HARLEYSVILLE YMCA
Early Childhood Center

PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

311 Alumni Ave., Harleysville, PA 19438
(215) 256-0767

Harleysville YMCA Early Childhood Center
A branch of the North Penn YMCA
311 Alumni Avenue Harleysville, PA 19438 Phone: 215-256-0767

A Branch of the North Penn YMCA, The Harleysville YMCA Early Childhood Center embraces the inclusive values, policies and practices that support the right of every young child to reach their fullest potential.

The YMCA has a strong foundation based on community involvement and volunteerism. We encourage parent engagement and partnerships for program planning and decision-making. We welcome suggestions, and we send out annual surveys to our parents for areas to improve upon and to praise our staff and programs for its successes. These suggestions and surveys are closely reviewed for quality assurance. We encourage our parents to attend our parent orientation meetings, participate or volunteer for events, serve on committees, share their culture and traditions and offer program suggestions that will help strengthen and guide our commitment to make the community we serve a better place to live.

At the Harleysville YMCA Early Childhood Center we build strong kids, strong families, strong communities. Through our programs we strive to make our community a better place to live regardless of race, religion, disability, ancestry, national origin, sex or economic circumstance.

Diane Manus

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2022-2023 PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER
8th T/TH Parent & Child Orientation Day
9th M/W/F Parent & Child Orientation Day
12th Classes begin
26th Rosh Hashanah (NO SCHOOL)

OCTOBER
5TH Yom Kippur (NO SCHOOL)

NOVEMBER
23rd – 25th Thanksgiving Break (NO SCHOOL)

DECEMBER 23rd –JANUARY 2ND Winter Break (NO SCHOOL)

JANUARY
3rd School Re-opens on Tuesday 1/3/23
16th Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (NO SCHOOL)

FEBRUARY
17th (NO SCHOOL) Snow Make-up day, if needed
20th Presidents' Day (NO SCHOOL)

MARCH
1st-3rd Parent/Teacher Conferences – (NO SCHOOL)
(Your child's teacher will contact you to schedule)

APRIL
5th (NO SCHOOL) Snow Make-up day, if needed
6th (NO SCHOOL) Snow Make-up day, if needed
7th -10th Spring Holiday (NO SCHOOL)

MAY
25th Last Day T/TH classes
26th Last Day M/W/F classes

SUMMER CAMP begins after Memorial Day – Date TBD

ADMISSION / ENROLLMENT: In addition to the required state and YMCA admission forms, we offer you an opportunity to discuss your child's individual needs, likes, dislikes, etc. within the first few weeks of enrollment. We ask you to fill out a "Getting to Know You" information sheet to help us provide a positive preschool experience.

ATTENDANCE / TUITION: Your child is expected to attend school on regularly scheduled days. Refunds and credits will not be issued due to illness, vacation or weather conditions.

Tuition payments are **due the 1st of each month**. Payments received later than the **15th** of the month will be accessed a $15.00 late fee.

Please contact our office to set up automatic payments. You can set up on-line access to your account and pay on your own, call or email our office to make a one-time credit card payment, or send in a check made payable to North Penn YMCA.

BUILDING SECURITY: Our building is locked during the day to provide a safe and secure environment. Ring the guest doorbell for assistance.

CALENDAR: Please refer to our School Calendar within this document for important dates.

CLASS TIMES: Note that we have staggered drop-off and pick-up times depending on your child's class, in order to keep traffic moving efficiently.

Please do not arrive earlier than five minutes before the start of your class.* The time before each session is teacher preparation time. Teachers may not be in their classroom.

2-Year-Old a.m.	9:00-11:00
3/4- Year- Old a.m.	8:45-11:15
Pre-K a.m. only	9:00-11:30
Full Day Pre-K	9:00- 2:15
Extended Day Programs	Per Contract Agreement

* Unless otherwise contracted for Early Drop-off

Please pick-up your child at your scheduled dismissal time. A late fee of $15.00 for every 15 minutes will be charged for late pick-ups.

CAR LINE / TRANSPORTATION: Please observe all NO PARKING signs at all times. **Do not block travel lanes, cross traffic, or garages.**

Harleysville YMCA Branch Drop-off & Pick-Up Procedures

UPON ARRIVAL

- Parents may pull up to the main door or may park their vehicle and walk up.
- If you are using our carline, please do not arrive more than 5 minutes before your child's class time.
- Staff will escort your child into the building following a brief health assessment.
- Staff will escort your child to the assigned group.

AT DISMISSAL

- Parents may enter carline 5 minutes before class dismissal.
- Children will be escorted by staff to parent's vehicle one at a time.
- Parents and/or designated pick-up persons are responsible for using a child safety car seat and securing your child's seatbelt.

If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, inform your teacher preferably in writing, of your travel arrangements. Also, if applicable, signed custody papers must be on file.

