



EARLY LEARNING & BEYOND



YMCA OF GREATER BRANDYWINE

Early Learning Center and Montessori School

Family Handbook

2025

Revised 4.18.25

Dear YMCA Family,

Welcome to the **YMCA of Greater Brandywine** Early Learning Program!

Thank you for choosing us as a partner in your child's early education. We are excited to be a part of your child's journey and work together to instill a lifelong love of learning!

The Greater Brandywine YMCA offers a developmentally appropriate curriculum linked to the Pennsylvania State Standards for Education. Our teachers will use the curriculum to engage each child's physical, intellectual, and emotional development. Our goal is to create a safe and fun educational environment that supports children and their families through each milestone. The YMCA uses [Caring for our Children](#) to promote a safe, healthy, and clean environment. The Greater Brandywine YMCA association has eight early learning centers across Chester County. Each is licensed annually by the PA Department of Human Services (DHS). The YMCA abides by all licensing requirements. Families can learn more about childcare licensing regulations at the following link: [Child Care Regulations \(pa.gov\)](#)

You can trust your child's teachers to support the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Our teachers work diligently to provide children and families with a welcoming and supportive daily experience. YMCA-employed teachers, staff, and volunteers working in our early learning centers must maintain all regulations for safety and training through DHS and the Pennsylvania Keystone [STARS](#), quality rating and improvement system. Our teachers have criminal record clearances and child abuse registry clearances, annual in-service training, fire safety training, child abuse prevention and reporter training, and are certified in Infant, Pediatric, and Adult CPR and First Aid.

We believe in building our community through strengthening relationships with partners and a commitment to families, because when we all work together, our children can be their most successful! We invite you to share as much information about your child as possible so we can provide outstanding care! Should you have an IFSP, IEPs, 504 plans, allergy action plans, or any other information that will assist our team in supporting your child's success this year, please schedule an appointment with your center director!

In addition, we would like to ask that you contact your center director if you have special talents, cultural traditions, or information that you would like to share with our school communities and students. We welcome family involvement as part of our curriculum.

We thank you for choosing the YMCA to serve your family. Please contact our Childcare Admin Team at (610) 643-9622 x2190 with any billing questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



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PPARTNERING WITH YOU

At the Y, we strive to provide you with timely and relevant information about our programs, engaging you as a partner in your child’s success. This includes bi-annual satisfaction surveys, twice-yearly conferences, monthly newsletters, and daily informal communication. To best support you and your family at our Y, we ask that you share with us information, educational, or personal about your child that can enhance their YMCA experience and daily success. We also thank you for providing suggestions and feedback about the BASE programs at any time. The YMCA BASE Team invites parents/guardians to be engaged in our programs by attending special events and family nights throughout the year and by suggesting content/curriculum ideas for programming. Finally, should you as a family wish to share special traditions about your family’s heritage, our team would be grateful to work with you in preparing a special event!

YMCA OF GREATER BRANDYWINE MISSION

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

The YMCA of Greater Brandywine is committed to a value-based character development curriculum. Teaching of the following core values is incorporated into all youth activities:

YMCA CORE VALUES

Caring: Interest and concern - compassion, friendliness, generosity, kindness, love, mercy.

Honesty: Fairness of conduct and adherence to facts - including sincerity, truthfulness, honor, tact, forgiveness, moderation, orderliness.

Respect: Special regard for others, including assertiveness, consideration, courtesy, gentleness, unity, tolerance, and humility.

Responsibility: Moral, legal, and mental accountability - including courage, determination, helpfulness, justice, reliability, loyalty, self-discipline, obedience, cleanliness.

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

Each Child Care Center opens at 7:00 am and closes at 6:00 pm Monday-Friday. Changes to the schedule or calendar for the year will be provided with as much notice as possible and will be sent via electronic communication, website updates and posted alerts on family information boards in the center/classroom

The Early Learning Centers are closed on the following days:

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|--|
| New Year's Day | Martin Luther King Jr. Day | President's Day Teacher in Service / Training |
| Good Friday | Memorial Day | Juneteenth |
| Independence Day | Labor Day | Indigenous Peoples' Day Teacher in Service / Training |
| Christmas Day | New Year's Eve | Christmas Eve |

Please see information about inclement weather regarding non-scheduled closures

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Early Learning Centers are locked at all times. Teachers and families are provided with a security code or key fob to enter the facility during hours of operation. For the safety of all, security codes are not to be shared with any other child or adult.

At the YMCA of Greater Brandywine, we support language development for all children regardless of primary home language or cultural background. We make every accommodation to foster communication between children, teachers, and families.

These accommodations may include pictures, gestures, sign language, and translation of family communication.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

All people are welcome at the YMCA regardless of race, sex, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or abilities. Children and parents/guardians who have a limited English language ability can be assisted with the translation of written information, with an interpreter, or through the use of translation platforms. Contact the Program Director or the Childcare Administration team to make necessary arrangements. In our efforts to promote an awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the world around us, lessons about customs and celebrations of other cultures are introduced in our curricula, and we welcome family input and suggestions!

YMCA Early Learning Centers will reflect and respect the diversity in our community. Religious education is not included in the YMCA curriculum content. The YMCA of Greater Brandywine is committed to providing developmentally and culturally appropriate programming, which respects, reflects, and supports children and families. We work together with the community to cultivate and incorporate an anti-bias approach within our programs, curriculum, and daily planning.

INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

The YMCA of the Greater Brandywine makes every effort to keep happy and productive enrollment for all children regardless of differences in behavior, physical, developmental, or cognitive abilities. We collaborate with the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) to provide screenings and support as needed. The YGBW also works with individual children, parents/guardians, and teachers with the Behavioral Specialist team to support success for a child in our programs. Parents/guardians are included and invited to join in conversation to develop a plan that best suits each child's individual needs and utilize strategies that can be shared between school and home. When intervention services are used for a child, we actively solicit partnership so that our approach with the child is consistent amongst intervention, school, and home. When a child needs help with behavior modification, we may seek training or intervention through the CCIU, Keystone Stars, or local area agencies.

