

YWCA McCaskey Child
Development Center
Parent Handbook



eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

Center
Center Fax Number

(717) 391-8618
(717) 396-0513

Welcome to the YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center



The YWCA Mission and Child Care

For over 140 years the YWCA of the USA has been committed to empowering women of all ages to live full and productive lives. For many mothers, this means working outside of the home and finding someone to care for their children. In partnership with these women and their families, YWCAs across the country have been providing quality, nurturing, enriching child care services.

Moreover, as part of the YWCA's commitment to eliminating racism, children celebrate diversity as they learn to understand value and create a society where all people are treated equally. All YWCA child care and school age programs embody the ideals of the YWCA- peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all people.

What is our philosophy?

The YWCA child care philosophy is based on the belief that each child is an individual, a special human being to be treated with love, respect, and sensitivity. Our major goal is that each child will develop a positive self-image. We strive toward this goal by maximizing each child's opportunities for success. By providing developmentally appropriate activities in each room and staff that are sensitive to the developmental and emotional needs of young children, we feel the children in our programs will develop an "I can do it" attitude. Children learn from birth on. Their "play" is their "work". Their reward for this is what they learn. We strive to provide opportunity for success by planning activities to meet age appropriate goals.

We believe that every child has the right to receive care and nurturing of the highest quality in a safe and loving environment. All YWCA child care programs are open programs where parents are welcome and encouraged to drop in at any time.

What is our curriculum?

The YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center follows the National standards for developmentally appropriate activities for young children set forth by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We follow the *Creative Curriculum* within our program. This curriculum allows us to assess each child and create a working portfolio for each child that attends our program.

We also follow Department of Public Welfare state child care regulations, and Pennsylvania Keystone STARS quality initiative. Our preschool classroom is a Pre-K Counts classroom through the state. We are also involved with the United Way's "Success by 6" initiative. We require all staff to complete at least **27** hours of training in Early Childhood Development each year. All staff is trained in first aid, CPR, fire safety, emergency preparedness plans and water safety.

Our Relationship to the School District of Lancaster

The center is available to both community parents as well as teen parents. The YWCA McCaskey center works cooperatively with the School District of Lancaster to provide a “model” child care center for the district’s Early Childhood Education Program. The center also works with community organizations to provide care for children of teen parents that use any of the schools in the city of Lancaster.

The School District of Lancaster allows the YWCA Lancaster to run the McCaskey Child Development Center year-round, Monday through Friday. The center is open from 6:30 a.m.– 6:00 p.m. for community parents, and 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. for teen parents.

The center also works with the School District of Lancaster as a community partner for the Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts initiative.

Our Goals for Young Children

The most important goal of the program is to help children become well-rounded, and enthusiastic, thus resulting in a positive self-image. The activities that we plan for children follow the Pennsylvania Early Childhood Standards for Learning.

Pennsylvania has set standards for Early Childhood based on many areas of learning to build successful learners. These standards include: Cognitive Development, Creative Expression, Emergent Literacy, Physical, Motor, Social, Emotional and Personal Development.

Cognitive Development:

a. Problem solving by observing, questioning, predicting, testing, and forming conclusions; thinking logically by gathering, and representing information.

Creative Expression:

a. Representing and thinking symbolically through creative activities such as art, music and dance.

Social/Emotional Development:

- a. Achieve a sense of self through relationships with peers and adults.
- b. Taking responsibility for self and others in the classroom setting.
- c. Behaving in a positive social manner by showing empathy, sharing, and taking turns.

Language Development/Emergent Curriculum:

- a. Listening and speaking
- b. Communicating with others
- c. Reading and writing: making sense of written language, understanding the purpose of print and how it works, gaining knowledge of the alphabet, writing letters and words.

Physical Development:

- a. Achieving gross motor control by moving the large muscle groups in the body.
- b. Gross motor control includes balance, and stability, running, jumping, throwing, and kicking.
- c. Fine motor control involves coordinating the small muscles in the hands and wrists. Children will be able to manipulate small objects such as writing utensils, and scissors.



Overview of Child Protective Services Law

All staff of the YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center are **Mandated reporters**. Mandated reporters are defined as a person who, in the course of their employment have direct contact with children must report or cause a report to be made when they suspect child abuse. Any signs of suspected abuse, neglect or maltreatment will be reported. It is not the center's responsibility to investigate reports of child abuse/neglect, as it must be reported as stated by the law signed by Governor Rendell in May 2007. The law also states that anything told to a mandated reporter, regardless of evidence involving maltreatment, abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate agency.

