



JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER
OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY
Hammel Campus

Child Care Family Handbook



EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION
AT THE JCC OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY



JLounge



2026-27 School Year

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Table of Contents

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Philosophy	4
1.2 Curriculum.....	4
1.3 Licensing	5
1.4 Organizational Governance	5
1.5 Staffing	5
1.6 Rights & Responsibilities	5
2.0 COMING TO THE JCC	7
2.1 Arrival & Departure.....	7
2.2 Preparing for the First Day	7
2.3 Handling Transition.....	8
2.4 Food Policies	8
2.5 Clothing	9
2.6 Toys	9
2.7 Birthdays.....	10
2.8 Holidays and Closings	10
3.0 CHILD POLICIES & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT	10
3.1 Behavior Management Policy.....	11
3.2 Biting	11
3.3 Inclusion Policy	12
3.4 Policy for Caring for our Children.....	12
3.5 Shaken Baby Syndrome (Abusive Head Trauma) Prevention Policy.....	13
3.6 Shared Services.....	15
3.7 Infant and Child Physical Activity Policy	16
3.8 Nutrition Policy	17
3.9 Screen Time Policy.....	17
3.10 Camp Code of Honor & Behavior Management	18
4.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	18
4.1 Reporting Abuse & Neglect.....	18
4.2 Medical Policies.....	20
4.3 Accidents & Emergencies.....	20
4.4 Medication	20
4.5 Toileting and Diapering.....	21
4.6 Illness Policy.....	22
4.7 Individual Illnesses	23
4.8 Air Quality Alerts	27
4.9 Napping	27
4.10 Evacuation	27
4.11 Supervision Policy.....	28
5.0 PARENT POLICIES	30
5.1 Arrivals and departures	30
5.2 Confidentiality	30

5.3 Grievance Procedure.....	31
6.0 TUITION AND FEES	32
6.1 Payment Options.....	32
6.2 Registration Fee	33
6.3 Payment Dates and Fees	33
6.4 Withdrawal	33
6.5 Financial Assistance	34
6.6 Schedule Changes.....	34
7.0 PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION	34
7.1 Parent Visits.....	34
7.2 Communication.....	35
7.3 Staff Contact.....	36
7.4 Forms.....	36
7.5 Conferences and Reports	36
7.6 Age Transitions & Staff Ratios.....	37
7.7 Developmental Support and Referrals.....	37
7.8 Termination Policy	39
7.9 Continuity of Care Policy	39
8.0 PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION	40
8.1 Parking Procedures	40
8.2 Transportation.....	41
9.0 COMMUNICATION	41

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Philosophy

The JCC's philosophy is to care for children with warmth and guidance in an environment that honors and supports their individuality. The JCC strives to give each child a balanced education that is specifically tailored to the individual child and also integrated into the community of the classroom. The learning environment reflects opportunities involving one or more of the Key Developmental Indicators outlined in our HighScope Curriculum: Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development; Physical Developmental and Health; Language, Literacy, and Communication; Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

We appreciate that children have their own timetables for development. The experiences reinforced at the JCC are carefully designed to give your child the tools needed to succeed in forming meaningful and healthy friendships; developing attitudes and values that will help him/her approach learning with delight; building curiosity and confidence to succeed in school and lifelong learning; and developing a healthy, positive self-concept. We recognize that transparent and regular communication between parents and educators help to form the basis for success in Early Childhood.

Through the celebration of the Jewish holidays and through learning about Jewish values and customs, we hope every child will come to have a joyful and positive sense of identity, regardless of their own personal background. By honoring the similarities and differences that are part of our daily life, we strive for every child and family to feel welcome and included within the JCC community. Our families and staff reflect a broad spectrum of religious observance, and their diversity is recognized and embraced.

1.2 Curriculum

The Early Childhood program uses the HighScope Curriculum, which is a developmentally appropriate, play-based curriculum designed to help nurture the inquisitive, outgoing spirit that leads children to investigate and explore their surroundings. The HighScope Curriculum uses Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs) which are in line with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards. The curriculum serves as a scaffold, informing the activities and experiences that your child's teachers plan each day. Your child will engage in experiences guided by skilled teachers who know exactly when to actively supervise, to stimulate or scaffold, to inconspicuously watch, or to provide warmth and nurturing.

The educational program is based on an integrated approach to child development in which creative arts, sciences, literacy skills and numeracy skills are incorporated within the daily activities of the classroom. Your child will be involved in hands-on learning through which concepts and skills are experienced as integrated parts of learning and exploration rather than as isolated proficiencies. The daily schedule is designed to balance active play and quiet rest, individual attention and group interaction, free choice and structured activities. The balance of planned and emergent programming supports the development of not only basic skills, but also of the higher-level critical thinking skills of observation, questioning, problem solving, and making predictions.