Children enrolled in our program may have an educational (IEP/IFSP) or behavioral (504) plan or specialized needs care plan provided by an outside agency, and we welcome and encourage partnership with families and agencies to provide a consistent approach to each child's individual needs. We will request to share information with the parents' permission with all agencies and teams a child works with, to best support the needs of the child and the family. The YMCA respectfully requests a copy of any educational or care plans a child may have to provide the best, consistent, and successful care.

At times, we may recommend further screening or interventions for children so that they are best served in our program and all children have every advantage for future

success. In collaboration with families, teachers, the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and the Behavior Specialists team, the Rapid Response Team, and experts in our community, resources can be identified. The CCIU provides screenings for children at our center and can then refer families to appropriate support. For parents/guardians who may want to explore these resources independently, parents/guardians should refer to the pages at the end of the handbook and/or visit the following, where help and information are available on a variety of topics: Early Learning Resource Center 19 <https://www.elrc19chesco.org/family-zone> Family Resources of Chester County <https://www.familyservice.us/ChesterCountyResources> <https://www.chesco.org/3388/Parent-Resources>

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION AND ENROLLMENT PLAN

YGBW would like to invite all families interested in enrolling their child(ren) into a child care program to visit the center location(s) and meet with the director and teachers of the program. At this time, a tour of the facility is offered, and a follow-up meeting can be scheduled to invite the child(ren) for a brief visit with their anticipated classroom teachers. Children enrolling in the YGBW PreK Counts classrooms will need to schedule time to review enrollment criteria and collect required documentation for the PreK Counts Program.

Attendance

Our Program opens at 7:00 a.m., and daily classroom lessons begin at 9:00 a.m. Children should arrive at school no later than 10:00 a.m. Please request a late drop-off from the center director if your child has an appointment and will need to arrive after 10:00 a.m. Late drop-off daily may result in a parent/guardian conference with the center director. A parent/guardian must sign their child in and out daily.

Children enrolled in the PreK Counts program must be in class by 8:30 a.m. to ensure they can participate in the full day of learning activities.

Attendance is recorded for all children each day using the Tadpoles app platform.

For the safety of your child, please ensure that all paperwork, registration forms, contact information, and medical forms are completed as requested, but at least every six months. Updates can be completed directly in ePact. A notice will be sent regarding required updates.

DAILY SIGN IN/SIGN OUT PROCEDURES

- A sign-in/sign-out area will be available when you arrive at the site. Use the on-site device to sign in and out using your individual PIN. Please do not share the individual pin with other parents/guardians or other emergency pick-up persons.
- Please wait to be acknowledged by a staff person before leaving.
- Your child will only be released to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult listed on the Parental Consent/Emergency Information sheet.
- Please provide a copy of your custody agreement if applicable.
- Identification may be checked daily. Anyone you have listed as an authorized pick-up person will be asked to show picture identification at the time of child pick-up. While we know it can be inconvenient to show your ID every day, we appreciate your support of our teachers in helping to keep children safe.

- Pick up your child on time each day. If an emergency arises and you cannot reach the Y before closing, call the staff to inform them of your progress.

In an emergency, a child may be released to an individual upon the oral designation of the parent/guardian if the individual's identity can be verified (PA Code 3270.117).

The director/teacher must call the parent back at one of the telephone numbers listed on the child's contact information form to verify that the parent/guardian is, in fact, the person who called and provided an alternate pick-up person.

If the parent answers and confirms that they made the request, our teachers will log the following information:

1. The name of the parent making the request.
2. The date and time of the request.
3. The name of the individual to whom the child is to be released.
4. The name of the teacher/person taking the call.
5. The name of the teacher releasing the child.

Please remind the person picking up your child that they must show identification before we can release the child. Unfortunately, we cannot release a child to anyone without proper identification. There are no exceptions.

For the safety of the children we serve, we will not release a child to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Should there be any suspicion or concern, teachers will ask for the child to be transported by another approved adult. If the parent/caregiver refuses to contact someone else, teachers will call the police immediately and not release the child until the police arrive.

ABSENCES

Should your child need to miss a day of care for any reason, including illness, kindly provide a message in the Tadpoles App or leave a message for the center director via email or phone call. If we do not receive notice of absence, a phone call will be made to contact a parent/guardian to confirm that the child is okay and provide any support that may be needed.

A doctor's note may be required for any absence that extends beyond two days.

Extensive absences could impact the ability of children enrolled in the PreK Counts program to remain enrolled. Together, the parent/guardian(s) and the Early Learning Center Director will work to provide a system of support to ensure continued enrollment and manage any hardship the family may be experiencing. This support may involve community partner agencies, therapeutic or behavioral health services such as Rapid Response.

REGISTRATION

All registration is completed online after a welcome tour with the director. A \$85.00 non-refundable registration fee is required through the online system. The following forms must be completed in full and submitted before your child may begin the program:

1. Financial Agreement form
2. Parental Consent/Emergency Contact form (Completed Via Epact/Registration Packet)
3. Health Assessment: A current yearly health assessment and immunization record, *signed by the doctor*, must be on file for all children. Any child under the age of 3 must have a current health assessment and immunization record in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics. Updated health and immunization records must be presented to the childcare center every 6 months for children 2 years of age and younger.
4. Family Handbook Receipt Acknowledgement
5. Medical information, allergy, and seizure action plans as needed
6. ELRC/CCW Release Form (if applicable)
7. IEP/IFSP and 504 plans (if applicable)
8. Custody paperwork (if applicable)

All information included in the registration materials must be updated immediately as changes occur, and every 6 months as required by the state licensing DHS. This includes information collected through ePACT. Childcare services must be temporarily suspended if forms and EPACT information are not on file and up to date.

