance the objectives of the Child Safety and Protection Policy and the relevant portions of the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* across the Association by:
  - Implementing this policy and related guidelines involved with the safety and protection of children.
  - Ensuring that all employees are trained in this Child Safety and Protection Policy and related guidelines within the first month of the start of their employment at the Association.
  - Ensuring that all volunteers are trained in this Child Safety and Protection Policy and related guidelines on their first shift at the start of their volunteering at the Association.

- Reviewing, annually, the Child Safety and Protection Policy and related guidelines to ensure compliance with applicable legislation and YMCA National Child Safety and Protection Standards.
- Reviewing proposed Facility Access Plans to ensure alignment with this policy and related guidelines.
- Reviewing proposed policies and guidelines to ensure alignment with this policy and related guidelines.
- Supporting employees and volunteers through the reporting process.
- Supporting the annual Child Safety and Protection Audit and Peer Review by completing and carrying out the Action Plan.
- Conducting the semi-annual self-assessment as per the YMCA National Child Safety and Protection Standards.
- Ensuring that all employees and volunteers have read, understood, and signed the applicable acknowledgement form, as per the attachments.
- Preparing the training material for Level 1, Level 2, and annual recertification training.
- Reporting to the CEO Critical Child Protection Incidents and their resolution.
- Acting as Chair of the Child Safety and Protection Committee.

4.4. It is the responsibility of supervisors to:

- Ensure employees are provided with ratio-coverage, a private space, and the necessary time to immediately complete their obligations for reporting and documenting any allegations of or suspicions that a child is in need of protection.
- Ensure new employees are enrolled in orientation training, and that they are not scheduled to work until child safety orientation training is completed and they have completed the orientation quiz and applicable acknowledgement form, as per the attachments.
- Ensure caregiver-to-child ratios include both volunteers and employees when scheduling programs that include child supervision, noting that volunteers will not be permitted to be alone with children.
- Ensure that employees who require supervision while awaiting their Criminal Record Check and Child Intervention Check are appropriately supervised according to the Supervision Guideline.
- Ensure programs are developmentally appropriate and well planned in advance. This includes implementing the guidelines related to sign-in and sign-out procedures for children.
- Create and annually review any Facility Access Plans for the spaces and/or programs they manage.

4.5. It is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer to:

- Abide by this policy, including obtaining their Criminal Record Check, Child Intervention Check, and attending child safety and protection training as required.
- Promote the safety of children in their care by:
  - Creating a safe and caring environment for children.
  - Following program guidelines.
  - Reporting when a child is in need of protection as provided in the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*.
  - Notifying their supervisor that a report is being made.

5. Definitions

5.1. **"Accessing the facility"** refers to the act of individuals entering the non-public or gated areas of any facilities operated by the Association.

5.2. **"Action Plan"** refers to the report provided to YMCA Canada to address any gaps and enhanced compliance related to the semi-annual self-assessment or annual audit.

5.3. A **"child"**, unless it is otherwise stated, means a person under the age of 18 years.

5.4. A **"child in need of protection"**, according to the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, means a child is in need of intervention if there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that the survival, security, or development of the child is endangered because of any of the following:

- The child has been abandoned or lost.
- The guardian of the child is dead, and the child has no other guardian.
- The child is neglected by the guardian.
- The child has been or there is substantial risk that the child will be physically injured or sexually abused by the guardian of the child.
- The guardian of the child is unable or unwilling to protect the child from physical injury or sexual abuse.
- The child has been emotionally injured by the guardian of the child.
- The guardian of the child is unable or unwilling to protect the child from emotional injury.
- The guardian of the child has subjected the child to or is unable or unwilling to protect the child from cruel and unusual treatment or punishment.

5.5. **"Child abuse"** involves a child who has been placed at risk through something a person has done to them or something a person is failing to do for them. This includes any form of physical harm, emotional deprivation, sexual mistreatment, or neglect which can result in injury or psychological damage to a child. There are many different forms of abuse, and a child may be subjected to more than one form.