CLOSINGS / SNOW DAYS: **We will post inclement weather information on our website and our private group Facebook page:**
www.northpennymca.org .
https://www.facebook.com/groups/666755686861399/?ref=share

Our school follows the Souderton Area School District for school cancellations and delays due to weather.

If SASD closes, we close our school. If SASD calls for a Flexible Instruction Day, please **consult our website and/or Facebook page**. Based on conditions, we will determine whether we are opening on schedule, delaying our opening, or cancelling classes.

If Souderton School District has a delayed opening, classes will start 1 hour later than usual.

If possible, days missed due to inclement weather will be made up.

CLOTHING AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES: Play clothes and sneakers are most desirable. We often go outside so please dress your child appropriately. Please label EVERYTHING, including jackets, sweaters, hats and gloves. **Send a backpack daily, including an extra change of clothing (just in case).**
Teachers will inform you of other supplies that your child will need.

BATHROOM PRACTICES: Children have the opportunity to use the bathroom as needed. The expectation is for children enrolled in our 3 year old & Pre K classes to be potty-trained, meaning they can tell the staff when they need to use the bathroom and attend to their own hygiene when finished. We realize occasional accidents may happen. If a child has repeated accidents after reasonable accommodations have been attempted, we will evaluate whether the program is suited to meet the child's needs.

COMMUNITY SERVICES /STAKEHOLDER LIST: You may contact our administrative staff for assistance with locating community resources and services available to you and your child. For transitioning purposes, Pre-K parents are asked about their child's elementary school choice. Also, we will periodically provide information of interest on health issues, safety, tax-credits, family events, etc. We continue to update and expand our stakeholder list to include additional resources and community partnerships as needed.

CURRICULUM: Our three-year progressive curriculum builds on skills at age-appropriate levels. ***The Creative Curriculum for Preschool,*** developed by Teaching Strategies, is one of the resources used in our preschool programs. The curriculum is consistent with YMCA philosophy, which is grounded in a child-centered and holistic approach to early childhood. Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards are also used by teachers in daily lesson planning.

DISCIPLINE POLICY: All children are encouraged to respect each other, be fair, respect property, and learn to be accountable for their actions.

Staff will:

- Use positive guidance
- Redirect
- Plan ahead to prevent problems
- Encourage appropriate behavior
- Give clear consistent rules
- Teach children to problem solve and re-direct

Aggression or physical violence is unacceptable. Staff will immediately intercede to prevent harm.

- Children will be separated
- Injured child will be comforted and given first-aid, if needed
- Incident report will be written notifying parent
- Staff will review incident report with director to avoid any recurrence
- For multiple incidents with a child, parents will be notified of a plan of action to address unacceptable behavior

Before any discipline action is taken staff will explain the action to the child. Physical restraint will not be used except to ensure the safety of a child or that of another person, and then in the form of gently holding the child until he/she can gain self-control. A child may be removed from an activity or group as a last resort, and only until the child can regain self-control with staff support. As a general rule, this period will not exceed more than one minute per child's age. Staff will monitor the effectiveness of any use of discipline strategies and seek additional resources to improve behavior management techniques.

When a pattern of behavior persists that endangers self, others, property, or significantly disrupts the program, we will work with the family to determine solutions and conditions for the child remaining in the program. This includes referral for additional outside services, a requirement for one-on-one support persons who are permitted to intercede with a child during a disruptive outburst, or the exclusion of a child from the Harleysville YMCA Early Childhood Center.

DISMISSAL POLICY:

1. If a child's file is incomplete. All children enrolled in a state licensed facility must have a current health, emergency, civil rights and agreement form on file.
2. Unpaid tuition after given deadline.
3. Non-resolvable behavioral issues.

HEALTH INFORMATION: Our complete Health Policy is attached at the end of this document. **It is a state requirement for every child to have an annual health assessment on file, signed by a Physician.** Please inform staff of any physical or medical conditions that may affect your child's participation in our program so that we may provide a safe, supportive environment. A signed privacy release form is required to post any child's allergies in a classroom. Staff may ask you to provide alternative snacks for your child with food allergies.

ILLNESS: Please refer to our Health Policy, attached to this document.

COVID Guidelines: We will follow the most current guidelines and requirements of the State of Pennsylvania, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), and the Montgomery County Health Department.

All families attending our Center MUST follow the most current Montgomery County School Exclusion Policy regarding any COVID exposures.

IEP / IFSP: In order for staff to provide consistency, parents of children with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) are asked to share these plans with written consent. Consent forms are available in our office.

We want the best for every child, and will make reasonable accommodations to attempt to meet your child's needs. We reserve the right to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children in our program, and will determine whether our program can meet the child's needs accordingly.

NEWSLETTERS: Your teacher will provide a monthly newsletter and calendar regarding classroom activities, events, and snack assignments, as well as weekly updates and information.