The J Lounge after-school provides enrichment and development opportunities for kids and young adults beyond the traditional school curriculum. Programs taking place after school hours give youth a safe, supervised place to explore interests, learn new skills and spend worthwhile time with peers and adults. Each day, children have time to do homework and eat healthy snacks. J Lounge is also a combination of educational and recreational programming. Our basic programming goal is to provide structured activities

that are non-lecturing, hands-on and experiential. Other times are left to be organized largely by the children in order to give them time to simply play and socialize under the supervision of trained staff members.

1.3 Licensing

The Early Childhood and J Lounge programs are licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and the City of Allentown Health Bureau. We are mandated to uphold all regulations pertaining to Group Care and School Age Licensing. A copy of the Pennsylvania Code Title 55: Chapter 3270 is available in the Director's office for your review. We also actively participate in the Pennsylvania Keystone STARS program.

1.4 Organizational Governance

The JCC of the Lehigh Valley is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors that is elected by its membership to provide leadership and oversight. Operational responsibilities for all JCC programs are delegated to the staff via its Executive Director, an employee who is selected and supervised by the Board of Directors. The Early Childhood Director supervises all educational and support professionals working in the Early Childhood department, and reports to the Executive Director. The Youth & Camp Director supervises all programs in the Youth and Camp departments, including J Lounge, and reports to the Program Director.

1.5 Staffing

We believe the success of our programs, which is determined by your child's success, lies in the quality of our staff. The teaching staff at the JCC is professional, skilled and committed to the growth and development of your child.

All child care employees meet the qualification standards established by the Department of Human Services. Each teacher is certified in First Aid and Infant-Child CPR and has obtained all required Pennsylvania clearances, including the PA Child Abuse history clearance, PA State Police criminal history clearance, FBI criminal history clearance, and the NSOR (National Sex Offender Registry) clearance. All teaching staff must complete staff development training annually. They attend monthly staff meetings that cover such topics as program goals, emergency procedures, curriculum planning, health and safety, child abuse reporting and prevention, documentation, policies and procedures. The teachers, assistant teachers, aides and directors work cooperatively as a team.

1.6 Rights & Responsibilities

Children's Rights

All children:

- Are treated with respect and dignity, and they have a right to voice their opinion.
- Are provided with a safe, reliable environment that is free of hazards and offers a variety of choices across all the domains, including active and quiet areas, indoor and outdoor areas, and guided and open-ended activities.
- When needing discipline, receive it in a way that is a source of guidance and that is fair and respectful.
- Have the opportunity to learn how to identify and express their anger, frustration, disappointment, joy, and other emotions in a safe and appropriate manner.

- Have activities that allow them to express their creative ability as they explore and discover, while developing to their fullest potential.
- Have staff members that care about them, enjoy being with them, keep them safe, and help them grow and learn.

Children's Responsibilities

All children:

- Are expected to respect and adhere to the ground rules of the JCC, including but not limited to safe and respectful behavior regarding others and property.
- Are expected to share equipment and facilities with all children in the program.
- Are expected to have fun, enjoy friendships, and delight in the exploration of learning.

Parents/Guardians' Rights

All parents/guardians may:

- Make unannounced visits to your child's room while your child is present.
- Are provided with information about child-care regulatory standards, if applicable; where to direct questions about regulatory standards; and how to file a complaint.
- Receive information regarding their children's progress two times a year and may request an individual conference at any time.
- Have an enrollment meeting with a department administrator in the week prior to starting at the JCC. This enrollment meeting will be a time for parents to bring in personal belongings, review the school's policies, and have the child meet their teachers and classmates.
- Review their child's records. Information contained in your child's record is privileged and confidential. The JCC staff may not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without your written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

Parents/Guardians' Responsibilities

All parents/guardians should:

- Model the character, values and responsibilities of being part of the JCC community.
- Respect confidentiality by having personal conversations in private.
- Interact with others in a respectful manner.
- Check your child's cubby daily for communication from your child's classroom or the JCC.
- Adhere to timelines for submitting paperwork, questionnaires and other requested information.
- Notify the JCC any time you will be arriving late or your child will be absent, whether or not it is for reasons of illness.

JCC Responsibilities

The JCC will:

- Provide information to licensing authority: The licensee must make available to the DHS or any other licensing or governmental body any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. Authorized employees of the office are not to remove identifying case materials from the JCC premises and are required to maintain the confidentiality of individual records.
- Notify parents/guardians immediately of any injury which requires emergency care, as soon as it is safe to do so without risking further injury.
- Notify parents/guardians in writing within 24 hours if any first aid is administered to your child.
- Administer and ensure program quality for the benefit of children and families.