If you have questions or need assistance with ePACT, contact them directly at help@epactnetwork.com or call 1-855-773-7228 ext. 1.

TUITION/FINANCIAL POLICY

Payment for child care services is due each Sunday, 2 weeks before the services are delivered.

Tuition fees are weekly and are based on your child's enrollment in the program and not on attendance. The parent/guardian is responsible for paying every week via auto-draft. Payments not received by the due date will incur a *10% late fee* per week per child. Any account delinquent for 5 days or more may result in the suspension of your child's participation privileges. Participation privileges may be restored upon settlement of your account. Account adjustments will be credited to your YMCA account accordingly.

Families needing assistance resolving their account should contact the Childcare Admin Team at childcareadmin@ymcagbw.org. Tuition reductions are not given for vacations or short absences. If your child should become ill and not be able to attend the program for an extended period of time (more than one month with a doctor's note), your child's place will be held until the end of the second month of the absence. At the beginning of the third month, we are financially obligated to fill the vacancy.

There is a sibling discount for families with two or more children. The sibling discount will be 10% off the lowest program fee. The Sibling Discount form, listed on our website, must be completed by the parent/legal guardian to receive the discount.

YMCA of Greater Brandywine does not offer multiple discounts.

The association office will assess a fee to cover incurred charges for all returned checks. The childcare Admin Team will notify you and require a cash payment of the full amount

plus the returned check charge. Your child will be temporarily suspended until this balance is cleared.

TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL -

A **thirty-day written notice** to the Director and the Childcare Admin Team is required to temporarily withdraw your child. Temporary withdrawal is approved for a family whose child will be absent from our program for a minimum of four (4) consecutive weeks and a maximum of **twelve (12)** consecutive weeks. Families will be responsible for continuing to pay the weekly tuition at a 50% discount, to guarantee your child's spot, for your return. Without written notice, the families will be responsible for continuing to pay the weekly tuition at the full rate. Temporary withdrawal will only be approved once a year.

LATE PICK-UP & FEES

Child care is available until 6:00 pm. If you will be late picking up your child, please arrange to have an emergency pick-up person arrive by 6:00 pm and call your YMCA Early Learning Childcare Center to inform the staff of your emergency.

A late fee of \$5.00 will be charged for pickup one to five minutes past program end time, and \$1.00 per minute thereafter for pick-up after 6:00 p.m.

By closing time, the Center staff will attempt to contact the parent(s)/guardians of any child who has not been picked up. If parents are unreachable, staff will contact the person(s) authorized to pick up the child. If staff cannot reach anyone for a period exceeding thirty minutes, we will contact local authorities, including the PA State Police Department and the Department of Children, Youth & Families.

Consistent late pick-up will require a meeting with the center director to create an action plan to support the family's needs and ensure that pick-up can occur on time moving forward. Should late pick-up continue, services may need to be terminated.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial assistance is available to families with demonstrated financial need. Please contact your director or our membership services department to obtain the required documents to request financial assistance.. If you do not qualify with Childcare Works (CCW) or are wait-listed, you may apply for YMCA financial assistance. Information for CCW and applications are accepted online at [Child Care Works \(CCW\) | Department of Human Services | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

Please contact the YMCA for further information or to pick up a Financial Assistance application. Eligibility for financial assistance will be determined upon available space and funds, review of the information given, and a letter of intent. The YMCA of Greater Brandywine reserves the right to deny assistance to any applicant who provides false information or withholds pertinent details relating to need. The level of need is determined by our financial assistance scale, which is available for yearly family incomes less than \$80,000 per year, and written documentation submitted by the applicant. The YMCA provided more than 2.6 million dollars in financial assistance last year. These funds are raised in part through the YMCA's annual campaign. learn more here: [Donate Now | YMCA of Greater Brandywine](#)

PROGRAM TERMINATION/WITHDRAWAL -

A **thirty-day written notice** to the Director and the Childcare Admin Team is required to withdraw your child. Without written notice, a financial charge of one month's tuition will be assessed. Re-enrollment is not guaranteed.

Nutrition Policy

Breakfast & Lunch are provided by the parent/guardian daily. The YMCA of Greater Brandywine is a community-based health organization. We ask that items packed for children provide nutritional value and include as many non-processed, whole foods as possible. We will not serve children large candy bars, soda, or other such non-nutrient items. Please try to avoid food that contains an excessive amount of sugar, preservatives, artificial flavorings, and caffeine. Please visit www.myplate.gov to learn more about serving healthy food choices and the appropriate child serving size.

All food should be provided ready-to-serve (fruit peeled and cut). Every item must be labeled with each child's first and last name. Items that must be refrigerated must be removed from a lunchbox and placed in the child's designated spot in the refrigerator. Please do not leave food items in a child's backpack. Lunch boxes may not be placed in the classroom refrigerator or on tabletop **surfaces**.

Children enrolled in PreK Counts receive a snack and lunch included in the daily program, provided by the YMCA.

NUT-FREE POLICY AND ALLERGY POLICY

We recognize that food allergies can cause serious, life-threatening conditions for some children in our childcare program.

Our nut-free policy dictates that no food will be permitted in our classrooms if it contains tree nuts, peanuts, or peanut butter in the ingredients or indicates it was manufactured in a plant using nuts. Children may have special snacks at various times during the school year. If your child has an allergy, we ask that you provide special snacks that are allergen-free for your child to enjoy.

To further reduce the risk of exposure, children will be required to wash their hands upon arrival and any time after eating. All childcare staff will follow the same rules as the children regarding food ingredients and hand-washing.