In addition, as mandated reporters it is our responsibility to make sure children in our programs are safe while in our care. Please note, that if you do not put your child in a car seat when getting into a car, we may have cause to call Children and Youth Services for child endangerment.

If you have any questions, please see the Center Director.

General Policies and Procedures:

Tuition:

Payment is due in full the Friday before the scheduled week of care. Late payments may result in suspension and/or termination of child care services.

Cancellations/Vacations:

There will be a \$15.00 per week vacation fee charged to your account to reserve your child's spot. This is limited to up to three consecutive weeks. If you exceed three weeks, then your account will be charged the regular tuition fee. We must receive notification of such cancellation **at least one week in advance**.

Late fees:

When you pick up your child later than the scheduled departure time, a late fee of \$1.50 per 15 minutes will be added to your bill. If you pick up your child after 6:00 p.m., you will be charged \$1.00 per minute. If you fail to pick up your child by 6:30 p.m., the Lancaster City Police Department will be notified of an abandoned child. We will release your child to them, and you will be required to pick them up at the Lancaster Police Department located on West Chestnut Street.

YWCA Membership:

A current YWCA membership is required for **all** parents using YWCA Child Care services. The adult membership fee is \$35.00 per year. A family membership is \$55.00 per year. All members receive our quarterly newsletter, detailing all programs and services that are available.

Hours of Operation:

The YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center is open Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. When you schedule your child, please allow yourself sufficient time for drop off and pick up. If your child is scheduled to arrive by 8:00 a.m., and you arrive at 7:45 a.m., we may not have sufficient caregivers to comply with state regulations. The same is true in the evening – if you know that you will be late picking up your child, please call and let us know so that we can maintain appropriate staff: child ratios.

Scheduling and Billing:

Your child's weekly billing is determined by the schedule you submit on the center agreement. If you need to change your submitted schedule, changes must be received **by 9:00 a.m. Wednesday morning for the following week's care**. All changes should be called into the front desk at 391-8618.

Payments are due every Friday for the following week's care. If payment is overdue, your child will not be accepted into our care until the balance is paid in full. Overdue bills will be put in your child's individual file or cubby. Payments are to be made to the payment box in the center's office. If we receive **three** returned checks, you will be put on a **cash only payment plan** for **6** months. If you have any questions about your bill, please contact our Finance Associate at 393-1735 x230. The child care staff is not involved in billing procedures and will not be able to answer your questions.

Toys:

The YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center has an ample supply of toys and materials. We ask that your child not bring in toys from home. We are not responsible for lost, stolen or broken toys.

Diapers:

The YWCA McCaskey Child Care Center will not provide diapers for children. Parents are asked to bring a supply of diapers for their child. We will notify you when that supply is running low. **If two reminders have been given to the parent about their child needing diapers and the supply is not replenished, the YWCA will charge the parent's account a supplemental fee for diaper usage if extras are available.**



Meals:

The YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center supplies breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack to all children at no charge. Parents are given a menu every month to choose what their child will have for lunch. No outside food is permitted in our program. If your child has a food allergy, documentation from a physician must be obtained, and kept on file. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a government funded program. Therefore, from time to time you will be required to update your information to maintain accuracy. These forms must be completed, if you fail to complete the forms, your childcare services will be suspended.

All children must have enough bottles/cups for each feeding per day. If you fail to bring them in, you may be sent home to get more. We are not responsible for washing cups/bottles.

Clothing:

We ask that you provide at least two complete changes of clothing for your child, which can be kept in his/her cubby. You may also bring in a diaper bag for storing supplies. Please remember to label everything that you bring into the center with your child's initials, or name.

Health Assessments:

Children's health assessments are due in scheduled intervals. These assessments must be completed at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, 36 months, 48 months, and 60 months. These health assessments must be turned into the Assistant Director no later than the last day of the month that it is due (e.g. child's 2nd birthday is 4/11, the health assessment is due no later than 4/30). There will be no exceptions to this policy. Please make sure that you schedule appointments ahead of time. ***The Assistant Director will remind all parents of health assessment dates approximately 1 month before they are due.***

General Policies and Procedures (con):

Anti-Harassment:

The YWCA is committed to protecting the rights and dignity of each individual it serves and of every employee who provides those services. Any offensive physical, written, or spoken conduct including conduct of a sexual nature is prohibited.

