

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the East Shore YMCA's Child Development Center. Both of our locations are licensed by OCDEL (Office of Child Development and Early Learning) formerly known as DPW (Department of Public Welfare). Information about the status of our licenses or licensing information can be obtained by calling 1-800-222-2177.

This booklet is your guide to the services we offer in child care. You should know that the East Shore YMCA also serves children from kindergarten through fifth grade in before and after school child care and summer day camp. Feel free to ask your child's center director for information on either of these programs at any point in time.

Please be sure to introduce yourself to the staff at your child's center. We also encourage you to ask questions and express any concerns that you may have. This handbook is designed to inform you of our policies and procedures furthermore, a monthly newsletter will keep you up to date on specific events and changes to our policies. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the child care office at either of the East Shore locations:

Downtown Child Care Center  
701 N. Front Street  
Harrisburg, Pa 17101  
Telephone: 232-9622

Lower Paxton Child Care Center  
4618 Linglestown Road  
Harrisburg, Pa 17112  
Telephone: 652-3681

We may amend the policies and procedures described in this handbook from time to time. We will make every effort to alert you to changes as they occur.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Children's Ages:	Downtown: 6 weeks to 5 years Lower Paxton: 6 weeks to 5 years
Hours of Operation:	Downtown: 6:45 AM to 5:45 PM Lower Paxton: 7 AM to 6 PM
School Holidays:	The YMCA Child Care Centers are closed seven major holidays  New Years Day*                      Labor Day President's Day                      Thanksgiving Day Memorial Day                      Christmas Day* Independence Day

\*When New Year's Eve or Christmas Eve falls on a week day, we close the center at noon.

## MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

The East Shore YMCA strives to provide a safe, educational and nurturing environment for all children enrolled in our child development, school age child care and summer programs. Keeping developmentally appropriate practices and collaborative communication with families in mind, we consider the individual child when our qualified, well trained staff members plan activities. The East Shore YMCA provides family activities and encourages participation when possible. Our programs are based on the four core values of the YMCA: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Children enrolled in the toddler and preschool rooms are engaged in activities that are planned weekly and a lesson plan for each week is posted in the classroom. In addition, there is a dry erase board posted to let you know about some of the activities that occurred each day and what skills your child gained from them. At the East Shore YMCA we adhere to the National Association for the Education of the Young Children's (NAEYC) philosophy that children learn best through play. NAEYC is the leading organization for early childhood programs. Rest assured that while your child may look like he/she plays at our child care program, they are learning many of the skills necessary for their future entrance into public school.

Progress reports and parent teacher conferences are done a minimum of semi-annually and you may meet with your child's teacher at any time to discuss your child's development. The director at your child's site is also available to meet with you should you have any questions or concerns.

## ADMISSION AND TUITION INFORMATION

There is a non-refundable one-time application fee and an annual program fee to enroll your child in our program. These fees are paid in advance when a start date is agreed upon between the YMCA and the parents. You should discuss your child's re-entry into the program with the Senior Program Director prior to withdrawal.

**NOTE: The East Shore YMCA requires a two-week written notice of termination from the program.** If you would like any part of your child's YMCA records to be transferred to another program, please add that information to your written notice. We reserve the right to bill you for the difference in a notice which is less than two week and/or send your account to a collection agent if full payment is not received.

## PAYMENT INFORMATION/LATE FEES/CREDITS

Payment for child care services is due each Friday for the following week. There is a \$20 late fee if your payment is not received by 8am Monday morning. Repeated late payments will result in termination. Should payment not be received by Monday morning, your child will not be able to attend until payment is received.

There is a \$30.00 service fee for all returned checks. With the exception of the days that the center is closed due to weather conditions, full payment is required for every week that your child is enrolled. We reserve the right to ask for cash payments if you have more than two returned checks.

### **WEATHER INFORMATION AND CLOSINGS**

In case of inclement weather please tune in to one of the following stations for possible closings or delays.