The Y believes the health and safety of our children is a collaborative partnership with our families involving prevention, education, communication, and the development of food allergy action plans for all children with allergies.

When filling out the emergency contact/parent/guardian consent form, please specify if your child has any food or material (example: latex) allergies. The pediatrician must complete an Allergy Action Plan and a family member before the YMCA cares for your child. All necessary medications and the allergy action plan must be provided, i.e., Epi-Pen or Benadryl. Our policy is that if your child is prescribed an EpiPen and it is used in response to an emergency, paramedics will be notified immediately.

FOODS THAT PRESENT A CHOKING HAZARD

Food that may present a choking hazard will not be served to children if they are not properly prepared to reduce the safety risk to the child. Because all children develop

at different ages, the following items must be cut or prepared to reduce choking hazards, or they may not be brought to school:

- Cheese Pizza (must be cut into small bite-sized pieces)
- Hot dogs (must be cut in full length and then in bite-sized pieces)
- Grapes must be cut or quartered
- Grape tomatoes must be cut or quartered
- Cherries must be cut or quartered
- Baby carrots – either cut or lightly cooked
- Cheese cubes / should be cut into smaller sizes

For more information about safe foods for young children please visit: [Preventing Choking \(for Parents\) | Nemours KidsHealth](#)

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays may be celebrated at the center. Please check with your child's teacher and/or director prior to bringing in snacks. We ask that the treats brought to the center are store bought, individually packaged and have ingredients listed.

INFANT FEEDING

All bottles and bottle caps must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name and placed in the child's individual area in the classroom refrigerator. Bottles must come ready to serve. Bottles will be reheated with warm water (not exceeding 110°F), and temperature tested before feeding. Instructions regarding a schedule must be provided by a parent/guardian and updated as necessary. Any remaining milk will be discarded after feeding; therefore, please only put the amount of formula or breast milk the child will eat during one feeding. We are not able to reuse bottles that have been used earlier in the day due to cleaning requirements. Please ensure that each day your child has enough bottles. Teachers are available for conferences as scheduled with the director or at the beginning and end of the day to share specific information regarding any changes to a baby's eating habits. Each childcare location has a quiet space available for mothers should you wish to use those facilities. Please contact your director with any questions or if you need assistance locating the space provided.

When solid foods are being introduced, we ask that parents only send foods that have been tried at home. All solid foods must be in small, labeled, portioned jars or containers with the child's name and date. The food will be warmed using warm water before serving. Food that has been served to a child may not be saved.

Medical Policy

ILLNESS POLICY

To best care for all children in the program, we ask that a sick child be kept at home. Many communicable diseases start with cold-like symptoms. The YMCA should be informed about the nature of the illness. If, at any time, the staff feels that your child is too sick to remain in the program, you will be called. You, or someone you designate, must pick up your child within one hour of receiving the phone call. Your child should not attend school and will be sent home if any of the following conditions are apparent:

- A temperature of 100.4 degrees
- Vomiting or diarrhea

- Rash (unidentified)
- Suspected communicable disease (i.e. Chicken pox, impetigo, scabies)
- Severe cold with/without fever, hacking or persistent cough, unclear mucus
- Bronchitis or other throat infections, such as strep
- Conjunctivitis or pink eye if prior to 2 doses of medication
- Lice until treated
- Test positive for COVID-19

Families should notify the Childcare Early Learning Center Director within 24 hours if your child has a communicable disease, such as chicken pox, strep throat, lice, or COVID, so we can inform other families and staff. Your child is welcome back to the program after 24 hours of required absence, with a note from the doctor or reasonable evidence of recovery.

Due to illness, a full list of inclusions/exclusions standards may be found at *Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards for Early Care and Education Programs*. <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.6.1.1>

MEDICATION POLICY

A copy of a doctor's order (prescription) and a completed medication form must be submitted before the administration of **all** medications. All prescription medication must be in its original container with the pharmacy label intact, with your child's name, dosage, doctor's name and phone number, date the prescription was filled, expiration date, and specific instructions for administering and storing the medication. You may want to ask your pharmacist to divide the medication into two bottles; one to be kept at home and one to be kept at school.

Allergy medicines must be provided and must follow the same guidelines as prescription medications. They should be kept on site and traveled with students as they go outside or leave the regular program area.

Over-the-counter medication will only be accepted if it's in its original container.

Parents/guardians must provide detailed information on dosage from a physician with a written permission to use the medicine for specific requirements as written by the physician.

Non medicated lotion such as sunscreen, (Non- Aerosol) and diaper creams do require a form be completed to keep on file, providing permission for use of these items brought in and labeled. The form will need to be reviewed and updated yearly.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of an accident, the following emergency procedures will be followed:

- A teacher will administer immediate, basic first aid. Nine hundred eleven will be called if needed.
- 911 is called for all serious neck/head injuries. A teacher will accompany the child to the hospital until a parent or guardian arrives.
- A teacher will contact the parent if immediate medical care is necessary.

Please note that YMCA teachers have been trained in first aid and emergency procedures and are prepared to handle issues should they arise.

Information regarding the accident will be recorded. YMCA teachers will complete any necessary forms and forward them to you for your signature.

All YMCA teachers are trained on the individual emergency plan created for each location. This plan accounts for weather emergencies as well as emergencies that can arise based on incidents. Teachers and students will practice a non fire emergency at least one time each year and fire drills are practiced each month.

Parents may review the emergency plan that is posted at the school site as required by DHS

EVACUATION/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- In an emergency, if children are required to evacuate our learning areas (but stay in the facility), we will use the interior bathrooms or windowless rooms as shelter.
- If we have to leave the facility, the children will be evacuated, based on the center's Emergency Plan. The center will provide you with the location and address. Children and staff will walk to the evacuation site.
- In an emergency, parents will be notified as soon as possible, at the start of the emergency.
- Families will be notified via telephone that the emergency has ended and where to pick up their children.
- Emergency messages will be sent to families via ePACT and/or Tadpoles.