The YWCA Lancaster strives to create and maintain a work environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency, and respect. Mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression, and exploitation should characterize the environment in the child care center. Employees should be able to work and learn in a safe, yet stimulating atmosphere. The accomplishment of this goal is essential to the mission of the YWCA. For that reason, the YWCA **will not tolerate** unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind.

Harassment may be defined as unwelcome or unsolicited verbal, physical, or sexual conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. If any of the following behaviors are exhibited by a parent/guardian in the child care center, their child care services will immediately be suspended for three days. We reserve the right, depending on the severity of the harassment to terminate child care services completely.

- **Use of inappropriate language or profanity**
- **Exhibiting behavior that is believed to be hostile**
- **Disrespecting the child care staff or Director**
- **Initiating a verbal or physical threat towards a YWCA child care employee. *(Immediate termination of child care services will occur).***

Children's Attendance

In order to provide a consistent experience for your child, it is important that he/she attends school regularly. On days that your child is unable to attend, please notify the center as soon as possible at (717)391-8618. Three unexcused absences will be reported to your funding source, and ten will automatically be cause for termination of child care services.

The PA Pre-K Counts is a grant funded program, available to students that are preschool age (age 3 before September 1st). In addition to meeting income guidelines, children will qualify if he/she has a disability, is an English language learner, is a child of a teen parent, a child in a single parent household, or have an incarcerated parent. Each child is expected to attend **consistently**. Failure to do so may result in termination of services. Wrap around care is available if scheduled in advance for an additional fee.

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

PARENT AWARENESS

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aides, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any student and/or their guardian, who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

YWCA McCaskey Child Dev. Center
Attention: Christelle H. Thaw-Bolton
445 North Reservoir Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

YWCA Lancaster
Attention: Cheryl Gahring
110 North Lime Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Central Regional Office
Cameron & Maclay Street
Building 56, Patton House
PO Box 61260
Harrisburg, PA 17106-1260

PA Human Relations Commission
Harrisburg Regional Office
Riverfront Office Center
1101 S. Front Street, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17104

Department of Public Welfare
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 521, Health & Welfare Building
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 S. Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Inclement Weather:

In the case of inclement weather, the YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center Director makes decisions regarding cancellations, delayed openings and early dismissals in response to weather conditions and other emergencies. The most current weather related information is announced on WGAL-TV. * Please note that it is posted as a "schedule change".*

Behavior Policies and Procedures:

Behavior Reports:

The purpose of a behavior form is to notify the child and parent of inappropriate behavior that could warrant disciplinary action. The form reiterates the importance of appropriate behavior while participating in the Child Development Center. Please read through the policy below and offer strategies we can use to ensure that negative behaviors will not continue.

The following behaviors will be considered serious enough to begin disciplinary procedures:

1. Behaviors that result in unsafe conditions that may include injury or attempted injury to children, self or staff.
2. Willful destruction of property
3. Repeated running away from the group
4. Inappropriate Language
5. Violation of safety rules

When the above mentioned behaviors occur:

1. The child will be given a verbal warning.
2. The child will be given thinking time away from the group.
3. The child will be given a behavior report form.
4. The staff will notify the parents and the child may be sent home from the program.
5. If a child receives **three** behavior reports, the child will be suspended for **1-3 days** depending on the severity of the incident. After which, the child will be placed on probation and the staff will document inappropriate behavior for two weeks.
6. If after the suspension the child receives a **fourth** behavior report, that child will be suspended from care for **one week**.
7. If the child receives a fifth behavior report that child will be **expelled**, and the YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center Director will give the parent/guardian a **two week notice** to find alternate childcare.
8. In extreme cases the YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center Director may suspend or terminate childcare that day.

*** We reserve the right to skip one or more of these steps depending on the severity of the infraction involving your child.**

School Closing/Holidays:

If the School District of Lancaster closes and offices are open, care is still provided at McCaskey. If the School District of Lancaster closes and offices are closed, our center will relocate to our N. Lime Street location. These days typically include: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Easter Monday, and President's Day. Other dates will be announced as they arise.

