



RICHARD MERWIN, CHAIRMAN  
GERRY VANDEMERWE, CEO

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Tammy Roche (814) 452-1432, (814) 566-9597**

**FREE BASIC SWIMMING & WATER SAFETY CLASS TEACHES KIDS & FAMILIES HOW TO BE SAFER IN AND AROUND WATER**

Erie, PA – Swimming builds confidence with every lap. One in every 5 kids in Erie County learns to swim at the YMCA of Greater Erie. Whether it be through instructional swimming lessons at YMCA Membership branches or community programs at the Erie Housing Authority or City of Erie Parks & Recreation programs, the YMCA of Greater Erie teaches kids and families how to be safer in and around water.

“It is vitally important to the overall health and safety of our community that kids, teens and adults have access to basic swimming and water safety instruction,” says Kelly Austin, aquatics director at the Glenwood Park YMCA. “One in four drowning accidents involves children under the age of 15. And, for every drowning, there are four times the amount of nonfatal submersion injuries which can cause long-term disabilities that include memory problems, learning disabilities and permanent vegetative state.”

Funded by a grant from Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, the YMCA of Greater Erie will offer Y-SPLASH, a free basic swimming, water safety and character development series for non-swimmers and beginners. Taught by YMCA aquatics certified instructors and aimed at children, teens and adults, the comprehensive program also provides opportunities to teach and demonstrate the four YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Y-SPLASH will be offered at the Downtown, Eastside Family and Glenwood Park YMCAs in Erie. All classes are filled on a first come, first serve basis.

**Schedule**

**Glenwood Park YMCA, 3727 Cherry Street, 868-0867, May 16-19, 2011, 5, 5:30, 6 or 6:30 p.m.** Registration begins April 25 – May 9.

**Downtown YMCA, 31 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, 452-3261, May 23-26, 5, 5:30, 6 or 6:30 p.m.** Registration begins May 2 – May 16.

**Eastside Family YMCA, 2101 Nagle Road, 899-9622, June 13-16, 10, 10:30, 11, 11:30 a.m., 5:15, 5:45, 6:15 or 6:45 p.m., 7:15 p.m. ADULT CLASS**

**About the Y**

**The Y’s Mission:** To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

**YMCA OF GREATER ERIE [WWW.YMCAERIE.ORG](http://WWW.YMCAERIE.ORG)**

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



**CORPORATE OFFICE**  
31 West 10th Street  
Erie, PA 16501  
(814) 452-1432

**CAMP SHERWIN**  
8600 West Lake Road  
Lake City, PA 16423  
(814) 774-9416

**COUNTY YMCA**  
12285 YMCA Drive  
Edinboro, PA 16412  
(814) 734-5700

**DOWNTOWN YMCA**  
31 West 10th Street  
Erie, PA 16501  
(814) 452-3261

**EASTSIDE YMCA**  
2101 Nagle Road  
Erie, PA 16510  
(814) 899-9622

**GLENWOOD PARK YMCA**  
3727 Cherry Street  
Erie, PA 16508  
(814) 868-0867

**The Y's Cause:** At the Y, strengthening community is our cause. Every day, the Y works side by side with our neighbors to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

**The Y,** founded in 1860, is one of Erie's leading nonprofits (501 c-3), committed to strengthening our community in the areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility:

**Youth Development: Nurturing the potential of every child and teen.**

The Y believes that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve. That's why, through the Y, thousands of Erie's youth today are engaged in programs that encourage Y core-values – character, honesty, respect and responsibility. Unique community partnerships with the City of Erie and the Erie Housing Authority serve Erie's most at-risk, underserved kids and teens directly in their neighborhoods. In our membership and program centers, award-winning childcare, before & after school care, summer camp, youth sports, swimming, youth fitness, leadership, mentoring and volunteerism, are all Y programs that are helping Erie's kids and teens reach their full potential.

**Healthy Living: Improving health and well-being.**

Through advocacy and leadership, the Y is a leading voice on health and well-being. With a mission centered on balance, the Y brings families closer together, encourages good health and fosters connections through fitness, sports, fun and shared interests. As a result, thousands of Erie's youth, adults and families are receiving the support, guidance and resources needed to achieve greater health and well-being for their spirit, mind and body.

**Social Responsibility: Giving back and providing support to our neighbors.**

Across Erie County, the Y helps people give back and assist our neighbors by offering them opportunities to volunteer, advocate and support programs that strengthen community. At the Y, we are volunteer-founded, volunteer-led organization. Volunteers are found at every level of the Y – in childcare, health & wellness, youth mentoring, board leadership and more. Through the Y's We Build People annual scholarship campaign, the Y provides financial assistance and income-based membership rates so that everyone can benefit from Y programs and membership. Additionally, the Y partners with other area non-profits enabling our members to support the community through donations and volunteerism.

**Involvement at the Y:** The Y strives to engage more people in the communities it serves whether it is as a member, volunteer, supporter or advocate. Each YMCA association is an independent, autonomous organization with its own governing board, professional staff and assets.

**The Y By the Numbers:**

The Y has 4 membership branches: the County Y located in Edinboro, the Downtown, Eastside and Glenwood Park Ys. Eighteen award-winning childcare centers provide care to children as young as six weeks. Unique community partnerships with the City of Erie and

the Erie Housing Authority serve Erie's most at-risk, underserved kids and teens directly in their neighborhoods.

30,000 people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds and abilities are served by the Y and Y programs. Financial assistance is available for all Y memberships and programs.

To learn more about the Y, [www.ymcaerie.org](http://www.ymcaerie.org).