- Report any reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect. All JCC staff are mandated reporters and are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Human Services. The JCC maintains written employees policies and procedures for reporting suspected child abuse.

2.0 COMING TO THE JCC

2.1 Arrival & Departure

- All children must be accompanied to and picked up from their classroom or the group's current activity space according to their scheduled times and by an approved adult (18 or older).
- The parent is expected to sign the child in and ensure the child is under their supervision before leaving the premises.
- Please encourage and assist your children ages two and older in hanging up outerwear and placing lunch boxes and any personal belongings in their designated place. This type of morning ritual can help to ease the transition from home to school each day. It also instills a sense of independence and pride in the children as they learn to help themselves.
- Since the teachers need to arrive before the scheduled starting time to prepare the environment for the day's activities, it is important that you do not arrive before your child's designated start time, even if staff are present.
- Please be on time to pick up your child at their expected or scheduled departure time. Children become anxious and worried when they are not picked up promptly. Late pick-ups can also impact required child-teacher ratios. If an emergency situation arises and you will be delayed, please call the JCC at 610-435-3571 or message on Brightwheel so we can provide appropriate care for your child.

When a parent or guardian is present at the JCC, the parent/guardian, and not the staff, is responsible for the care of the child. This is also true when parents/guardians and children are enjoying JCC family activities such as picnics. Pre-arranged meetings with staff members will take place in one of the ECE offices or at another location removed from the activities of the classroom. If such meetings occur during your child's regularly scheduled time at the JCC, the staff will care for the visiting parent/guardian's child.

We ask that you plan your travel time with enough leeway for inclement weather conditions, traffic, parking, or walking to the JCC to pick up your child at his/her scheduled time.

There will be a late fee of \$10.00 for any late pick-up within the first 10 minutes after your child's scheduled departure time, and an additional \$1 per minute thereafter.

2.2 Preparing for the First Day

You can help prepare your child for his/her new experience at the JCC by talking about the school in a casual, pleasant manner and by talking about what will happen each day. The administration will plan an enrollment meeting prior to your child's first day of school. At this meeting you will have the opportunity to meet your child's teacher, visit the classroom for a short while, and bring in any items that will be needed in the classroom. We will let you know in advance the name of the child's teachers so that you can refer to them by name. Let your child know that a parent or familiar caregiver will accompany him/her during the initial transition period. Separation issues may arise, particularly during the first few weeks. It is important that your child feels safe, secure and comfortable at the JCC.

2.3 Handling Transition

Separating and reuniting with parents is a process through which the child learns trust, independence, and resiliency. Establishing a consistent routine for saying good-bye is instrumental to a child's success with separation. Explain to your child where you will be going while he/she is at the JCC and when you will be coming back. Outbursts of tears often accompany normal adjustment. For some children, it is over in a matter of seconds; for others, it takes several minutes before they feel comfortable letting you go. Feel free to contact the department office or message on Brightwheel to inquire about your child. Information is available to help with the transition to a new program from the department director.

2.4 Food Policies

Kashrut

Adhering to Jewish tradition around kosher foods is called "kashrut." The families at the JCC come from many different backgrounds and practices, both within the Jewish community and outside of it. To maintain an environment where all feel welcome and comfortable, our policy for food sent from home for student consumption is as follows:

- No products containing pork or shellfish ingredients are permitted.
- Foods cooked at home may only be used for your own child's consumption (e.g., home-baked goods may not be sent in to be served to the class).

Food Allergies

There are children in our school with severe allergies. Being mindful of what you pack in your child's lunch is not only beneficial to the children with allergies, but may also save your child from witnessing a life-threatening reaction. Please do not pack any food items containing peanuts or tree nuts. For the same reasons of health and safety, children may not share anything from their lunches. Assisting your child in washing his/her hands, as well as your own, upon entering the building is another important safeguard when interacting with highly allergic individuals, and it also prevents germs from spreading in the classroom. Please notify us if your child has any food allergies.

Snacks

Snacks are served mid-morning and mid-afternoon at the discretion of the staff. They will typically include fresh fruit or plain cookies, crackers, or pretzels which are not high in sugar. Families are encouraged to participate in their child's classroom's healthy snack sign-up.

Lunch

Children who are at the JCC for lunch are required to bring their own lunch. We will provide whole milk for Infants and Young Toddlers, 2% milk for Older Toddlers, and 1% for Preschool and Pre-K. Please label all containers, including thermoses and thermos covers, with your child's name. Please include labeled utensils as needed.

Please send foods ready for consumption; teachers should not need to peel or cut food into pieces. Children will be asked to keep the dessert portion of their lunch in their lunchbox until they have finished eating the nutritious part of their meal. Teachers will send home any unfinished items. If an unacceptable item (e.g., shellfish) is brought to the JCC, the staff will provide your child with a substitute lunch, and the food will be sent home. If you send in something that is a substitute for a shellfish or pork product (e.g., a tofu-based "lookalike" product) or a substitute for a product with allergens (e.g., soy nut butter in place of peanut butter), please alert the teacher at the beginning of the day to avoid confusion. This will save us the time of calling you with an inquiry or sending the item home unnecessarily.