The YWCA Lancaster is **CLOSED** on the following holidays: *New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.* If any of these holidays fall on a Saturday, we are closed the Friday before, if it falls on a Sunday, the YWCA will be closed on that Monday.



Our Teachers and Staff:

* The Child Development **Center Director** is responsible for the programming, and running of the center. The Director works directly with the Assistant Director, the School District of Lancaster, and the ELECT/Teen Parenting Program. The Director is responsible for maintaining the Center's policies and procedures. The center follows the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare's regulations, as well as the Pennsylvania Keystone STARS quality initiative.

* The **Assistant Center Director** serves as the liaison between the staff, parents and Director. The Assistant Director is responsible for center paperwork including Children's Health Assessments.

* **Classroom Staff** consists of the **Lead teacher** and at least one **Assistant Teacher**. The classroom staff's main priority is the health and safety of the children in our care. Should you have a concern regarding your child's care, please speak with the classroom staff. If you feel that your concerns have not been addressed, please see the Assistant Director or Center Director.

* Student interns are completing required hours for their Assistant Group Supervisor Certificate. **Student interns** are never left alone with the children, and they must have the same clearances as the staff (e.g. Criminal Record Check, Child Abuse Clearance) as well as an up-to-date physical. Student interns are accountable to the Lead teachers.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

To ensure the safety and welfare of children attending the YWCA of Lancaster (McCaskey Child Development Center), we will use one of the following protective actions in emergency situations.

* **Immediate evacuation**: Students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc. This location is located next to the football stadium.

* **In-place sheltering**: Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response. All children and staff will relocate to the "Grasshoppers Room".

* **Evacuation**: Total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case it becomes necessary that we relocate to a distance:

*****1 mile: YWCA located at 110 North Lime Street***

*****5 miles: Double Tree Conference Center located at Willow Valley Pike***

*****10 miles: Lancaster Career & Technology Center: Mt. Joy Campus****

Modified Operation: May include cancellation/ postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

PLEASE LISTEN TO WGAL TV-8 FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS RELATING ANY OF THE EMERGENCY ACTIONS LISTED ABOVE.

We ask that you not call during the emergency. This will keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay information.

Upon enrollment, each family is required to complete an emergency contact release form. Please ensure that only those persons you list on the form attempt to pick up persons must be prepared to show proper identification. Authorized persons must be at least 16 years old age per state regulation **3270.117**. I specifically urge you **not** to attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties.

In order to assure the safety of your children and our staff, I ask your understanding and cooperation. Should you have additional questions regarding our emergency operating procedures contact the center at **717-391-8618**.

Center Sick Policy:

We want to provide a learning environment that fosters safety and well-being. There are several reasons for a sick child to be excluded from the center. The first is to prevent the spread of any communicable disease or infection to other children or teachers.

Another reason is to ensure that the child receives enough rest and attention. Please do not bring your child to the Center if:

1. Your child has a fever of 101 degrees or higher
2. Your child has an unexplained rash
3. Your child has persistent diarrhea or vomiting.
4. Your child has a contagious disease or condition including, but not limited to:
 - A. Pink-eye (conjunctivitis)- until treatment is started
 - B. Chicken pox– until 6 days after the last blister appears
 - C. Strep throat until 24 hours after antibiotic is started.
 - D. Hand, foot, and mouth (coxsachievirus)- until 24 hours after fever is gone and your doctor advises your child's return to school.



If your child gets sick while in our care:

If your child has two cases of diarrhea/vomiting within an hour, or three cases within a day, your child will be sent home. You have one hour to pick up your child. To maintain a healthy environment for all the children and families we serve, your child must be symptom free for at least 24 hours to return to care.

If your child begins to exhibit symptoms of any illness or condition noted above, a teacher will contact you immediately to pick up your child. If you cannot be reached, a person designated by you as an emergency contact will be called. Please make sure that the people you list as emergency contacts are also allowed to pick your child up.



