

YMCA of Greater Toledo

Heat Index Outdoor Programming Policy

Purpose

To protect participants, families, volunteers, and staff from heat-related illness while supporting safe, consistent decision-making for outdoor programming.

Policy

When the **heat index is 103°F or higher**, all outdoor programming will be **cancelled**, with the exception of **outdoor swim lessons**, which may continue with added heat-safety precautions.

Weather Source

The designated weather source is **The Weather Channel / Weather.com**. Staff must check the heat index using the **ZIP code of the program location**, not a nearby city or general regional forecast. The Weather Channel describes heat index as how hot it feels when heat and humidity combine.

Decision Standard

Outdoor programming will be cancelled when the Weather Channel heat index for the program location's ZIP code is **103°F or higher** at the time of review or during the scheduled program window.

Programs Covered

This applies to all outdoor programs, including but not limited to camps, sports, fitness classes, enrichment activities, playground activities, and outdoor events.

Exception: Outdoor Swim Lessons

Outdoor swim lessons may continue when the heat index is over 103°F, provided staff implement additional precautions, including access to drinking water, shaded or cooled rest areas when feasible, shortened on-deck time, close monitoring for heat illness, and cancellation if thunder, poor air quality, unsafe pool conditions, staffing concerns, or participant safety concerns arise.

Procedure

Program leadership will check Weather.com by location ZIP code before outdoor programming begins and again as needed when conditions change. Cancellation decisions should be communicated to staff and families as early as practical through the organization's normal communication channels.

Staff Safety Expectations

Staff should encourage hydration, monitor participants for signs of heat illness, reduce

physical exertion when heat is elevated, and seek emergency assistance for any serious symptoms.