WHTM TV CHANNEL 27  
WHP TV CHANNEL 21

\*Friend us on Facebook for YMCA updates\*

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Please see your child's Site Director to verify designated parking areas for drop-off and pick-up. You must sign your child in and out each day. The sign-in/sign-out sheet is very important and is used to protect the children in the center. Our formal program begins at 9:00 AM and we ask that you have your child at the center by that time. In addition, children can sense when it is time to go home, therefore, we encourage you to call us if you will be arriving later than your scheduled pick up time so that we can reassure your child. If the staff cannot reach you and it is time for the center to close, they are instructed to call the emergency contact person(s) listed on your emergency contact form.

### **LATE FEES AND POLICIES**

While the YMCA attempts to be understanding of family emergencies, we do reserve the right to charge \$1.00 per minute late fee for each minute that you are late (according to the site clock). This fee goes directly to the staff at your child's center and must be made in cash to the staff. If payment is not made, you will be billed for the fee plus a \$5.00 service charge. Being late on a consistent basis may result in termination from the program.

### **AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE CHILDREN**

As part of the enrollment process you will be asked to complete a variety of forms including the "EMERGENCY CONTACT/PARENTAL CONSENT FORM". There is space on this form to list any additional persons to whom your child may be released. Please be advised that any person you place on the consent form is authorized to pick your child up unless you make changes in writing.

A court order must be on file with the YMCA if a biological parent or legal guardian is NOT permitted to pick up your child. If you would like the YMCA to release your child to someone who is not on his or her release list, we will need that request in writing or by telephone. Should you call us with such a request, we reserve the right to call you back to verify the information for your child's protection. As an added measure of security, you will be asked for a "family code word" when you enroll. Should you need to call the center and inform us that a person unknown to us will be picking up your child, we will ask you to give us this code word for security and voice verification. PROPER IDENTIFICATION (picture ID) is required of any person picking up your child who is not known to our staff. No one under the age of 18 can be considered as an authorized release person.

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Please be sure that the staff at your child's center is kept informed of any changes in your home or work telephone numbers and/or addresses. This information is extremely important in the event we need to reach you. The emergency contact people listed on your emergency contact forms are also important. Please keep us informed of any changes to that information as well.

The staff will request this information every six months in order to comply with OCDEL regulations. Repeated failure to provide updated contact information may result in termination from the program.

## HEALTH INFORMATION

According to OCDEL licensing regulations, every child enrolled must have a complete health form on file. Forms are included in the registration packet or you can submit the form that is required for entrance into public school. The form must include a physician's signature AND an updated immunization record. A printout of the immunization record alone is not acceptable. Forms must be received 30 days after the initial start date or the child will be suspended from care until a form is submitted. Please make a copy and retain the original form for yourself.

We would greatly appreciate advance notice of any health problems, behavior disorders or dietary needs.

Your child's health is of major importance to us. Please do NOT bring your child to the center if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher
2. Discolored drainage from the nose or eyes
3. Persistent cough
4. Contagious rash
5. Diarrhea
6. Vomiting
7. Too ill to go outdoors for activities
8. Uncomfortable and needs constant attention
9. Evidence of a contagious disease (i.e. mumps, chicken pox)

Your child may be sent home if symptoms of illness occur during the day and the staff feels that the health of others may be impacted. In addition if your child is sent home with any of the symptoms listed above, our policy is that the child must stay home for 24 to 48 hours before returning to the center depending on the nature of the illness.

A doctor's note is required to your child's return to the center for any contagious disease such as chicken pox. The note should specify the date the child may return to the center. This policy protects the health of all children and staff at the center.