- **"Physical abuse"** refers to all actions resulting in non-accidental physical injury or harm. This may include non-accidental injury, cruel or excessive corporal punishment (which may or may not cause physical injury), threats of physical harm, dangerous behaviour towards a child or in immediate proximity to the child (i.e., throwing objects, use of weapons).
- **"Emotional abuse"** refers to both emotional abuse and emotional neglect of the child. Emotional abuse includes excessive and overt rejection, criticism, and excessive demands of performance for a child's age and ability. Emotional neglect refers to the failure of the parent/caregiver to provide adequate psychological nurturance necessary for a child's growth and development.
- **"Sexual abuse"** occurs when a child has been or is likely to be exposed to harmful interaction for a sexual purpose by a parent, caregiver, any person in a position of trust and/or any other person. It can include both physical and/or non-physical contact. Examples include engaging a child in sexual acts, obscene acts, taking pictures of a sexual nature (sexual exploitation), pornography, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and threatening sexual assault as well as the utilization of grooming techniques.
- **"Neglect"** refers to acts of omission on the part of the parent/caregiver. This includes failure to provide for the child's basic needs and appropriate level of care with respect to food, clothing, shelter, health/medical, hygiene, safety and supervision as determined by the minimum levels of care standards.

5.6. **"Critical Child Protection Incidents"** refers to any incident which involves child abuse where: (1) the allegation is against an employee or volunteer of the Association, or (2) that is alleged to have occurred within facilities or programs operated by the Association.

5.7. **"Employees"** are paid individuals who are employed by the Association.

5.8. **"Facility Access Plan"** is the document identifying how the Association is monitoring its space and identifying any potential barriers for maintaining a safe YMCA environment.

5.9. **"In facility"** means being present within designated restricted areas at the Cor Van Raay YMCA typically used for Association programs that are accessed with a membership card, by paying a day pass, or by being a participant in a program. These spaces may include Fieldhouse, Fitness Floor, Aquatics Centre, Rec Room, Indoor Play, and Child Care Centre rooms. It excludes offices, storage spaces, public washrooms, and the boardroom.

5.10. A **"New Hire"** means an individual beginning employment with the Association who is not considered a Returning Employee under this policy.

5.11. A **"Returning Employee"**, for the purposes of this policy, means a former employee who left the Association in good standing and is returning within one year to the same or substantially similar position within the same department, program, or team. In these circumstances, the requirement to complete three professional reference checks may be waived – as requested by the hiring supervisor and with CEO approval – provided there is sufficient prior employment information to support the hiring decision.

5.12. **"Volunteers"** are individuals who have committed to provide volunteer work on a regular and ongoing basis for the Association, including practicum and work experience students.

6. References To Related Policy, Guideline or Legislation

6.1. 1080 Insurance Coverage Policy 20240130

6.2. 1090 Legal and Regulatory Policy 20260324

6.3. 1130 Privacy Policy 20251021

6.4. 1220 DEIB Policy 20260324

6.5. 1280 Investigation Policy 20240917

6.6. 1310G-001 Vulnerable Adult Protection Guideline 20240131

6.7. 1310G-003 Child Safety and Protection Electronic Communications Guideline 20240131

6.8. 1310G-004 Identification (ID) Guideline TBD

6.9. 1310G-005 Supervision Plan Guideline 20240424

6.10. 1310G-007 Child Safety and Protection Committee Terms of Reference 20241218

6.11. YMCA National Child Safety and Protection Standards

6.12. *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*

7. Procedures

7.1. People – Orientation and Training

- All employees and volunteers, regardless of their position, will receive training adequate to familiarize them with protection issues and responsibilities, and this Association policy and the guidelines related to the safety and protection of children.
- The orientation and subsequent training will be documented in the employee or volunteer's personnel file and these records will be retained by the Association indefinitely. The training will be conducted as per this policy attachment.
- Annual recertification training is mandatory for all employees and volunteers.

