

PARENT / CARER INFORMATION PACK

Information for parents/carers whose child or young person attends YMCA Portadown youth service

The background of the entire page is a photograph of two people from behind, wearing bright orange hoodies. The hoodies have white text and a logo. The text on the left hoodie reads "LOVE THE YM" and the text on the right hoodie reads "LOVE THE YM". Both hoodies feature a white inverted triangle logo to the right of the text.

LOVE
THE
YM

LOVE
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YM





Parent / Carer Information Pack

In this document, you will find a number of procedures that we follow within the YMCA Portadown youth provision. We ask that you take the time to read through all of the information provided.

This pack will also provide you with information on how to get in touch with us and other helpful organisations.

YMCA Portadown is here to help provide a safe and nurturing space for your young person to create friendships, gain life skills and experience new opportunities.

We hope your child or young person enjoys their time at YMCA Portadown and we look forward to welcoming them to our centres.

Kind regards,

Nathan White
Youth Work Manager

Contact us

-  **YMCA Portadown**
80 Jervis Street
Portadown
Co. Armagh
BT62 3HD
-  **028 38 33 23 21**
07809168984
-  **nathan.white@ymca-ireland.net**
-  **www.ymcaportadown.com**
- 

YMCA IRELAND VISSION, MISSION & VALUES



OUR VISION

"Our vision is a world where young people, their families and communities flourish in body, mind and spirit."

OUR MISSION

As a faith-based, all-island organisation, our mission is:

To create inclusive communities where everyone feels welcomed, accepted and inspired by social justice and peace for all.

To provide life-enriching opportunities for young people, their families and communities.

OUR VALUES



Welcome

We believe that every YMCA should be a place of welcome.



Opportunity

We place that every YMCA should be a place of opportunity.



Wellbeing

We believe that every YMCA should be a place of wellbeing.



Justice

Creating inclusive communities where everyone feels welcomed, accepted and inspired by social justice and peace for all.

ABOUT YMCA PORTADOWN



YMCA Portadown was first established in 1903 and was reformed after a period of abeyance in 1945.

The YMCA has been located on its current site since 1957 and in 2019 a new £1.4m youth centre was officially opened by the Earl of Caledon KCVO JP and currently operates a full-time youth centre just West of Portadown town centre.

Our programmes range from evening drop-in sessions to specific needs-based interventions for young people with a particular focus on Health, Well being, youth development, International work, and Inclusion.

YMCA Portadown is managed by a local standing committee of the National Council of YMCAs of Ireland Ltd.

WHAT DO WE DO?

- ✔ Health & Wellbeing
- ✔ Peace Building
- ✔ Youth Work & Youth Spaces
- ✔ Vocational Training
- ✔ Global Youth Work / International Work
- ✔ Venue Rental

YMCA PORTADOWN POLICY DOCUMENTS

Please select or scan a policy to view.

For more information or queries, please contact us at gordon.woolsey@ymca-ireland.net



Child Safeguarding Statement



YMCA Challenge 21



Keeping Adults Safe Policy



YMCA Ireland Privacy Statement



YMCA Christian Emphasis



Commitment to Equality & Diversity



YMCA Health & Safety Policy



YMCA Staff Development



Outreach / Detached Policy



ANTI BULLYING PROCEDURE

All elements of addressing bullying behaviour fall within the YMCA Safeguarding Policy:

- Young people have a right to a safe, secure and caring environment.
- All forms of bullying behaviour are not acceptable.
- Members will be aware of the bullying policy and the consequences of unacceptable behaviour.
- Bullying behaviour will always be addressed Staff will promote an environment where individual differences and diversity are accepted.
- A preventative approach to an anti-bullying culture within the youth service will be adopted.
- Staff will provide direct intervention with vulnerable groups to ensure bullying does not occur.
- Parents will be encouraged to follow the procedures for reporting bullying concerns.
- Any complaint of bullying made by a parent/guardian will be fully investigated by a YMCA Staff member, and a personal response to the complaint will be made within one week.
- Action to protect the victim will be taken immediately. This may include contacting the parents of the bully, and, depending on the seriousness of the attack, suspending them from attending the relevant youth service provision.



DRUGS & ALCOHOL PROCEDURES

YMCA Portadown operates a non-smoking, no drugs and no alcohol policy for staff and young people within all youth provision, including Educational Visits and Residentials;

- **There should be no alcohol, solvents or illicit drug use/possession/supply in and around the youth centre.**
- **YMCA Portadown will support young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs based on knowledge and skills developed through our personal success and wellbeing programmes.**
- **Staff will promote a positive attitude to a drug-free lifestyle, which allows young people to make informed choices about drug use.**
- **If a member of staff believes that a young person may cause physical or emotional harm to themselves or others through alcohol/drug misuse, or a person is no longer able to take responsibility for his/her actions, then a member of staff will have to escalate to a senior member of staff and make contact with the young person's parent/guardian.**
- **It is encouraged that young people with e-cigarettes and any other age should be treated as they would with any other age-restricted products such as cigarettes or alcohol.**
 - *Confiscating e-cigarettes from young people and explaining why*
 - *Taking opportunities to provide accurate information on e-cigarettes and engage young people in accurate conversations about the risks of vaping, including that some long-term risks remain unclear.*
 - *Recognising that all staff are role models for young people and they should refrain from smoking and vaping in front of young people.*
 - *For more information or guidance on vaping; click the link below*
<https://ineqe.com/2023/04/20/youth-vaping/>



CHILD SAFEGUARDING

All elements of child protection fall within YMCA Ireland's Safeguarding Policy 2023.