We ask that you not call during the emergency. This will free the main telephone lines to make emergency calls and relay information. We will contact you to let you know that we've taken one of the protective actions. We will also call you when we've resolved the situation and it's safe for you to pick up your child.

SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME AND ABUSIVE HEAD TRAUMA INFORMATION

Shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma is the occurrence of brain injury in newborns, infants, and children younger than 3 years caused by shaking a child. Even mild shaking can result in severe, permanent brain damage or death. The brain of the young child may bounce inside the skull, resulting in brain damage, hemorrhaging, blindness, or other serious injuries or death.

YMCA Teachers are trained to identify and support the prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and to protect children from all abuse.

Please visit the websites here to learn more about the prevention of abusive head trauma. www.dontshake.org

CHILD ABUSE

The Child Protective Services Law of Pennsylvania requires all licensed caregivers or any persons in contact with children to report any suspected child abuse to CHILDLINE immediately. Every staff member at the YMCA will comply with this law to protect the health and safety of all the children. Should a parent or guardian be perceived to be

under the influence or impaired at the time of pick up, staff will ask for the child to be transported by another approved adult and/or contact proper authorities immediately.

School Day

CURRICULUM

The YMCA is proud to offer the [Frog Street Curriculum](#) and the Cognitive Toy Box Assessment tool for each age group: Infant, Toddler, Preschool, and PreK. The Frog Street Curriculum is a **comprehensive, research-based program developed by early childhood experts to help students build a solid foundation for lifelong learning**. It offers an early childhood solution that combines active learning and rigorous instruction across all developmental domains. The YMCA partnered with this curriculum because it is an approved Pennsylvania State curriculum linked to the [Early Learning Standards](#), provides outstanding teacher development resources, and most importantly, uses the [Conscious Discipline](#) social emotional learning as a core to each daily lesson. Please select the links included here to learn more about the curriculum content. We always invite you to schedule time with your teacher or director to learn more!

TOYS FROM HOME

The YMCA provides children with developmentally appropriate toys and materials. These are for your child's enjoyment and learning throughout the school day. Therefore, toys from home should not be brought to school. Toys from home, if brought to school, may be broken or lost and are not the responsibility of the Early Learning Program.

Electronic toys and devices, including child safety devices, smart watches, phones, and tablets, are not permitted in the child care center. Please keep these items at home. If these items are kept in a child's belongings and stored in the classroom, they could be damaged during the day. For everyone's safety, please leave these items at home or in the car.

ITEMS TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD

Infants (All items MUST be labeled with first and last name)

- Crib sheets
- 2-3 complete changes of clothing
- Diapers
- Wipes
- Several Bibs/Burp cloths
- All food and drink utensils needed to serve food
- Outerwear (hat, mittens, jacket)
- A non-porous reusable tote bag to store coats and jackets
- An arms-free sleep sack. No infants will be swaddled.

You will be responsible for providing clean crib sheets at least once per week. We will gladly apply diaper creams; however, these require an appropriate authorization form.

All items must be labeled with your child's first name and last initial. Please re-label as needed. The parent must provide any items to serve food, such as bowls, spoons, cups, etc. Bottles must be prepared at home. We provide refrigeration for storing bottles and food.

Toddlers and Preschoolers (All items must be labeled with first and last name)

- Full change of seasonal clothing
- Lunch and afternoon snack
- Recommended a box of utensils in their cubby
- A non-porous reusable tote bag to store coats and jackets
- A crib sheet or covering the child's rest cot and a favorite sleep toy or blanket. All nap items must fit into the sleep cubbie.
- Children who are potty training must have at least three seasonal clothing changes and extra shoes and socks.

All items must be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.

As your child grows and the seasons change, we recommend that you provide extra clothing. Please send your child to school in rubber-soled, closed-toe shoes. Flip-flops are only permitted to and from the pool.

Every effort is made to play outside daily. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather, as we will go outside as weather permits. We will go outside with temperatures between 25 degrees and 90 degrees.

TOILET TRAINING

We understand that toilet training is one of many skills children acquire between the ages of 2 and 3. This skill will be reached in your child's own time, but is encouraged in the 2-year-old classroom. Your child's teacher will work with you directly to determine a plan for your child. As accidents do happen, we ask that you provide extra clothing and an extra set of shoes during potty-training time.

NAP/REST TIME

Rest Time is between 1 pm and 3 pm. The classroom lights will be dimmed, and quiet music will be played. This is a time of relaxation for both nappers and non-nappers. Children who do not fall asleep during nap time can select quiet activities such as puzzles and books while remaining on their cots. At some locations, children may enroll in YMCA-provided classes. Please check with your director for more information about these options and costs.

Infants will rest according to an individual schedule provided by the families. Since we follow safe sleep practices, all infants will be placed on their backs in the crib. No blankets or toys are allowed in the crib. Please provide a sleep sack for your child in place of a blanket or swaddle blanket.

TRANSITION

Deciding to transition a child to a new classroom is exciting and requires parents/guardians and teachers to agree that a child is ready for the next step in their learning career! The YMCA will work together to ensure your child is prepared for the

next step in his or her development. Before the classroom transition, we will notify you in writing with a timeline and what we are working on to ensure an easy transition. Below is the schedule we plan to follow to help your child engage and enjoy their new classroom, just a few moments at a time, until they are comfortable and ready to move up!

