

## **Staffing Information**

### **Melissa O'Shaughnessy; Kids Club Director**

Melissa O'Shaughnessy has proudly called Mountain Lakes home for the past 22 years, where she and her husband raised their three children. The YMCA has long been an important part of their family's life. All three of her children learned to swim at the Y, participated in its sports, dance, and before- and after-school programs, and spent many memorable summers attending YMCA camp.

Coming from a family of educators, Melissa has always been passionate about working with children and supporting young people as they grow, learn, and thrive. Prior to joining the YMCA team, she worked at DAWN Center for Independent Living as a Pre-Employment Transition Site Developer, where she helped secure internships and employment opportunities for individuals in the neurodivergent community.

Before that, Melissa served as a job coach at a private special education school, supporting neurodivergent students in real-world work settings. In this role, she provided individualized guidance and helped students develop practical job skills, preparing them for greater independence and meaningful employment.

Melissa is excited to bring her dedication to youth development, community engagement, and inclusive programming to the YMCA. She looks forward to creating a positive, welcoming environment where every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed.

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| <p><b>Site Directors:</b> Site directors are a leadership position at each site. The Site Director is responsible for making sure the Kids Club procedures and requirements detailed in the staff handbook are being executed. Responsible for the supervision, safety, and well-being of the children. Creates positive, nurturing relationships with children, while building cooperative relationships with parents/caregivers. Promotes and supports the potential of participants and facilitates peer-to-peer connections as part of the overall Kids Club experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervises staff and children.</li> <li>• Follow all protocols as outlined in the staff handbook.</li> <li>• Make sure all staff follow state regulations as outlined in the Staff Handbook and Orientation.</li> <li>• Implement program activities that are culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate, and consistent with YMCA values. These must include: SEL, Arts &amp; Crafts, STEM, Sports &amp; Games, and Literacy.</li> <li>• Adheres to program standards including safety and cleanliness.</li> <li>• Follows YMCA policies and procedures, including those related to medical and disciplinary situations, child abuse prevention and emergencies.</li> <li>• Cultivates positive relationships and maintains effective communication with parents, children, and staff. Be a role model for relationship-building skills in all interactions.</li> <li>• Make sure weekly planners are completed 2 weeks in advance and are followed by staff.</li> <li>• Coach support staff to become stronger counselors by modeling techniques for group management and activity facilitation.</li> <li>• Complete Behavior Slips as needed and communicate them with the parents the day that they are administered.</li> <li>• Maintain all state required documentation at the site. (i.e. drill logs, staff and children's record checklists, illness logs, staff credentials, etc.)</li> <li>• Must have a degree or at least 60 credit hours in a related field. And experience with children in a related field.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Co-Directors:</b> The Co-Director is responsible for aiding the Site Director in making sure the Kids Club procedures and requirements, detailed in the staff handbook, are executed. Responsible for the supervision, safety, and well-being of the children. Creates positive, nurturing relationships with children, while building cooperative relationships with parents/caregivers. The director is the leader of a group at the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow all protocols as outlined in the staff handbook.</li> <li>• Make sure all staff follow state regulations as outlined in the Staff Handbook and Orientation.</li> <li>• Implement program activities that are culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate, and consistent with YMCA values. These must include: SEL, Arts &amp; Crafts, STEM, Sports &amp; Games, Community Projects, and Literacy.</li> <li>• Complete weekly planner for the site with support staff and site director. Make sure it is followed weekly.</li> <li>• Adheres to program standards including safety and cleanliness.</li> <li>• Follows YMCA policies and procedures, including those related to medical and disciplinary situations, child abuse prevention and emergencies.</li> <li>• Cultivates positive relationships and maintains effective communication with parents, children, and staff. Models' relationship-building skills in all interactions.</li> <li>• Coach support staff to become stronger counselors by modeling techniques for group management and activity facilitation.</li> <li>• Stand in for Site Director in his/her absence.</li> <li>• Must have at least 2 years' experience in working with children.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Support Staff:</b> Responsible for the overall safety and supervision of the children as well as the running of the program activities with the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in the planning of upcoming events and activities.</li> <li>• Follow all state regulations as outlined in Staff Orientation.</li> <li>• Executes program activities that are culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate, and consistent with YMCA values. These must include: SEL, Arts &amp; Crafts, STEM, Sports &amp; Games, and Literacy.</li> <li>• Adheres to program standards including safety and cleanliness standards.</li> <li>• Follows YMCA policies and procedures, including those related to medical and disciplinary situations, child abuse prevention and emergencies.</li> <li>• Cultivates positive relationships and maintains effective communication with parents, children, and staff.</li> <li>• Must model relationship-building skills in all interactions.</li> <li>• Take daily attendance and follow "Missing Child Procedure".</li> <li>• Must use behavior management techniques as outlined in the staff handbook and orientation.</li> </ul> |
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## **STAFF BACKGROUND & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