Infants: Bottles, Formulas, and Introduced Foods

All parents of infants are required to complete a form detailing feeding instructions including the type, amount and frequency of liquids as well as any solid foods. A list of the foods you have introduced to your child is given to the JCC and updated on an ongoing basis. New foods should only be sent after the child has been given them at home at least three times. Infant bottles must be prepared by the infant room staff, or, if purchased pre-made, the bottles must be sealed. Breast milk must be labeled and dated. We do not allow glass bottles.

Toddlers

We ask that a labeled sippy cup be sent to school for snacks and lunch. If your child uses a pacifier, please make sure that it is labeled.

2.5 Clothing

Safe and Comfortable Clothing

Since play is a child's work, we ask that your child come dressed in comfortable clothing, ready to explore. They are exposed to many art materials and play both indoors and outside, which will inevitably cause your child's clothing to get dirty. Please make sure that your child dresses appropriately for the weather. In the winter months make sure your child has a labeled hat and mittens, and in the summer remember that flip flops, open toe shoes, or heels are not safe for an outside setting. All clothing including underwear, socks, shoes and outerwear must be labeled with your child's initials. Clothing that is not labeled cannot be monitored by the teachers.

Change of Clothes

We ask that you provide at least one complete change of clothing at all times. This includes: socks, underwear, shirt, shoes, pants/skirt, sweater or sweatshirt and an extra pair of mittens. Please check spare items seasonally.

Jewelry

The JCC does not allow children to attend wearing any jewelry around their necks. If you choose to send your child with any other jewelry, the JCC takes no responsibility in keeping track of it or in making sure it does not get broken or misplaced.

Lost and Found

Labeling your child's clothing and belongings will hopefully reduce the frequency of items getting lost. However, since items do get misplaced, we will maintain a Lost and Found bin in each department office. It is the parent's responsibility to search for missing items that were not labeled.

2.6 Toys

Children sometimes have a difficult time sharing as well as keeping track of toys from home. Therefore, we do not allow items from home unless they are requested for a classroom activity. We respect a child's need for a comfort object to help bridge the transition from home to school; some children may need a favorite toy, blanket or stuffed animal. **Weapons, balloons, and gum are never allowed.** Electronic devices, including but not limited to, cell phones, tablets, smart watches, and video game consoles are not permitted and will be confiscated until a parent can pick them up; an exception is made for computers necessary for schoolwork, which may only be used under supervision and for that purpose.

2.7 Birthdays

We welcome the celebration of your child's birthday in the classrooms and in camp groups. Due to kashrut and allergy regulations, ALL treats must be ordered through the appropriate program office (early childhood or youth and camp), which will provide order forms upon request. Please make arrangements at least one week in advance.

2.8 Holidays and Closings

Holidays Not Observed

The JCC does not observe non-Jewish holidays with a religious basis or origin such as Christmas, Halloween, Valentine's Day or St. Patrick's Day. While children are always free to wear clothing of their choice and communicate with their classmates, please be aware that these holidays will not be celebrated in a formal or organized fashion (e.g., a costume parade or the arranged trading of Valentine's Day cards).

Shabbat (Sabbath)

Shabbat is a special time at the JCC. On Friday mornings, the children of the early childhood program join together to celebrate Shabbat with songs, dancing, stories and blessings. Parents are always welcome to join us.

JCC Holidays

See the 2026-2027 School Calendar included in the welcome packet and on the JCC of the Lehigh Valley website (www.lvjcc.org) for specific opening and closing times and early dismissals. In addition to federal holidays observed, the JCC also closes for some Jewish holidays as well as teacher in-service days. Jewish holidays begin at sundown and continue for 24 hours. The evening on which the holiday starts is called the "*erev*" (literally, "evening") of the holiday while the next day is often referred to with the holiday name. Jewish holidays operate on a lunar calendar, so dates change each year on the regular calendar. When the JCC is closed for a Jewish holiday, the closure will begin at 5 p.m. on the day prior for the *erev*, and continue the entirety of the following day.

Snow Closings & Weather-Related Information

Weather-related delays, closings, or early closings will be announced on www.wfmz.com, the JCC voicemail at 610-435-3571, and the JCC website at www.lvjcc.org. Parents will also receive notifications via the Brightwheel app. The fastest way to be notified of closures is generally by signing up for WFMZ's text messaging service, which must be renewed each year. The JCC will make every attempt to remain open as long as the facility can be safely accessed, and staff are able to travel to and from work.