## **MEDICATION**

As per OCDEL regulations, child development staff members are encouraged not to administer medication. However, the East Shore YMCA will dispense medication provided that it is accompanied by a prescription or note from a physician or a CRNP. If child medication is administered, the following requirements apply:

1. A prescription or nonprescription medication may be accepted only in an original container. The medication shall remain in the container in which it was received.
2. A staff person shall administer medication only if written instructions are provided from the individual who prescribed the medicine. Instructions for administration contained on a prescription label are acceptable.
3. The label of a medication container shall identify the name of the medication and the name of the child for whom the medication is intended. Medication shall be administered only to the child whose name appears on the container.
4. Medication shall be stored in a locked area of the facility or in an area that is out of reach of children.
5. Medication shall be stored in accordance with the manufacturers or health professional's instructions on the original label.
6. A parent shall provide written consent for administration.
7. Staff are responsible to establish and maintain a medication log if prescription or nonprescription medication is administered. A medication log shall include the following minimum information:
  - a. The name of the medication
  - b. The name of the child receiving the medication
  - c. A requirement for refrigeration
  - d. The amount of medication administered
  - e. The date of administration
  - f. The time of administration
  - g. The initials of the staff person who administered the medication
  - h. Special notes related to problems of administration

## **PARENT VISITATION**

We encourage parents to visit our centers at any time and observe their children in the classroom environment. Individual evaluations of each child are done semi-annually and follow-up conferences can be requested. We encourage parents to speak with our staff at any time. We welcome your comments and suggestions and give you, the parent the opportunity to evaluate us annually as well using parent surveys.

## **POLICY FOR INTOXICATED PARENTS**

The child care staff will not release a child to any individual authorized to pick up your child who appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of a chemical substance. For the safety of the child, staff will contact another authorized person to pick up the child. While it is always our last choice, we will have no choice but to call the police if the intoxicated individual is unwilling to abide by this policy.

### **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Because many cell phones are now equipped with tiny cameras, we are concerned about the safety and security of the children in our care. Therefore, we will no longer allow anyone to use their cell phone while they are in any YMCA child care area. Please be sure to turn off your cellular telephone before you enter any YMCA child care program. This request is being made for the safety of every child in the center.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

All of our child care staff receives training in appropriate discipline practices. The East Shore YMCA works with many local agencies that are providing services for children with behavior problems and we can refer any interested parent to outside agencies if requested. The East Shore YMCA does, however, reserve the right to terminate the enrollment of any child who causes harm or threatens the safety of the other children or staff in the center.

Time out is used for children 18 months and older, not as punishment, but as a means of removing a child from a situation which is causing a negative behavior. Any child who is separated from the group is spoken with and is encouraged to exhibit appropriate behavior. Physical punishment and withholding of food cannot and will not be used as forms of discipline.

### **STAFF**

All of our child care staff must meet certain requirements before being employed. Each employee must be cleared through the Pennsylvania State Police, Child Line and FBI fingerprinting systems. A mandatory drug test is given, references are checked and two written references are kept on file. In addition to having prior experience working with children, all staff members are trained in first aid and child abuse prevention. Please be aware that as child care givers, all YMCA staff are mandated to report any suspected child abuse. YMCA child care staff are not permitted to have any outside contact with children such as driving them home, babysitting, or attending parties or functions.

### **FOOD PROGRAM**

Morning and afternoon snacks are provided by the center. Parents must provide a labeled, bagged lunch complete with a drink each day. *Please inform us immediately of any food allergies your child may have so we can help prevent an allergic reaction.*

\*All food required for children enrolled in the infant program must be provided by the child's parent.\*

### **CLOTHING**

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and sneakers or other appropriate shoes. Two sets of labeled clothing must be brought in as spare items for emergencies. These clothes need to come with your child on the first day of school. Please remember to replace spare clothing as it is used.

### NAPS

All of the children in both our preschool and toddler room's nap or rest from 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM each day. Each child in the toddler and preschool rooms are provided a mat for rest time and all mats are disinfected weekly. Your child should bring in a blanket from home for this purpose (small pillows are optional). Blankets and pillowcases should be labeled and taken home on Friday's to be laundered.

### TOYS FROM HOME

We ask that children leave toys, including electronic devices a home except on "show and tell days". Sharing is sometimes difficult and accidental damage or breakage can occur. Books, CD's and tapes from home are appreciated any time and the staff will do its best to insure that they are cared for. Please label any items from home that your child shares with us.

### BIRTHDAYS

We celebrate birthdays during snack time. Parents are welcome to bring birthday treats. Please notify your child's teacher of your plans so that she can provide the best opportunity to make this a special day. For the safety of all the children being served birthday treats, please ask the center staff about any food allergies another child may have.

