



**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)  
Regarding Our Merger  
South Shore YMCA (SSYMCA) and South Shore Natural Science Center (SSNSC)**

**Why merge?**

- 1) to expand our mutual commitment to environmental education throughout the South Shore
- 2) to help ensure the Science Center's financial viability for generations to come
- 3) to enhance the YMCA's focus on social responsibility by educating more children and families to be responsible stewards of our environment

**What will change?**

- 1) Science Center members and program participants should feel comfortable with their favorite exhibits and programs remaining virtually intact – although we're starting to dream about many new enhancements!
- 2) Many of the initial changes will be "behind the scenes" such as marketing, fiscal management, financial development, IT support, and human resources being handled by the YMCA
- 3) There will be noticeable improvements to the facilities and grounds in the fall including a comprehensive sprucing up of the Natural Science Center
- 4) Over the next couple of months, everyone will begin to see co-branding of the Science Center and YMCA in signage, brochures, web-sites, etc.
- 5) The Science Center will continue its mission of educating the community in the natural sciences as a branch of the YMCA and is forming a branch board that will be connected to the South Shore YMCA's Association Board

**How will membership work?**

- 1) Current and new Science Center members will retain all of their current benefits. The \$150 joiners' fees will be waived for Science Center members who now join the YMCA.
- 2) YMCA members who want to join the Science Center may do so for a nominal monthly fee that can be added to their monthly payments

**Will the public still have access to the Science Center?**

The Science Center will continue to be open for both members and the public year round including its six trails.

**Are the YMCA and Science Center really compatible?**

- 1) The Science Center's commitment to environmental and outdoor education is clear, but the YMCA is admittedly much better known for its health and wellness programs and facilities. However, the YMCA has been in the outdoor education field which incorporates environmental courses for decades including its residence camps and conference center on the Cape and its extensive day camp programs in various locations throughout the South Shore.
- 2) Two of the major programs of the Science Center are its renowned preschool and day camps. Day camp and child care are also two of the YMCA's major programs. Yes, there are both subtle and significant differences in our programs - but now all of our members will have additional program options and choices.
- 3) We see the synergies of our two organizations as a powerful force to reach many more youth and families to perpetuate the historical mission of the Science Center "to educate, excite, and commit individuals to preserve and enjoy the natural environment."

**Are you aware of any other mergers between a YMCA and a Science Center?**

We're quite certain we're the first merger of this kind in the United States. Being the first is certainly exciting but it also carries a lot of responsibility. We believe we have an opportunity to model how compatible not-for-profit organizations can come together to maximize precious and limited community resources.

**What are your plans for the future?**

Now that our merger is complete, we will start formulating a five year plan that will describe our "desired future" and the steps needed to get there. The driving force of these plans will be the mission-compatible programs and services we envision to best serve the communities of the South Shore.