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Media Contact: Scott Shoemaker, [sshoemaker@ymcadane.org](mailto:sshoemaker@ymcadane.org), 608 630 0660

## **YMCA Puts \$25K Relief Funding to Work in Emergency Child Care Programs**

**MADISON, WISCONSIN**—The YMCA of Dane County is pleased to announce that it will receive \$25,000 through the Dane County COVID-19 Emergency and Recovery Fund to support its emergency child care program. As Dane County's largest child care provider, the nonprofit is leveraging its expertise to provide 24/7 care for the children of health care workers and first responders during the current pandemic.

The YMCA worked with local governments and health care providers to develop the program to swiftly meet the emerging need. It is operated by the Y's state-licensed child care staff at the West and Sun Prairie YMCAs and uses the Y's standard child care curriculum while providing spaces for children to move and be active. 30-40 kids are currently served by the program, and there is additional capacity.

Important safety measures are in place to minimize foot-traffic and cross-contamination of each child's personal belongings, and staff sanitize and disinfect surfaces and materials as kids move from one space to another during care. Additionally, using multiple rooms and areas in each facility allows for physical distancing between students, their classmates, and staff as much as possible.

36 applications representing more than 90 organizations were selected to receive approximately \$1.5 million in grants through the Emergency and Recovery Fund, which is distributed by the United Way of Dane County. "To support health care workers and emergency responders in their ability to care for our community, we know they must have confidence their children are safe and being well-cared for while they work, no matter which shifts they are working," said Renee Moe, President & CEO of United Way of Dane County. "This partnership with the YMCA is unique and necessary, and United Way of Dane County is proud to partner with them to support local families."

As the public health crisis intensified, the YMCA identified community needs it could help meet. In addition to emergency child care services, it operates eight free food assistance sites across Dane County and an older adult outreach and health check program. The Y has subsidized its emergency service programs while providing them at no or below-market cost to community members in need.

YMCA President/CEO Mark Westover said, "The YMCA is thrilled to leverage our strength in child care to enable essential health care workers and first responders to stay at work. Our teachers are doing a great job keeping kids safe while still providing a fun and engaging atmosphere. We are extremely grateful for this \$25,000 grant and to the thousands of friends, neighbors and local businesses that continue to support the Emergency and Recovery Fund. Special thanks go out to Renee, the United Way and the recovery fund committee for recognizing our efforts."

Those wishing to support YMCA emergency service initiatives can also contribute at [ymcadane.org/support-y/donate](https://ymcadane.org/support-y/donate).

**About the YMCA of Dane County** The Y is a cause-driven nonprofit that serves about 22,000 members and has a much wider community impact through numerous community partnerships. The Y provides nearly \$400,000 in annual financial assistance to ensure that it is open and available to all. Across Dane County, it helps kids grow physically and emotionally through the area's largest child care operation and a diverse selection of sports, fitness and swim programs. The Y helps adults and families lead healthy lifestyles and manage chronic illnesses and keeps seniors connected and active. Find out more at [ymcadane.org](https://ymcadane.org).

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