There may be a delayed opening or a situation in which we open in the morning with the understanding that worsening weather conditions may call for an early dismissal. Please be aware of the weather forecast and prepared for these possibilities.

3.0 CHILD POLICIES & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Our goal is to help children learn to successfully manage their own behavior. Behavior management is accomplished through a positive approach that respects the child as an individual. This includes helping each child to identify feelings and escalating or intensifying emotions, to learn strategies to appropriately resolve any issues, and to find their way back to calm. A key component to working with young children

is modeling the desired behaviors, providing guidance within the positive framework of what we want a child to do, and providing the language of self-expression and problem solving.

3.1 Behavior Management Policy

If a concerning behavior occurs in the classroom or at camp, it will be discussed with the child's parent/s to share information and insights and to develop a collaborative child guidance plan to be signed by both parties. This plan will be used both at home and at the JCC. Follow-up meetings will be scheduled between the family and staff to discuss progress on the goals. Discipline and guidance will be consistent based on an understanding of each child's individuality and temperament. The safety of each child, teacher, and group is always a priority.

Corporal punishment including spanking, verbal abuse, force feeding, humiliation, denial of food or outdoor time (unless viewed as a safety issue), neglect, abusive treatment, or other means of severe punishment will never be tolerated in any JCC program. No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Our staff will be pleased to answer specific questions you may have regarding behavior management and guidance strategies. Teachers can make suggestions based on successful interactions with your child at school. Please feel free to ask for our ideas at any time.

See *Termination Policy* (7.8) regarding situations that remain potentially harmful to the child, other children or the staff at the JCC.

3.2 Biting

At the JCC, we are concerned about and responsible for the safety and well-being of each and every child. We understand that each child develops at their own rate and in their own learning style. It is our goal to provide a nurturing and safe environment for every child enrolled. Because we view each child as a special and unique individual, we set policies that reflect our understanding of the behavior that is appropriate to each child's developmental level while still providing appropriate procedures for identifying and assessing possible behavioral concerns.

One situation that is often present is biting. While we recognize that biting is a concerning behavior, we also know that biting is a normal developmental behavior for toddlers and children in their early preschool years. Before children have developed strong language skills, their ability to manage their energy and/or emotions, or the ability to delay gratification, they often communicate physically. They shove, push, grab, and bite. It is important to remember that at this age they do not have a social conscience as we know it. They may understand that when they bite someone cries, but they have not yet connected all the social consequences. With older toddlers and preschoolers, biting may be a sign of frustration, speech delays, overstimulation, sensory aggravations, and/or the inability to verbally communicate these frustrations or other physical or emotional concerns.

If a child is biting at home, chances are that the behavior will also manifest at school. Please let the teacher know so special care and attention can be given to help avoid unnecessary issues.

If a child bites another child, the incident will be documented, and the parents/guardians of the child who bit will be notified. Parents will also be notified that their child has been bitten. To maintain confidentiality, families will not be told who else was involved in the incident.

If a child bites another child, the teacher will immediately attend to the child who has been bitten. After comforting the bitten child, the teacher will turn to the biting child to give feedback appropriate for that child. If a child bites repeatedly, a conference with the parent/guardian will be arranged to share information from both the home and center environments. An action plan will be developed and signed to ensure consistent collaboration between home and school. The plan will be reviewed as determined necessary to discuss progress on the goals.

It may be necessary to ask the parent to withdraw the child from the JCC:

- If biting occurrences remain frequent and do not diminish in frequency or severity.
- If the biting incident is the final incident in a succession of aggressive behaviors that are harmful to the child and/or other children/staff at the JCC, or if it is determined that we are unable to provide the services that the child requires.

3.3 Inclusion Policy

The JCC supports the policies of the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning, the US Departments of Health and Human Services and US Department of Education regarding the benefits of inclusion for all children. The JCC promotes inclusion and supports children with disabilities being enrolled alongside peers without disabilities in the same classrooms. We support the right of every young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of community and society.

The JCC believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs. Families are encouraged to share their child's Individualized Family Service Plan ("IFSP") and/or Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") with us to help a child who has special needs accomplish their individual goals. If, during a school year, the lead classroom teacher and the Director feel a child's needs are not being met in the current classroom environment, our program reserves the right to require a professional screening to determine how best to help the child in his/her growth and development. It is the family's responsibility to obtain an appropriate services team and to bear the financial burden of the services. Please note that many services are available at no charge through the Lehigh County Intermediate Unit and/or other agencies and community-based organizations.

Here at the JCC we believe that exclusionary measures should be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. Even in such extraordinary cases, the program should assist the child and family in accessing services and an alternative placement through, for example, community-based child care resources and referral agencies. Should a situation arise where the JCC feels that all possible interventions and supports have recommended to the parents but have been unsuccessful in enabling the child to effectively participate in our program, all parties should work together to develop a plan to transition the child out of the JCC's care.