### SPECIAL NEEDS AND REQUESTS

The East Shore YMCA is very willing to work with families when a child has special needs or requests. Please keep us informed of any food allergies, asthma, etc. If your child has an IEP, please consider giving us a copy. The more information we have about your child the better able we are to assist in appropriate care. The following is a list of agencies that can assist you with specific services:

CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program)	1-800-543-7101
Early Intervention Services	717-732-8400
Child Care Network (Federal Funding for Child Care)	1-877-474-5437

### ENROLLMENT PROCESS

In addition to signing the final, page of this handbook, which acknowledges that you have read and agree to comply with our policies, the following forms must also be completed before your child can begin attending our program:

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| -Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form | -Agreement Form        |
| -Non Discrimination Form                 | -Photo Release Form    |
| -Background Information Form             | -Health Appraisal Form |
| -Permission slip for Products from Home  |                        |

All of these forms will be given to you upon payment of your registration and program fee. Should you need any assistance in completing these forms, please speak with your site director. If you are enrolling your child for five full days, you are eligible for a free family membership. Please ask your child's site director how to obtain the necessary paperwork. Children ages 3 and older receive free swimming lessons. Downtown children have weekly lessons on site, Lower Paxton children receive coupons for free lessons. Ask the site Director for more information.

## PENNSYLVANIA KEYSTONE STARS

Here at the East Shore YMCA, we believe very strongly in providing a quality child care experience for every child enrolled in every one of our licensed child care facilities. Because of this belief, we participate in Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS program, which is offered to improve the quality of child care through:

- **Standards**
- **Training/Professional Development**
- **Assistance**
- **Resources**
- **Support**

The Keystone STARS Performance Standards provide the foundation for the program. Standards are grouped into five levels: **Start with STARS, STAR 1, STAR 2, STAR 3, AND STAR 4**. Each level builds on the previous level and utilizes research-based best practices to promote quality learning environments and positive child outcomes. The standards address staff qualifications and professional development, the early learning program, partnerships with family and community, and leadership and management. Keystone STARS is managed through a partnership of the Office of Child Development and the Pennsylvania Regional Keys. For an in-depth look at the program, we encourage you to visit the website at [www.pakeys.org/STARS](http://www.pakeys.org/STARS).

For your information, we ask all parents as well as all staff being hired to fill positions in any of our child care program to note two things:

1. A "Getting to Know You" meeting is offered to every family within 60 days of every child's enrollment. We encourage you to schedule a time to meet with your child's teachers/parents to discuss how things are going and any questions you may have about our program and the individual child. Notes from this meeting will be placed in the child's records. Staff members complete a written assessment for each child within the first 45 days of enrollment. The results of this observation can also be discussed at your request.
2. The East Shore YMCA goes above and beyond the minimum DPW requirements of six clock hours of training for all child care staff. To comply with Keystone STARS we require that all child care staff receive **12 approved clock hours of training plus 2 hours of PA Keys approved health and safety training. In addition, it is a requirement that they receive Fire Safety annually and Pediatric First Aid every 2 years.** We offer much of this training right here at the East Shore YMCA. All staff members are notified of all upcoming training events in their monthly newsletters and are advised to keep these newsletters handy.



If your child is terminated from the child care program for any reason, he/she will be ineligible to reenroll in any East Shore YMCA child care program in the future.

I have read the East Shore YMCA Child Care Handbook. I understand the policies contained within it and I am willing to enroll my child based on this information.

Your child's growth and development is measured with developmental assessments. If your child currently has an IEP/IFSP, it would be beneficial to share a copy of this plan with us so we can work together to ensure that the guidelines are put into practice. You do not have to provide this information if you do not wish to do so.

- My child does not currently have an IEP or IFSP.
- I am providing a copy of my child's IEP or IFSP.
- I am not providing a copy of my child's IEP or IFSP.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Center Child Attends: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please detach this page from the book and return it with your enrollment forms.