- In the event of any change to this Child Safety and Protection Policy, all employees and volunteers will receive an orientation to the new policy. The training will be conducted as per policy attachments.

7.2. Responding – Incident Reporting and Investigations

- In the event that an employee or volunteer suspects that a child is in need of protection, the Association will take prompt and immediate action. Employees and volunteers are mandated by provincial law to report any suspected cases where a child is in need of protection.
- For incidents in which reports are not required to be made to the appropriate authorities (e.g., peer-to-peer incidents, incorrect medications administered, etc.), a debrief meeting may be held to review for corrective actions; documentation of incident will be retained in accordance with the Records Management Policy.
- In the case of a non-Critical Child Protection Incident, the following will occur:
  - The employee or volunteer will report the incident as per the attachments. Documentation for these incidents will be kept in a standard, uncoloured envelope.
  - The Child Safety and Protection Lead will hold the records and maintain statistics for reporting purposes.
- In the case of a Critical Child Protection Incident, the following will occur:
  - The employee or volunteer will report the incident as per the attachments. Documentation for these incidents will be kept in a coloured envelope.
  - The Child Safety and Protection Lead will report to the CEO a summary of the incident including the date of occurrence and an overview of the events which were alleged to occur. The CEO will determine any involvement of the Board and/or the Association's insurance carrier at the time of the incident.
  - Annually, the Board will receive a report, captured in Board Meeting minutes, of summary data.
  - The Child Safety and Protection Lead will conduct an investigation in accordance with the Child Safety and Protection Investigations Guideline. The Association will respond to the outcome of an investigation in the manner outlined in HR policies and guidelines regarding progressive discipline where appropriate.
  - The Child Safety and Protection Lead will hold the records and maintain statistics for reporting purposes.
- In the case of a Critical Child Protection Incident involving the CEO, all Critical Child Protection Incident procedures above will be followed except the report by the Child Safety and Protection Lead will be made to the Board Chairperson and the Association's insurance carrier directly.
- In the case of a Critical Child Protection Incident involving the Child Safety and Protection Lead, all Critical Child Protection Incident procedures above will be followed except the designate will be responsible for the Child Safety and Protection Lead duties.
- Records involving child safety and protection incidents are important and will be retained indefinitely.
  - For non-Critical Child Protection Incidents, the records will be sealed and maintained as paper documents in a locked location and filed by year of incident.
  - For Critical Child Protection Incidents, the records of the incident, along with any documentation from the investigation, are sealed following the completion

of the investigation; all documents will be maintained in a paper format, stored in a locked location, and be filed by year of incident. Upon completion of the investigation, all electronic copies of documentation (including electronic communications) will be deleted once included in the paper file.

7.3. Participant Experience – Facility Access for Participants and Members

- Facility Access – Cor Van Raay YMCA
  - All individuals 18 years of age and older will be asked to show government issued photo identification.
  - All members are required to have their information entered into our membership database and a photo taken.
  - Day Pass users and program registrants are required to have their information entered into our membership database.
  - Contractors are required to show government issued photo identification as well as to sign-in to the facility.
  - City of Lethbridge workers who regularly work at the Cor Van Raay YMCA are required to have their information entered into our membership database and a photo taken. City of Lethbridge workers who do not regularly work at the Cor Van Raay YMCA are required to show government issued photo identification as well as to sign-in to the facility.
  - For birthday parties and rentals in which adults are attending the event and the event occurs within the facility, government issued photo identification is shown and the first and last name of all adults are recorded, and attendance logs maintained.
  - For parents/guardians of children who are in registered programs and are accessing the facility to assist the child but are not registered participants, government issued photo identification is shown by all adults and the first and last name of all adults are recorded, and attendance logs maintained.
  - A participant who is 7 years of age or younger cannot access the facility without the direct supervision of a legal guardian or an individual over the age of 16. Children 8 years of age and older are permitted to come to use public access amenities independently.
- Facility Access – Licensed Programs
  - Parents/guardians of children in a licensed program are required to show government issued photo identification to sign-out the child and have their information entered into our membership database.
  - Parents/guardians may authorize other people to sign a child participant in or out of licensed programs. Authorized persons must be 16 years of age or older, unless they are the parent/guardian of the child, in which case there is no age minimum.
  - Any visitor (including contractors, licensing officers, etc.) to the program site is required to show government issued photo identification as well as to sign-in to the facility.
- Program Access – Unlicensed Programs Sign-in and Sign-out
  - The names of individuals who are authorized to sign out child participants will be entered in the database. Authorized individuals must be 16 years of age or older, unless they are the parent/guardian of the child, in which case there is no age minimum. Authorized individuals must sign-in and sign-out child