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Morning centers and morning meeting in the new classroom | Gross motor and Lunch times with the new classroom | Nap and afternoon schedule with the new class | Morning drop off through lunch with the new class | Lunch through end of day with the new class |

We may ask you and your new classroom teacher to complete some paperwork and review the Ages and Stages Screening Tool, which we use as part of getting to know your child. Please complete a copy as well. This is a great tool for everyone to get to know your child!

We will also provide you with resources and tools that may help you understand some of the milestones your child is meeting or about to meet and information about our next classroom!

We limit classroom teacher changes throughout the day to allow strong staff/child relationships to develop. Limited transitions in a school year encourage strong relationships, consistent routines, and awareness of each child's individual needs.

As our students transition out of our center to kindergarten, we provide registration and open house dates for nearby school districts. We invite special guests from the schools to read to our students and have an open discussion about the upcoming change. We may also partner with local schools to have your child visit a local school. Informational and parent events are also held throughout the school year to provide information and helpful tips for families. Students enrolled in PreK Counts programs will participate in a visit to a local elementary school with school district transportation provided.

Delays And Closures

CLOSINGS, WHEN NO CARE IS PROVIDED:

Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Presidents Day, the Friday before Easter, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, and Independence Day. Please review the YMCA Childcare calendar for more information or additional days.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The branch leadership and senior leaders of the YMCA of Greater Brandywine will determine the center's schedule changes. If there are any schedule changes due to inclement weather or other emergencies, such as power outages, families will be notified via Tadpoles and Epact, and updates will be made on the YMCA Website. Please note

that status updates can also be obtained through the YMCA branch Facebook page, website (www.ymcagbw.org), and phone recordings.

2 Hr. Delay: YMCA will open at 9 am

3 Hr. Delay: YMCA will open at 10 am

Closure: The YMCA will be closed.

In case of an early closure, all families will receive a phone call and an email. For the safety of all parties, the expectation is that all children will be picked up by the stated closure time. The YMCA will try to provide as much notice as possible to allow ample time to travel safely to the Y. The safety of the children, families, and the staff are our first priority.

YMCA Behavior Expectations

The YMCA is a drug, alcohol, smoke, and weapons-free organization. Possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, or a weapon of any kind may result in immediate termination of services and notification to legal authorities. Parents/guardians shall, if an issue arises with other children or other parents/guardians in the program, inform the teachers or director, who will address the situation. Parents/Guardians are required to follow the Core Values of the YMCA and are expected to model appropriate conduct while at the YMCA facilities and early learning centers.

CHARACTER VALUE EXPECTATIONS

In keeping with the YMCA's mission and character values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility, appropriate behavior is expected of all participants in YMCA programs. Respectful interactions with program participants and YMCA staff are at the core of the YMCA's mission and essential to having a successful program experience.

1. Every person has the right to be safe and healthy within their YMCA program environment.
2. Every person has the right to an opinion and to be heard constructively and positively.
3. Every person has the right to be respected and treated fairly.
4. Every person has the right to grow in spirit, mind, and body and is equally valued and important.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

We understand that each child is different and responds differently in certain situations. With clear behavior guidelines, we strive to prevent incidents by using redirection, having clear developmentally appropriate rules and expectations, and providing positive reinforcement. Using the selected social-emotional curricula, we aim to support children in refocusing and practicing resiliency skills.

Sometimes, a child may need additional support and guidance in the classroom and beyond. Should this occur, the following steps will be implemented to support the child and family.

- The child is provided with verbal redirection and a reminder of the rules/expectations of the classroom.
- The child is provided time to refocus and utilize calming strategies in a quiet area of the classroom
- The teacher and child can work together to identify how the child felt that may have caused a specific behavior, and discuss strategies to implement if they feel that way again.
- The parent/guardian is notified of the incident in writing.
- Should repeated behavior occur, a conference with the family, teachers, and directors may take place.
- If behaviors continue, the director and, if necessary, the YMCA behavioral support team may complete observations, review assessments, and request additional conferences.
- Should behavior persist, suspension could be an option, to allow the child, family and behavioral team time to review next steps and seek support if needed from Early Intervention/CCIU.
- If a child has an IEP, IFSP, or other care plan in place through an alternate agency and this is not provided to the YMCA, there may be a pause in care to allow the behavioral team time to properly train the YMCA teachers on how best to implement plan goals and support a child's success.

Parents/guardians are advised of behavior issues and concerns through written communication that the site teachers will share with them upon pick up and/or verbal communication via phone as needed. Parents/guardians should also expect to receive positive feedback, either verbally or in writing, during their program time. This communication occurs typically at pick up and will include a connection to the YMCA Core Values and expectations the child has demonstrated during their time in the program.

In extreme cases, a child's behavior may warrant immediate suspension or expulsion from the program. This would be reviewed by the YMCA team of leaders and BCBA, as well as the Senior Vice President of Operations and the Executive Director. Communication would come from the director and senior leadership. It is the responsibility of the YMCA to ensure each child's right to achieve their goals within the program environment.

The YMCA of the Greater Brandywine strives to provide programs that include children of different abilities. Our goal is to provide high-quality programs and highly qualified staff to give your child a fun, successful, and enjoyable learning and social opportunity. However, YMCA of Greater Brandywine is not a program specifically designed to manage medical, physical, behavioral, or intellectual abilities and challenges.

If your child has a behavioral plan, the YMCA welcomes the opportunity to discuss a care plan for your child before care can be started. This can include the need for families to provide additional services (TSS, PCA, aide) if you or the YMCA feels necessary to ensure your child's experience in the program will be fun and rewarding. If a TSS or PCA is assigned, they are to always remain with your child to provide the necessary support to make your child's experience successful.

RELEASE OF RECORDS

A request must be made in writing before the YMCA releases any records. Requests for the release of records will only be granted to persons/caregivers registering the child for services. Any release of information will be made according to the YMCA of Greater Brandywine's operating procedures regarding business records.