3.4 Policy for Caring for our Children

The JCC of Lehigh Valley's Early Childhood Education program uses Caring for our Children (<https://nrckids.org/CFOC>) to help establish the best practices regarding care plans for children with special needs as well as medication administration. "Children with special needs" is defined as **"A child that has an increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition**

and who also requires health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”

Children with special needs and their families and caregivers/teachers should have access to and be encouraged to receive a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary assessment by qualified health providers before the child starts in the facility. This information needs to be shared with the parents/guardians’ consent to disclose information if it is relevant to health and safety concerns in the child care setting. In this case, this evaluation should consist of the following:

1. A medical care plan developed by the child’s primary care provider/medical home;
2. Results of medical and developmental examinations;
3. Assessments of the child’s behavior, cognitive functioning, or current overall adaptive functioning;
4. Evaluations of the family’s needs, cultural and linguistic differences, concerns, and priorities; e. Other evaluations as needed.

The definitive characteristic of services for children and their families is the necessity of individualizing their care to meet their needs. Therefore, individual assessments must precede services. The family’s needs, values, and childrearing practices are highly relevant and respected in the provision of care to the child, however the child’s special needs continue to be the central focus of intervention.

3.5 Shaken Baby Syndrome (Abusive Head Trauma) Prevention Policy

This policy is designed to prevent the possibility of abusive head trauma during care. Abusive head trauma (also referred to as Shaken Baby Syndrome) occurs in infants and young children, whose neck muscles are not well-developed and whose heads are larger relative to their bodies. As a result, they are especially susceptible to head trauma caused by any type of forceful or sudden shaking, with or without blunt impact. Damage can occur in as little as five seconds.

Abusive head trauma can occur in children up to 5 years of age, however infants less than one year are at greater risk of injury. Shaken baby syndrome can lead to serious conditions including:

- Brain damage, problems with memory and attention, cerebral palsy;
- Blindness or hearing loss;
- Intellectual, speech or learning disabilities; and
- Developmental delays.

Signs and Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of shaken baby syndrome or head trauma include:

- Seizures;
- Bruises;
- Lack of appetite, vomiting, or difficulty sucking or swallowing;
- Lack of smiling or vocalizing;
- Rigidity, inability to lift the head;
- Difficulty staying awake, altered consciousness;
- Difficulty breathing, blue color due to lack of oxygen;
- Unequal pupil size, inability to focus the eyes or track movement; or
- Irritability.

Injury Prevention

Infant crying is normal behavior, which improves as a child ages. Caregivers should develop proactive strategies to manage stress levels and appropriate responses to a crying child. This includes being self-aware and noticing when the caregiver may become frustrated or angry. Parents/guardians, caregivers and coworkers should discuss what calming strategies are successful with a particular child at home or in the center.

Emergency Response

If a child presents any of the above symptoms or you suspect a baby has suffered abusive head trauma:

1. Call 911, and then inform your supervisor or the executive director. See the Medical Emergency procedure in the Emergency Procedures Guide for more information.
2. Report to the Department of Human Services' ChildLine as soon as is reasonably possible. See the Abuse Prevention Policy in the Employee Handbook for more information.

Strategies for Caregivers and Parents

A child is usually shaken out of frustration, often when the child is persistently crying or irritable. The following strategies may work some of the time; but sometimes nothing will comfort a crying child. **A teacher should seek support from a coworker or center management.** If a child is inconsolable on a regular basis, the director and regional manager should be notified and determine if the right supports are in place for the child and for staff.

Do:

- Hand the child to another caregiver.
- Place the child somewhere safe in the classroom (or home) and call the office (or a neighbor) for support; take deep breaths and count to 10.
- Check to see if the baby's diaper needs changing.
- Give the baby a bottle. If the baby readily takes a bottle, feed slowly, stopping to burp often. Do not force the baby to eat.
- Check for signs of illness and call the parent if you suspect the child is sick.
- Give the baby a pacifier.
- Hold the baby close against your body and breathe calmly and slowly.
- Gently rock the baby using slow, rhythmic movements.
- Sing to the baby or play soft, soothing music.
- Use "white noise" or rhythmic sounds that mimic the constant whirl of noise in the womb.
- Hold the baby on its side or stomach position to help with digestion. Babies should always be placed on their backs to sleep.
- Take the baby for a walk indoors or outside for a ride in the stroller.
- Be patient: let the baby cry it out if necessary.

Never:

- Shake a child.
- Drop a child.
- Throw a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat.
- Push a child into any object including walls, doors, and furniture.
- Strike a child's head, directly or indirectly.