Medication Administration:

Prescription medication can be administered if the following requirements are met:

1. Must be in original container
2. Label must identify name of medication and name of child
3. Instructions for use must be provided (written form) from the individual who prescribed the medicine. Instructions contained on the prescription label are acceptable.
4. Parent/Guardian must complete the medication log posted in the child's room
5. As a courtesy to the staff the Parent/Guardian should also verbally mention that the child is scheduled to take medicine.
6. Medication should be stored up and away from the children's reach (microwave area)

We will only administer **prescription** medication to children. All over the counter medications need to be scheduled for before school and/or after school. The only exception to this policy is if a **PHYSICIAN** writes a note stating that the over the counter medication is medically necessary during the school day (between 6:30 a.m.– 6:00 p.m.). If a **PHYSICIAN** writes this note; a pharmacy label with the child's name on it must be on the original box with the **EXACT** directions on how much to administer the medication to the child.

Appropriate Dress

We ask that you dress your child in weather appropriate clothes. Please do not dress the children in clothes that you don't want to get dirty.

Per state regulations, we are required to take all children outside for at least one hour per day, weather permitting. This means that we take children outside regardless of the temperature from 25°F—90°F. We ask that you bring boots, scarves, hats, gloves, etc. in cooler weather, and sunscreen, shorts, t-shirts, etc. in the warmer weather.

At age one, all children must wear closed-toed shoes with a strap in the back OR sneakers everyday.

IEP/IFSP:

The center staff makes every attempt to provide an environment conducive to learning through different aspects of child development. We ask that you provide our program with a copy of your child's IEP/IFSP upon enrollment, as well as updates throughout the year; so that we may provide the best developmentally appropriate activities for your child while in our program. We have inclusive classrooms and will provide support for your child by working cooperatively with other agencies (e.g. Intermediate Units, Mental Health, Physical Therapists, Mobile Therapists, Nurses, Speech Therapists, etc.)



Parent/Guardian Participation and Communication

Parents are an essential part of our program at the Child Development Center. It is our goal to work with the community, as well as parents/guardians to provide the best learning environment for each child.

We encourage parents to stop in throughout the day, and to take advantage of the opportunities to be involved in the classroom throughout the year. The teachers will schedule Individual conferences with parents at the end of the year. Problems or concerns you may have at other times should be brought to the attention of the Lead teacher and/or the Director.

Informative newsletters are sent home to update parents/guardians of upcoming classroom activities and special events.

Important information for parents can also be found on the parent bulletin board located inside the classroom. Please do not forget to sign your child in/out everyday.

Each year, the YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center holds two dinners for families, staff and friends of the center. All are welcome to attend both the Harvest Dinner and Spring Fling.

Conferences are held twice a year where parents/ guardians can meet with their child's teacher to discuss their child's progress and/or concerns.

Children's Files:

A file will be established for each child registered in the YWCA. The file will contain all information gathered at the time of registration; observation of the child's growth and development recorded by the staff; health records and parent conference reports made by the staff. The information is "For Official Use Only", and will not be made available to anyone not directly related to implementing your child's program without your written consent. If your child would happen to move on to another educational setting, completion of a release form for releasing child's file/information to another educational setting would be required.

NOTICES:

Our center is monitored by picture and sound. Each classroom has a microphone and camera that feeds directly into the center's office.

Therefore, to protect the installing dealer and his customers, when this equipment is used as part of an audio monitoring system, a decal stating AUDIO MONITORING ON THESE PREMISES must be installed in a visible location at the entrances and exits of both private and public buildings and vehicles.

THIS IS TO COMPLY WITH UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 18, SECTION 2510(2) REGARDING RIGHTS OF PRIVACY, IT STATES:

“Oral communication means any “oral communication” uttered by a person exhibiting an expectation that such communication is not subject to interception under circumstances justifying such expectation.”

By definition of the code section, a person cannot have an expectation of privacy, nor can he or she expect that communication will not be intercepted. If there are public signs posted, indicating that the communication is being monitored.

Confidentiality:

The YWCA Lancaster is dedicated to maintaining a professional environment for our clients and staff. Therefore, we will not release information to anyone that is not designated in writing. The enrolling parent must give written permission, and update as needed.

Conclusion:

We would like to “Welcome” you to our center! We look forward to working with you and your child/ren!

The YWCA McCaskey Child Development Center provides for activities that will contribute to the physical, emotional, mental, and social development of your child. The goals and objectives of our program is to provide a nurturing, safe and friendly atmosphere free from racism, and sexism.

As Early Childhood Professionals, we understand that children learn at different rates and we value individuality, and encourage creativity at every age.

Thank you again for considering us for your child care needs.

