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Gerry Vandemerwe, CEO

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YMCA of Greater Erie

YMCA Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

For Immediate Release

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The YMCA of Greater Erie Celebrates the 100th Anniversary of Father's Day

Erie, PA . This year, the YMCA of Greater Erie will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Father's Day. First Celebrated in June 1910 at the Spokane YMCA in Washington, Father's Day is now recognized all over the world.

The YMCA of Greater Erie is proud to join in this historic celebration honoring fathers, said Gerry Vandemerwe, CEO of the YMCA of Greater Erie. Dads and moms play a paramount role in children's lives, and the Y is committed to helping foster those relationships.

Father's Day was founded by Sonora Louise Smart Dodd, the daughter of a single father who served in the Civil War. On Mother's Day in 1909 Smart Dodd heard a sermon honoring mothers and wondered why there was no similar tribute for fathers. With the support of ministers in Spokane, Smart Dodd launched the first Father's Day celebration at the Spokane YMCA on June 19, 1910. President Nixon signed Father's Day into law in 1972.

Today, the Y remains committed to strengthening families. The YMCA of Greater Erie offers programs that foster understanding and companionship between children and their dads and moms- such as family fitness classes, family fun nights, youth sports, aquatic programs, and family camping and recreational activities at YMCA Camp Sherwin.

To honor dads, the YMCA has planned a Father's Day celebration at YMCA Camp Sherwin, 8600 West Lake Road, including a strawberry shortcake and ice cream social, pancake breakfast and World's Greatest Dad Contest. Camp Sherwin events are open to the public. Call (814) 774-9416 for more information.

About the YMCA of Greater Erie: The mission of the YMCA of Greater Erie is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Integral to all YMCA programs is character development and developmental assets. **Character** Development is based on the four YMCA core **values**-caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

For 150 years, the YMCA of Greater Erie has been dedicated to building strong kids, strong families and strong communities with a mission to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all it. Is also the belief of the YMCA that no one should ever be denied services because of inability to pay. Additionally, our income-based membership ensures that everyone can belong to the YMCA.

Our four convenient locations throughout the Erie region offer programs for all ages from our creative and fun youth sports programs to a wide variety of active older adults classes. Our award winning early learning care for children is offered at twenty locations throughout Erie County. A fit lifestyle and a philosophy dedicated to honesty, caring, respect and responsibility, the YMCA of Greater Erie celebrates a century and a half of services to our community.



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