participants, and show government issued photo identification at the time of sign-out at the program space.
    - The names of specific individuals who are not authorized to sign-out child participants due to Court Order(s), and the supporting documentation, must be provided to the Child Safety and Protection Lead. The Child Safety and Protection Lead will record the name of any unauthorized individuals and the expiration date of the supporting documentation, enter these details into the Association's membership database, and return or destroy any copies of the private documents provided.
    - Parents and/or guardians of participants 8 years of age or older can authorize the child sign-in and sign-out for themselves. This authorization is done at the time of registration for each program and each session.
- Program Access – Licensed Programs
    - The names of individuals who are authorized to sign out child participants will be entered in the database. Authorized individuals must be 16 years of age or older, unless they are the parent/guardian of the child, in which case there is no age minimum. Authorized individuals must sign-in and sign-out child participants, and show government issued photo identification at the time of sign-out at the program space.
    - The names of specific individuals who are not authorized to sign-out child participants due to Court Order(s), and the supporting documentation, must be provided to the Senior Licensed Programs Manager and Child Safety and Protection Lead. The Senior Licensed Programs Manager will record the name of any unauthorized individuals and the expiration date of the supporting documentation, enter these details into the Association's membership database, and return or destroy any copies of the private documents provided; they will then provide those details to the Child Safety and Protection Lead.

7.4. Governance and Culture

- All employees and volunteers of the Association are trained on the code of conduct specific to their team(s). All employees and volunteers will sign their Team-Specific Code(s) of Conduct.
- Annually, there will be one self-assessment completed mid-year plus one external audit completed by YMCA Canada peer reviewers.

8. Attachments

8.1. People – Recruitment & Selection and Orientation & Training
8.2. People – Exceptions & Related Forms
8.3. People – Orientation Acknowledgement Form
8.4. People – Association Training Acknowledgement Form (Level 1)
8.5. People – Association Training Acknowledgement Form (Level 2)
8.6. People – Recertification Training Acknowledgement Form (Level 1)
8.7. People – Child Safety and Protection Acknowledgement Form (Board Members)
8.8. Responding – Response & Reporting Information
8.9. Responding – Child and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Reporting Form
8.10. Participant Experience – Participant and Facility Access
8.11. Governance and Culture – Department-Specific Codes of Conduct
8.12. Telephone Numbers and Contacts
8.13. Signs of Abuse & Neglect

8.14. Best Practices for the Protection of Children

Approving Authority – Board of Directors and CEO	
Matthew Salmon Matthew Salmon (Oct 5, 2026 10:46:50 MDT)	05/10/2026
Matthew Salmon, Chairperson of the Board	Date
Jennifer Petracek-Kolb	24/09/2026
Jennifer Petracek-Kolb, CEO	Date

9. Policy History

9.1. 1310 Child Safety and Protection Policy 20251021
9.2. 1310 Child Safety and Protection Policy 20241119
9.3. 1310 Child Safety and Protection Policy 20231013
9.4. Association Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults Policies & Procedures (dated May 17, 2022)