To have a successful program, the YMCA searches for qualified individuals who meet New Jersey Licensing requirements to join our staff. When choosing staff, an extensive interview process is conducted. Experience, compassion, enthusiasm, creativity, and a strong desire to work with children are attributes we look for. In addition, all our staff are certified in Basic First Aid and CPR/AED.

We couldn't be more grateful for the exceptional care and support provided by Lakeland Hills YMCA Kids Club. As working parents, it was important for us to find a safe, caring, and engaging environment for our child after school, and the LHY Kids Club has exceeded our expectations in every way.

The staff are not only professional and dependable but also truly care about the children's well-being. Our child looks forward to attending each day, knowing that they'll have a mix of fun activities, homework help, and time to relax.

We highly recommend Lakeland Hills YMCA Kids Club program to any parent looking for a safe, caring, and fun after school experience for their child.

We follow the following state guidelines per licensing standards for background checks:

3A:52-4.11 Criminal History Record Information background check procedures (a) As a condition of securing a license or Certificate of Life/Safety Approval, the sponsor or sponsor representative shall ensure that a Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) fingerprint background check is completed for himself or herself, and for all staff members who are or will be working at the center on a regularly scheduled basis, to determine whether any such person has been convicted of a crime, as specified in P.L. 2000, c. 77 (N.J.S.A. 30:5B-6.10 to 6.17).

1. The sponsor or sponsor representative and each staff member shall complete the electronic fingerprinting process through the vendor authorized by the State to conduct CHRI background checks through the Division of State Police in the Department of Law and Public Safety and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
2. The sponsor or sponsor representative and each staff member shall provide the identifying information and documentation to the State-authorized vendor as necessary to conduct a CHRI background check, including the individual's name, address, date of birth, place of birth, citizenship, sex, race, height, weight, hair color, eye color, Social Security number, and the center's license number.

3A:52-4.10 Child Abuse Record Information background check procedures (a) As a condition of securing a new or renewal license or Certificate of Life/Safety Approval, the sponsor or sponsor representative shall provide for himself or herself, and shall obtain from all staff members who are or will be working at the center on a regularly scheduled basis, written consent for the Department to conduct a Child Abuse Record 35 Information (CARI) background check to determine whether an incident of child abuse or neglect has been substantiated against any such person.

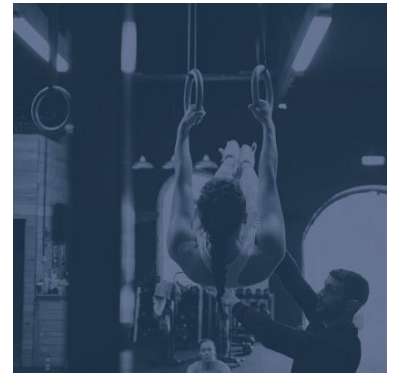
1. The sponsor or sponsor representative, and each staff member shall complete a signed consent form provided by the Department that indicates the identifying information necessary to conduct a CARI background check, including the person's name, address, date of birth, sex, race, and Social Security number. Pursuant to the Federal Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579), the Department shall advise each person that the disclosure of his or her Social Security number is voluntary, and that the Social Security number will only be used for the purpose of conducting a CARI background check.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Preasidium Child Abuse Prevention**

The YMCA is currently in the process of becoming accredited in Preasidium Child Abuse Prevention. Praesidium Accreditation publicly demonstrates an organization's commitment to safety and adherence to the highest standards in abuse prevention.