LUNCH: Parents provide lunch for your child if they are enrolled in afternoon programs. We suggest using insulated bags with ice packs for cold foods, and thermos for warm foods. We cannot heat up food.

SNACK: Your child's teacher will explain classroom guidelines and allergy information. When it is your family's turn to provide snacks for the class, we ask you to choose healthy snacks from 2 food groups. **Healthy snack suggestions: Sliced fruit or veggies, applesauce, raisins, banana bread, oatmeal cookies, blueberry muffins, granola bars, fruit bars, cheese sticks, crackers, yogurt, etc.**

SPECIAL EVENTS / HOLIDAYS: Your teachers will inform you about individual classroom's special events and birthday celebrations.

OBSERVATIONS: Our staff will be observing your child's growth and development within the first 45 days of enrollment and throughout the school year. Our teachers will share these confidential observations with you verbally, through written documentation (reports in Fall, Winter and Spring), and during Parent/Teacher conferences. These observations are used for curriculum planning, individual progress reports and for referrals to community resources.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES: You may request a consultation with a teacher at any time.
Teachers will be sending home written observation reports, along with a response form asking parents if they would like a conference, at several times throughout the school year:

1) In the Fall, upon observing your child's transition to school;
2) Following Winter Assessments, when we will schedule several days to accommodate formal Parent/Teacher Conferences;
3) Close to the end of the school year for transition purposes.

Our staff will always discuss with you any classroom issues either through a conference or through written documentation and will refer you to support services, if needed. Also, we will transfer any child's records to another educational setting upon the written request of a parent.

TRANSITIONING: Our preschool classes run from September through May. The age groups in our classes are based on an elementary school model. Children will stay in one class for the entire school year, regardless of where their next birthday falls. For example, Pre-K is for children who will be entering kindergarten the following September. Our 3 year old classes are for those going to kindergarten in 2 years.

Our reasoning behind this design is for your child to experience the curriculum with one teacher and to create a community with his/her peers. As children progress through our preschool classes, many will develop long term friendships with fellow classmates.

In the spring your child will have an opportunity to visit the next age classroom. You may also schedule a tour to view the progression in expectations at each age group.

Our Pre-K classes hope to have opportunities for field trips throughout the year. We will celebrate preschool graduation in May to help transition to elementary school. Some of our area elementary schools may also provide opportunities to visit the kindergarten classroom prior to the start of the next school year.

We also will transfer any documents requested by the elementary school with the signed permission of parents and/or guardians.

SUMMER CAMP: Programs are offered during June-August.

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HEALTH POLICY

Each child enrolled must have an age-appropriate health appraisal form on file with the North Penn YMCA within 60 days of enrollment. Each child must have a thorough examination by a licensed physician within the previous year and must be signed by a health care professional.

If your child needs special considerations concerning health, behavior or other needs, please inform us so that appropriate accommodations are made for your child.

Your child's health is of utmost importance to all of us. Please do not send your child in if they have any of the following symptoms:

1. Fever 101 degrees or higher or with changes in behavior
2. Changes in behavior associated with symptoms of illness, i.e., lethargy
3. Needs more care than staff can provide, compromising the safety of other children in the group
4. To ill to go outside or to participate in daily classroom activities
5. Sore Throat or difficulty swallowing due to pain and/or fever
6. Undiagnosed Inflamed Eyes with discharge
7. Uncontrollable Cough
8. Abdominal pain for more than 2 hrs. or intermittent pain with fever
9. Mouth sores with drooling until cleared by physician as non-infectious
10. Head Lice until treated
11. Undiagnosed Rash with fever or behavioral changes
12. Diarrhea (2 stools or more above normal or is not contained in diaper or toilet)
13. Vomiting (2 or more times in previous 24hrs. or until cleared by a health professional as non-infectious and child remains adequately hydrated)

If your child develops any of the above symptoms while in a YMCA child care program, you will be notified and will need to pick-up or send an authorized person to pick-up your ill child. Your child will need to remain home for at least the next 24 hours after treatment has started or until the illness is cleared by a health professional. In order for a child to be readmitted, after they have recovered from an illness, a doctor's note may be required at the discretion of the child care director.

Please notify the child care staff immediately if your child is exposed to a communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox) so that the YMCA staff may inform the other parents who can then take preventative measures.

A special note:
According to the Department of Public Welfare Regulations (DPW) Regulation #3270.133: "No medication of any type (cough medicine, vitamins, aspirin, ear drops, etc.) shall be given without a written consent from parents".

"All medication in the faculty shall be kept in a place inaccessible to children. All medication shall be kept in its original, prescription label, be age appropriate dosage and have safety lock enclosures on containers. All medication requiring refrigeration shall be refrigerated at the proper temperature".

Child's Name:_____

Parent Signature_____ **Date**_____