SURVEYS

Several times throughout the school year, the YMCA will send out paper/electronic surveys to families to provide you with a voluntary opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the program and our level of service to you and your child. We encourage your participation in these surveys as it is a significant tool for the YMCA to strive for program excellence. We will also request families to review program operations, including a review of curricula, extra services provided, and safety management. We ask that you provide as much information as possible at any point during your child's enrollment.

AGES AND STAGES QUESTIONNAIRE(ASQ)

Children shall be observed within 45 days of enrollment into the center using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Teachers should complete the ASQ closest to the child's age in 6-month increments and according to the ASQ guidelines. A copy shall also be provided to the parent/guardian to complete separately. Parents/guardians and teachers should meet within about 45 days to discuss the ASQ results. At each classroom transition, a new 45-day window begins, and the next ASQ should be completed by the new teacher to learn more about the child's skills and needs for lesson planning input and to prepare for a quality discussion with the parent. Parents/guardians may also be provided a blank copy of the ASQ to review/complete and share along with the teachers completed ASQ. Best Practice includes having children remain with a classroom/teacher for the full year, but at least 6 months.

CHILD OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Children shall be observed at least twice weekly to record behaviors, skills, and areas of need. These observations are used to inform lesson planning, assessments, and parent-teacher conferences. Documentation of the observation shall be placed in the child's file/portfolio and/or tadpoles. Formal assessment shall be conducted for every child each Fall and Spring using a developmental checklist. A signed copy of the assessment by the parent/guardian must be placed in the child's file.

The results of the child observation shall be used to plan curriculum studies.

Parent/guardian conferences shall be offered twice a year after completing assessments. A copy of the conference notice is part of the child's records. Documentation of the conference shall be placed in the child's file. Both the parent and the teacher should sign the child conference notes form, and a copy of the notes from the conference shall be provided to the parent. Parents/guardians are welcome to request a conference and are encouraged to communicate with site teachers and Y directors at any time.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Communication and cooperation between families and teachers are invaluable in providing and maintaining the highest quality childcare program for your family. We encourage family participation at all times. You may visit your child, speak to our staff, and join us in our activities. Visitors must register at the member service desk for the safety of all children enrolled. They must have their license or identification present. A staff member will then escort the visitor to the classroom, and the visitor will be accompanied by a staff person at all times.

We provide several different tools for you to receive information on your child's progress and day.

DAILY REPORTS - TADPOLES

A report is prepared for each child electronically through Tadpoles. This report provides you with an overview of the activities your child participated in and information about toileting and meals. It is emailed to the guardians at the end of each day.

NEWSLETTERS

Informative newsletters are sent home periodically to keep families informed about school activities. They are also posted on classroom family boards along with information about a child's daily schedule, classroom events, and curriculum updates.

Code of Conduct

BABYSITTING

The YMCA of the Greater Brandywine Staff Code of Conduct prevents all staff from babysitting or transporting any program participants. Please do not ask your teachers to provide care for your child outside of the YMCA program.

Custody and Visitation

At enrollment you will be required to inform us of any arrangements regarding a custody agreement. If there is a custody agreement that prohibits a family member from picking up your child, we must have the agreement from the court in your child's file. If you anticipate a problem, please contact the director with concerns.

Community Resources

The YMCA of Greater Brandywine believes our community is strongest when everyone is included and has the opportunity to reach their full potential. We strive to make information and services available for all who may be seeking social services such as food, health, and other needs. The following information is listed in hopes of helping those individuals. This includes food and housing insecurity as well as other community resources for support with mental health, and those who may be looking for an opportunity to volunteer in the community. We always welcome you to request information from your program director and teachers as well! We are better when we work together!

FOOD AND RESOURCE PANTRY AND YMCA GIFTS OF JOY

The YMCA of Greater Brandywine welcomes you to visit our resource pantry located at Coatesville YMCA, Lionville Community YMCA and Oscar Lasko YMCA. To learn more or find these locations please go to [Community Resource Pantry | YMCA of Greater Brandywine \(ymcagbw.org\)](http://CommunityResourcePantry|YMCAofGreaterBrandywine(ymcagbw.org))

PREK COUNTS -

Quality pre-kindergarten opportunities available to children ages 3 and 4 and families across the commonwealth. The program is funded through the state budget. Eligible families may earn up to 300% of the federal poverty level and may have additional risk factors which would create a risk for succeeding in kindergarten and beyond. PreK Counts is offered at Octorara YMCA Program Center & Jennersville YMCA Early Learning Center. Visit our website to complete an application and learn more! [PreK Counts at the YMCA | YMCA of Greater Brandywine \(ymcagbw.org\)](http://PreKCountsattheYMCA|YMCAofGreaterBrandywine(ymcagbw.org))

www.helpinpa.state.pa.us - the PA Help and Human Services Portal

www.heretohelp.pa.gov - a webpage with links to PA resources

www.facebook.com/HelpinPA - information and updates about PA resources

Child Care Information Services (CCIS) 610-344-5717

<http://www.chesco.org/2017/Child-Care-Information-Services-CCIS>

Child Care Information Services (CCIS) has been designated as the hub for child care information in Chester County. CCIS manages the subsidized child day care program, which is a Federal and State funded program through a contract with the Department of Human Services, Office of Child Development and Early Learning DHS/OCDEL).

Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) 1-800-986-KIDS (5437)

<http://www.chipcoverspakids.com/>

CHIP puts health coverage within reach for all uninsured kids and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance.

Children, Youth and Families 610-344-5800

<http://www.chesco.org/201/Children-Youth-Families>

The mission of the Department of Children, Youth and Families is to utilize high quality, comprehensive social services that strengthen the family's ability to provide for the safety and well-being of each child._

Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) 484-237-5000

<http://cciu.org/>

The Chester County Intermediate Unit various educational, supplemental and support services for ages 3-21.