**Partnership with Praesidium** - Pursuing Praesidium Accreditation gives an organization access to best practices, written resources to strengthen prevention efforts, and consultation with our experts.



**Strengthen Your Mission & Values** - An organization's consumers and communities deserve the highest level of safety and abuse protection, and its team is a valuable resource that demands leadership and support to navigate daily challenges. Pursuing Praesidium Accreditation creates a pathway to align the organization's mission and values with best practices in abuse prevention.

**Communicate A Commitment to Abuse Prevention** - Now more than ever communities, regulators, carriers, and funders are asking important questions. Praesidium Accreditation demonstrates an organization meets the highest standards in abuse prevention. Sexual abuse is a preventable risk and together we can make a difference.

When sexual abuse occurs in the context of an organization serving youths or other vulnerable populations, the first question is always "HOW?" How could this have happened on our watch? How did we miss the signs? How could we not have known that the person who perpetrated the abuse had such horrible intentions?

Despite prevailing myths, organizational sexual abuse is rarely a simple matter of a "bad actor" infiltrating an organization and preying upon its consumers. To learn from incidents and, therefore, help prevent them in the future, incidents must be evaluated in the context of the organization and the environment in which abuse was ultimately possible.

Praesidium's Safety Equation® identifies eight organizational operations that provide opportunities to decrease the risk of abuse by employees, volunteers, or other program participants.



## Commitment to Staff Professional Development at the Kids Club Program

At the Kids Club, we believe that ongoing professional development is crucial to providing the highest quality of care and support for your child. That's why we have established clear guidelines for both leadership and support staff to ensure that they are always growing in their knowledge, skills, and understanding of best practices in childcare and education. In addition to child abuse training, the YMCA staff have a library of training modules available for staff from the national YMCA.

### Leadership Staff: 20 Hours of Professional Development

Our leadership staff are required to complete at least **20 hours of professional development each year**. This investment in their growth ensures that they are up to date with the latest trends, research, and techniques in the field. As leaders, they set the tone for the entire program and are responsible for overseeing the daily operations, supporting the team, and ensuring that each child is receiving the best possible care.

### Support Staff: 12 Hours of Professional Development

Support staff, who work directly with the children daily, are also required to complete **at least 12 hours of professional development annually**. This ongoing education helps them stay informed about key developmental milestones, new teaching strategies, and ways to foster an inclusive, engaging, and safe environment for children of all ages.

### Topics for Development

Our professional development program covers a broad range of topics to ensure our staff members are equipped to handle the diverse needs of children in our care. Some of the **recommended topics** for staff development include:

- **Child Growth & Development**

Staff learn about the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of children, enabling them to better understand and respond to each child's unique needs and developmental stage. This knowledge helps them create activities and interactions that support growth in all areas.

- **Educational & Physical Activity**

The Kids Club places a strong emphasis on active learning, and staff are trained in how to integrate physical activity into everyday routines. Understanding the importance of movement, play, and physical fitness helps staff design fun and educational activities that keep children engaged and healthy.

- **Special Needs Programming**

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where all children feel supported. Staff are trained to work with children who have special needs, ensuring that every child receives the accommodations and assistance they need to thrive.

- **Social-Emotional and Behavioral Development for Young Children**

Understanding how young children develop social skills, emotional regulation, and appropriate behavior is essential. Our staff receive training in fostering positive behaviors, supporting emotional health, and helping children navigate social interactions in a constructive way.

- **ADA Guidelines**

We ensure that all staff are familiar with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** and its guidelines. This training empowers staff to create an environment that is accessible and welcoming to children of all abilities, making sure that every child can fully participate in activities and feel included.

- **Leadership & Advocacy**

Our leadership staff receive training in advocacy and leadership skills, helping them better support their teams

and represent the interests of the children and families we serve. This includes understanding how to advocate for policies that benefit children, parents, and the program.