

Next Best Thing to a Mother's Care

Agency: YWCA Sioux Falls

Program: Childcare

Service: Provides quality childcare services at an affordable cost. Children participate in activities that develop age-appropriate skills. Childcare is available at downtown and southern Sioux Falls locations.

Need: There are over 31,000 children ages 5-14 in our four county area. Lower income families pay 14-18% of their incomes for childcare.

Impact: The most formative years for a child are birth to six, years when most children are in a child care setting for 50 hours a week or 30% of their lives. 85% of a child's core brain structure is formed by the third birthday. More than 500 children attend YWCA childcare daily. Over 46% receive subsidy assistance thanks to the United Way.

Upon moving to Sioux Falls and starting a new career, Faith began her search for a childcare center she could trust. She wanted to ensure her children would be safe and enjoy their time in childcare.

"I found what I was looking for at YWCA," explains Faith. "I know my girls are safe here. I like that they have activities throughout the day and are not just sitting in front of a TV."

Jada who is 7, and Emma who is 3 have been attending the YWCA for a little over a year now. "Jada comes just during the summer and loves it. She gets to go on field trips to places like the Pavilion and library, they have daily activities, and her group got to go out to each for lunch once. And she loves that she gets to spend her summer with her friends," adds Faith.

Emma starts her day at the YWCA with breakfast and structured activities. She spends time learning her colors, singing songs, doing crafts or getting exercise in YWCA's gym. After lunch time, her classroom reads stories and takes naps before a light afternoon snack and free play. "Faith loves playing dress up in the afternoons and I love that they are modeling behaviors for her, like picking up their toys when they're done playing."



The childcare center at YWCA accepts children aged 4 weeks to 5 years old, opening up in the summer to children under the age of 12. "The YWCA is so much more than just being a fitness center," explains Teri Pieters, the Childcare Director for the downtown location. "Our childcare staff take a personal interest in each of our children and help with things like potty training, teaching them how to wash hands, stand in a line, even how to sing happy birthday."

Your support of Sioux Empire United Way provides YWCA with the ability to provide low-income families with scholarship assistance. Studies have shown that low-income families pay 14-18% of their income on childcare. Over 46% of all YWCA childcare families receive scholarship or childcare assistance subsidy.

"I can go to work each day knowing my girls are taken care of," ends Faith. "The staff here are genuine and truly care for my children. The care they provide is the next best thing to the own care that I provide as a mother."