YMCA Portadown has a duty of care for the welfare, safety and protection of children and young people using their services. They will carry out this duty through the safeguarding policy, which aims to ensure a caring, supportive and safe environment is provided.

One way in which the YMCA seeks to protect children and young people is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills needed to keep themselves safe.

All staff including auxiliary, ancillary and youth workers, paid and voluntary, have been subject to appropriate criminal background checks. All staff have adopted YMCA Ireland's Safeguarding Statment for adults working with Children" which dictates appropriate behaviours when working with young people.

All staff including auxiliary, ancillary and youth workers, paid and voluntary, have completed Keeping Children Safe Training.

The purpose of the safeguarding policy is to protect children and young people by ensuring that everyone who works in a youth provision - youth workers and non-youth work staff - has clear procedures on the actions to be taken where abuse or neglect of a child/young people has been disclosed, observed or suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child.

The designated officer within the youth centre/project will inform Social Services and/or the PSNI, of any disclosure, concern or suspicion of child abuse, in order to protect the child from further harm. Similar prompt action will ensue in the event of a complaint, disclosure, concern or suspicion against a member of staff.



CHILD SAFEGUARDING

CHILD PROTECTION COURT ORDERS OF EXCLUSIONS

To ensure the safety of young people, YMCA Portadown should be informed of any court order or exclusion of a named adult(s) who should not be in contact with a specific child or young person. By signing the registration form, the person with parental responsibility indicates that no such order or exclusion exists. However, if one does exist, the appropriate form should be obtained from the youth worker in charge and completed.

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT

Gateway Services

Northern Trust	0300 1234 333
Belfast Trust	028 9050 7000
South-Eastern Trust	0300 1000 300
Southern Trust	0800 7387 745
Western Trust	028 7131 4090
Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Service	029 9504 9999

External Organisations

PSNI Public Protection Unit 101
NSPCC 0808 800 5000
Family Support NI 0845 600 6483
Childline 0800 1111



PHOTOGRAPHY PROCEDURES

YMCA Portadown may wish to take photographs/produce films of young people for promotional purposes. These images may appear in the local press, YMCA printed publications or on our website.

YMCA Portadown operates social media sites, and it is possible that images could be used on X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. To comply with data protection legislation and YMCA Safeguarding policy, parental permission is required before any image of young people can be used.

Conditions of Use

- We will not include details or full names (First name and surname) of any child in an image without good reason. For example, we may include the full name of a competition prize winner if we have their consent.
- We will not include personal email, postal address or phone numbers.
- We will only use images of children who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately.
- We will not use full-face images on social media without your express permission.



PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Throughout the year, the YMCA Portadown will issue forms which must be signed by a person with parental responsibility.

These forms could be for the purpose of:

- Registration to YMCA Portadown youth provision
- Permission for educational visits, specialist programmes or residential
- Permission to take and use photographs or digital images.
- Permission to use ICT equipment

It is important that the appropriate adult signs these forms. This person must have parental responsibility as outlined in the Children (NI) Order 1995, which defines as follows:

- Natural mother (who always has parental responsibility)
- A natural father who only gains parental responsibility:
 - If married to the mother at the time of birth or subsequently
 - Through an agreement witnessed by a solicitor
 - Through a parental responsibility order by a court If jointly registered
- A person who has been awarded parental responsibility through a court order

For further clarification, if required, please contact the Youth Work Manager; nathan.white@ymca-ireland.net or 07809168984



PROMOTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

The relationship between youth worker and young person is crucial to positive youth work practice. In order to establish and maintain positive relationships and behaviour, the parents/guardians, staff and young people all have their part to play.

The following standards are expected of everyone involved:

- Staff and young people will work together to create a positive environment
- Staff and young people will strive to develop good working relationships based on mutual respect
- Staff will encourage and support young people to develop self-discipline, and respect for others
- Staff will encourage positive standards of behaviour and provide appropriate recognition for this
- Staff and young people will work together to establish clear boundaries to guard against inappropriate behaviour
- Staff and parents will communicate if there is a cause for concern
- Staff will ensure that young people are aware of all child protection and health and safety procedures
- Young people will care for the building and equipment
- Young people will follow the directions given by staff
- Staff will intervene immediately to challenge unacceptable behaviour
- Sanctions for inappropriate behaviour will be highlighted by the youth worker in charge, and discussed with young people, staff and parents/guardians as appropriate
- Staff to ensure that young people are clear about the expectations in relation to positive behaviour at all times



LEAVING THE PREMISES

Young people come to YMCA Portadown activities and sessions voluntarily, and youth workers encourage them to remain for the entire session.