Housing Assistance:

Human Services, Inc. – Rental Assistance Program: 610-429-3033, ext. 189

Community, Youth, and Women's Alliance: 610-384-9591*

Legal Service:

Chester County Bar Association: 610-692-1889

Mental Health Services:

Chester County Dept. of Mental Health/Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: 610-344-6265

Warm Line (for non-emergency mental health calls): 866-846-2722

Holcomb Behavioral Health: 610-363-1488

Food Services:

Church of the Holy Trinity/Act in Faith: 484-324-8492

West Chester Food Cupboard: 610-344-3175

The Salvation Army: 610-696-8746

St. Agnes Church Day Room: 610-429-0697

Other Important Numbers:

All services: 211

Compassionate Friends (bereaved parents): 610-933-2346

Downs Syndrome Interest Group of Chester County: 610-889-0291

Mothers Against Drunk Driving: 800-948-6233

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill: 717-238-1514

Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians & Gays: 484-354-2448

Parents Without Partners: 610-383-9830

Women's Resource Center: 610-687-6391

Crime Victims: 610-692-7420

Crisis Intervention (Mental Health): 877-918-2100

Domestic Violence: 888-711-6270

Drug & Alcohol Information and Referral: 866-286-3767

Red Cross Emergency Number for S.E. PA: 215-299-4889

Chester County Aging Services: 800-692-1100, ext. 6350

Chester County CareerLink: 610-384-9393

Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services: 610-344-5630

Chester County Health Department: 610-344-6225

Chester County Dept. of Human Services: 610-344-6640

Chester County Department of Mental Health/Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: 800-692-1100, ext. 6265

Chester County District Attorney: 610-344-6801

Chester County Domestic Relations Support Hotline: 800-221-4636

Chester County Library System: 610-280-2600

Chester County Assistance Office (Welfare Office): 888-814-4698 or 610-466-1000

Stakeholders

We recognize those groups or individuals who are significantly impacted by children and families who are served by our facility or those who have potential to impact the family. Families are encouraged to participate in building a list of Stakeholders who directly or indirectly impact the health and welfare of our children.

PA School District Offices

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Avon Grove | 610-869-2441 |
| Coatesville | 610-466-2400 |
| Downingtown | 610-269-8460 |
| Great Valley | 610-889-2100 |
| Kennett Consolidated | 610-444-6600 |
| Octorara | 610-593-8238 |
| Owen J. Roberts | 610-469-5100 |
| Oxford | 610-932-6600 |
| Phoenixville | 484-927-5000 |
| Treddifryn/Easttown | 610-240-1900 |
| Unionville-Chadds Ford | 610-347-0970 |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| West Chester Area | 484-266-1000 |
| West Chester University | 610-436-1000 |
| Delaware County Community College | 484-237-6200 |
| United Way of Chester County | 610-429-9400 |
| Pediatric Dental Practices | |
| Chester County Dentistry for Children | 610-400-1172 or 484-252-2796 |
| Children's Dental Health Associates | 610-388-2131 |
| Pediatric Medical Practices | |
| Chester County Pediatrics | 610-524-5437 |
| Paoli Pediatrics | 610-644-9380 |
| CHOP Care | 610-869-4700 |
| AllStar Pediatrics | 610-363-1330 |
| Pediatrics Care of Children | 610-594-6440 |
| Pediatric Association of Main Line | 610-647-5022 |
| West Chester Pediatrics | 610-436-861 |
| Head Start | |
| Coatesville | 610-383-6800 |
| Downingtown | 484-237-5100 |
| West Chester | 610-692-5805 |
| Oxford | 610-932-2721 |
| Phoenixville | 610-933-3763 |
| Kennett | 610-444-2880 |



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Subject: Nondiscrimination in Services

To: Program Participant Parents

From: Claudia Aust Senior Association Director of Licensed Childcare

Admissions, the provision of services, and referral of clients shall be made without regard to race (to include hair type, hair texture, or hair style), color, religious creed (to include all aspects of religious observances and practice, as well as belief), disability, ancestry, national origin (including Limited English Proficiency), age (40 and over), or sex (to include pregnancy status, childbirth status, breastfeeding status, sex assigned at birth).

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 individual/client/patient/student (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

| | |
|--|---|
| YMCA of Greater Brandywine 1 East Chestnut Street West Chester Pa 19380 610-643-9622 DHSLICENSING@ymcagbw.org | Office for Civil Rights U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centralized Case Management Operations 200 Independence Avenue, S.W. Room 509 HHH Bldg. Washington, D.C. 20201 Customer Response Center: (800) 368-1019 TDD: (800) 537-7697 https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/complaints Email: ocrcomplaint@hhs.gov (Within 180 days from the date of incident) |
| Commonwealth of Pennsylvania | Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission |

| | |
|--|--|
| Department of Human Services Bureau of Equal Opportunity Room 225, Health & Welfare Building P.O. Box 2675 Harrisburg, PA 17120 Inquiries: (717) 787-1127 Email: RA-PWBEOAO@pa.gov (Within 90 days from the date of incident) | 333 Market Street, 8th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17101 https://www.phrc.pa.gov/Complaints/Pages/How-to-File-a-Complaint.aspx Inquiries: (717) 787-4410 TTY users only: (717) 787-7279 (Within 180 days from the date of incident) |
|--|--|



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CELC Family Handbook Receipt Acknowledgement
Please return this page with your registration paperwork.

I have received and read the CELC Family handbook. I have also had the opportunity to ask questions regarding these policies. I agree to all of the policies and procedures set forth.

Parent Signature: _____

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____

Please initial that you understand the following policies

_____ Illness Policy

_____ Behavior Policy

_____ Allergy Action Plan

_____ Late pick-up Policy