

YWCA Children/Youth Programming



HIGH FIVE Commitment to Children

Quality recreation, child care, and sport programs help children become capable adults who can contribute effectively to the community. When children participate in recreational play, they develop physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively. What they learn at play provides a strong foundation that will help prepare them for future life experiences. All recreation and sport programs have a responsibility to provide activities and environments where children feel safe, welcome, competent, connected, empowered and special. HIGH FIVE is a quality assurance and accreditation system to help children's recreation and sport programs measure the quality of their programs and to support them in the *Quest* for quality.

The HIGH FIVE program:

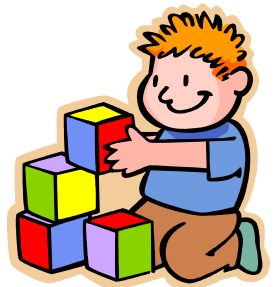
- ★ Provides resources, tools and training to support program quality
- ★ Supports organizations using these resources, tools, and training to meet their commitment to quality
- ★ Accredits organizations that are using the training, tools, and resources to support quality in their children's programs; and
- ★ Helps parents understand what to look for in a quality program.



The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin is a registered member of the HIGH FIVE Quality Assurance program and is committed to providing quality programming for children aged 6-12. The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin recognizes that the following conditions help children along the path of healthy development:

Environments for children must be:

- secure, safe, and stable
- caring, stimulating, accessible and challenging
- considerate of personal space needs and special needs
- equipped with age, size and ability-appropriate equipment, furniture and materials
- welcoming of diverse races, cultures and abilities

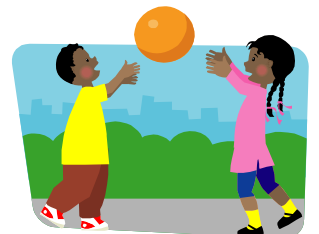


Activities for children must:

- allow for a combination of self-directed and leader-directed activities
- provide children with opportunities for input, involvement, and choice
- reflect both assessed and expressed needs
- provide opportunities for active participation and reflection
- encourage cooperation and friendship
- incorporate varied learning styles and developmental stages
- recognize uniqueness and encourage mastery
- value and incorporate cultural, racial and linguistic diversity

Leaders must:

- Ensure all children are treated with respect, honesty and trust
- Recognize and accept children's individual needs and circumstances
- Employ positive behaviour management methods
- Help children value and celebrate diversity in the community
- Consistently model appropriate behaviour
- Continually evaluate the program and their leadership to ensure improvements and reflect changing needs.



The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will:

- Encourage and support the ongoing development of staff and volunteers with regard to their knowledge and understanding of healthy child development
- Ensure clear and on-going communication with parents and families
- Encourage participation and input from children and families
- Provide the organizational supports necessary to ensure that children feel safe, welcome, competent, connected, empowered and special.