It should be noted by parents that while youth workers will take all reasonable steps to supervise the young people attending such activities and sessions, **they cannot force young people to remain on the premises against their wishes.**

Parents and guardians are therefore requested to have a conversation with their young person regarding the expectation that they will attend for the duration of the sessions and that they should seek permission from their parents if they wish to leave the premises.

Once they leave the youth club/centre premises, the YM and its staff cannot accept responsibility for the young person and will not be supervising the young person.

In all cases, parents should specify if their child can leave the centre or not in their membership form. There is an expectation that all junior members are to remain for the duration of the session unless specified in the membership form or by a parent/guardian.

The YM will allow the young person to access a telephone should they wish to contact you for permission to leave, subject to the young person notifying a youth worker that they are leaving.

COMPLAINTS & COMMENTS

At all times we aim to treat you with respect and courtesy, but there may be times when you are unhappy with the standard of our service. It may also be that you wish to make a comment to express your praise or appreciation for the work of a staff member or support of YMCA Portadown. There are a number of ways in which you can get in touch regarding comments or concerns.

- Talk to your youth centre manager if you have a concern about your child or another child's safety. There is also a deputy safeguarding officer at every centre.
- We would encourage you to use our online form to leave any comments you may have regarding staff, programmes/provision or suggestions on how we may improve. You may also use this to make a complaint which will then be handled through the official YMCA complaints processes.

The YMCA Portadown complaints process can be accessed in a range of ways:

Name: John Peacock (YMCA Ireland National Secretary)

Email: john.peacock@ymca-ireland.net

or

Phone: 028 38332321

Email: gordon.woolsey@ymca-ireland.net

Post: 80 Jervis Street, Portadown, BT62 3HD

Online: [YMCA Portadown Comments & Complaints Form](#)

QR Code:





DONATE JOIN CLUB 120 TODAY

YMCA Club 120 is a unique club that offers its members the opportunity to support YMCA Portadown's children and young people, through monthly or annual donations, whilst receiving a variety of perks and exclusive events. Due to continued funding cutbacks and challenges we are facing, we are asking and encouraging parents, guardians, friends, businesses and stakeholders of YMCA Portadown to consider committing to a monthly/annual donation by joining Club 120 to ensure the positive work continues in West Portadown and beyond for the foreseeable future.

YMCA Club 120 is a simple concept that aims to have 120 people donating to YMCA Portadown in our 120th year operating in Portadown. By donating a suggested amount of £10 per month, we would cover our annual rising costs and be able to provide effective and purposeful support and opportunities for the children and young people of Portadown, enabling them to build resilience, overcome significant problems, broaden their horizons and work towards their full potential in life.

WHY JOIN CLUB 120?

With so many good causes in the UK in need of financial support, we created Club 120 with the aim of showing our members how much we value their generosity, by providing a variety of benefits to those in the Club.

- Invitation to Members-only events, where you'll meet staff, young people, key stakeholders and supporters who have the common goal of supporting YMCA Portadown.
- Monthly newsletter delivered by email, showing you how your monthly giving is making a difference in our community.
- Waiving annual membership fee for child or children attending service.
- Discounts for selected trips or residential experiences.

This unique club significantly changes the lives of children and young people for the better, so why wouldn't you want to get involved?



JOIN TODAY



**120 YEARS
CLUB**



BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

Dear parent/carer

YMCA Portadown is a youth club for all young people and in order to ensure it is a safe space for all - we require everyone to be registered members of our service.

Our registration fee of £10 and subscription per session of 50p will remain the same for 2023/24

YMCA PORTADOWN CORE PROGRAMME 2023/24

TUESDAY EVENING; Jnr Youth Club, P4 to P5 from 6 to 7:30 PM *Starting 05/09/23*
Jnr Youth Club, P6 to P7 from 7:30 to 9 PM *Starting 05/09/23*

WEDNESDAY EVENING: Intermediate Youth Club, Year 8 to Year 10 from 6 to 9 PM *Starting 06/09/23*

THURSDAY AFTERNOON: Kidz Club, P4 to Year 10 from 2:45 to 5:30 *Starting 14/09/23*
(Pick up available from Millington Primary School at 2:45 PM & cost per session is £1pp)

THURSDAY EVENING: Snr Youth Club, Year 11+ from 6 to 9 PM *Starting 07/09/23*

FRIDAY EVENING: Jnr Drop-in, P4 to P7 from 5 to 7:45 PM *Starting 08/09/23*
Snr Drop-in, Year 8+ from 8 to 10:45 PM *Starting 08/09/23*

Additional opportunities, programmes and projects will be released at a later date and all registered members will get first preference for participating.

In order to register please follow this link: <https://www.ymcaportadown.com/ourprogrammes>

You can also follow the link via the QR Code below;

Yours sincerely,



Nathan White
Manager

07809168984

nathan.white@ymca-ireland.net



JOIN US ON WHATSAPP



ymca portadown
WhatsApp Business

SCAN ME



alternatively, contact us at; 07809168984



YMCA Portadown

80 Jervis Street Portadown | 028 38 332321

gordon.woolsey@ymca-ireland.net (CEO)

nathan.white@ymca-ireland.net (Manager)

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