Resources

In addition to any required state training, the following resources are available to parents/guardians and staff:

Abusive Head Trauma-How to Protect Your Baby: <https://americanspcc.org/shaken-baby-syndrome/>

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome <https://www.dontshake.org>

3.6 Shared Services

The Jewish Community Center of the Lehigh Valley's Early Childhood Education and JLounge afterschool programs participate in shared service opportunities, both internally and externally. These opportunities allow the programs to think strategically about centralizing and streamlining tasks and roles.

Internal Resource Sharing

As an integral part of a larger JCC organization, the ECE and JLounge programs mutually benefit internally in the following ways:

1. Oversight and supervision by the executive director of the agency.
2. Financial management through internal and external accounting professionals.
3. Staff sharing: both children's programs utilize staff at appropriate times.
4. Additional agency program staff in areas of fitness, aquatics and recreation use their talents to teach classes and skill development to children.
5. Marketing staff strategize and implement parental and community communications.
6. Membership management staff use extensive databases for enrollment, tracking, reporting and cost collection.
7. ECE/JLounge/camp professional staff participate together in regular staff development opportunities and meetings.
8. On-site staff with proper credentials provide instruction and certification in CPR and First Aid.
9. On-site building services management team ensures environmental compliance and proper safety measures.
10. Departments work together on purchasing and logistics for supplies, crafts, food and office needs.

External Resources

1. JCC has a state-certified Safety Committee consisting of both managers and associates that regularly reviews safety procedures and concerns.
2. The Jewish Day School of the Lehigh Valley works collaboratively with the JCC on programming opportunities throughout the year, as well as cross-promotion of programs and events.
3. The Jewish Family Service of the Lehigh Valley works collaboratively with the JCC on mission-aligned programs, including the importance of helping those in need and giving back to the community.

4. The Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley supports the larger JCC with a generous annual allocation, enabling the JCC to provide significant levels of financial aid for its child care programs.
5. Private grant foundations (including the Trexler Trust and the Kline Foundation) support general operations and financial aid for child care programs.

3.7 Infant and Child Physical Activity Policy

The JCC is committed to our children's health and understands the unique needs of each child. Our staff members are positive role models who help children begin healthy habits at a young age. We promote indoor and outdoor physical activity based on the guidelines below. This policy is for a standard eight-hour daily schedule and is specific to each age group.

For children birth through 11 months:

- Staff members engage infants in short periods of tummy time (3 to 5 minutes) and increase the amount of time as infants show enjoyment, or as appropriate for children with special health care needs.
- Staff members include activities that safely support infants' developmental milestones. Sedentary time will be limited to less than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Outdoor space includes shaded areas/structures that allow for children and staff to be protected from the rays of the sun.
- Screen time is not permitted.

For children 12 months to 23 months:

- Staff members will include at least 60 minutes per day in the curriculum for physical activity. At least 30 minutes will be adult-led and 30 minutes will be free play.
- Staff members will encourage both moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity.
- Outdoor space includes shaded areas/structures that allow for children and staff to be protected from the rays of the sun.
- Sedentary time is limited to less than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Screen time is not permitted.

For children two years and older:

- Staff members will include at least 120 minutes per day in the curriculum for physical activity regardless of weather.
- At least 60 minutes will be adult-led and 60 minutes will be free play.
- Weekly structured gym class taught by a certified instructor will be 45 minutes in length.
- Staff members will encourage both moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity.
- A variety of toys, in good condition, both indoors and outdoors, to help encourage children's physical activity.
- Staff are encouraged to dress in attire that supports exercise.
- Outdoor space includes shaded areas/structures that allow for children and staff to be protected from the rays of the sun.
- Sedentary time is limited to less than 120 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Screen time is limited to three hours or less per week.

Exceptions to screen time limits include: children needing assistive and/or adaptive equipment or when screen time engages children in physical activity or is used for educational purposes. Physical activity will never be used or withheld as a punishment.

3.8 Nutrition Policy

The JCC is committed to providing healthy snacks and beverages and positive mealtimes so that your child can learn good eating habits and grow up strong.

Foods and Beverages

- Children are offered fruit and/or vegetables as a morning and afternoon snack.
- Sweets and salty snacks are offered infrequently.
- We offer only healthy beverages like milk and water.

Mealtimes

- Teachers talk with children about healthy habits and healthy foods, and check in with them about hunger and fullness.
- Teachers never force or bribe children to eat any particular foods or to clean their plates.

Celebrations

Because we are a Jewish Community Center, we do not celebrate the following holidays in our classrooms: Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day or Easter. As a result, sweets that are normally introduced during these holiday celebrations are not served. The celebrations where food is introduced into the curriculum is as follows:

- Rosh Hashanah - apples and honey
- Hanukkah - potato pancakes, applesauce and donuts
- Tu B'Shevat – fruits
- Passover – *matzah* (flatbread crackers) and *charoset* (apples, grape juice, and cinnamon chutney)
- Shavuot - dairy and vegan foods

Nutrition Education

- Children learn about food and eating each week through stories and activities.
- Each year, all staff and teachers participate in training on nutrition topics.

3.9 Screen Time Policy

Screen Time Policy for the Classroom

We recognize the importance of fostering a balanced, developmentally appropriate approach to screen time for young children. Our goal is to support the overall growth and well-being of each child while promoting meaningful interactions, creative play, and physical activity. Thus, the following policies are in place regarding screen time on electronic devices:

1. Screen Time Limitations:

- We limit screen time to age-appropriate, purposeful use that aligns with our educational goals.

- Screen time will be used sparingly and only for activities that support the learning environment, such as interactive learning games, educational videos, or virtual field trips.
 - For children under the age of 2, no screen time is allowed.
 - For children ages 2 to 5, screen time will not exceed 15 minutes per day.
- 2. Educational Content:**
- Screens will only be used for educational content that is aligned with our curriculum and developmental goals.
 - Programs, videos, or apps will be carefully selected by staff to ensure that they are of high quality, age-appropriate, and support learning objectives.
- 3. Active Engagement:**
- When screens are used, teachers will facilitate and engage with children to encourage active participation, discussion, and reflection on the content.
 - Screen time will be incorporated into the day in a way that does not replace or overshadow hands-on learning, outdoor play, or face-to-face social interactions.
- 4. Supervision:**
- All screen use will be supervised by staff members to ensure content appropriateness and that the child's engagement with the screen is constructive and meaningful.
 - Screen use will be conducted in a group setting where children can engage with each other, share ideas, and participate in discussions.
- 5. Outdoor Play and Hands-on Activities:**
- Outdoor play and other non-screen-based activities will remain the priority in our daily schedule.
 - Time spent on screens will be balanced with active play, creative arts, reading, and other enriching, screen-free experiences.
- 6. Parental Communication:**
- Parents will be informed of any screen time activities through regular communication channels, including newsletters and daily reports via Brightwheel, to maintain transparency and collaboration.
 - We encourage parents to discuss any concerns or preferences regarding screen use with the teaching staff.

3.10 Camp Code of Honor & Behavior Management

In our summer camp and JLounge programs, all parents and students/campers are expected to read, understand and adhere to the Code of Honor and Behavior & Consequences document posted on the camp website.

4.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.1 Reporting Abuse & Neglect

Each teacher in a classroom is assigned individual children as per DHS and general best practice. It will be that teacher's responsibility to greet those children daily for a general review of the child's well-being. Any physical marks are noted and discussed with the parent/guardian upon entry. Any changes in behavior are noted as well.

Upon physical evidence, child report, or any reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect, the protocol checklist and documentation is initiated and the Pennsylvania ChildLine is notified immediately. As per state regulation, the JCC's Executive Director and relevant department director (Early Childhood Director or Youth & Camp Director) will also be notified. If it is decided a child is in any immediate danger, the police will be called. It is not required to notify the parent or guardian if there is a possibility it could jeopardize the welfare of the child.

ChildLine: 1-800-932-0313 (Child Abuse Line)

County Children and Youth Agencies:

<u>Lehigh</u>	<u>Northampton</u>
610-782-3200	610-559-3290
45 North 2nd St.	17 South 7th St.
Allentown, PA 18101	Easton, PA 18042

JCC Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Strategies

These preventive strategies are designed to protect the children attending the JCC programs and to protect staff and volunteers from being wrongly accused of incidents of child abuse.

- The JCC implements a careful pre-employment interview and hiring process to screen out staff not suited for working with children.
- The JCC will take any allegation or suspicion of child abuse seriously and will respond accordingly.
- Staff understands the legal obligation to report suspected abuse, as well as the obligation to follow the protocol checklist to reduce the likelihood of making any unsubstantiated reports.
- Policies, procedures and training are available relating to discipline, supervision, and the staff and volunteer Code of Conduct.
- Staff understands what practices or behaviors may be considered abusive, as well as the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch.
- Staff communicates frequently with parents regarding day-to-day activities and encourages parents to report or question any behavior or event your child may share that appears out of the ordinary.
- Staff tries to identify stressed parents, or other staff members, and to offer support and/or referrals for help.

4.1.1 Suspicion of Child Abuse Protocol Checklist

1. If the child is in immediate danger, 911 should be called by the employee who becomes aware of the incident for a police and/or EMT response.
2. A department supervisor should immediately be informed of the incident or alleged incident. If a department supervisor is unavailable, the Executive Director or Administrative Director should be contacted (their cell phone numbers are available at the Welcome Desk).
3. The supervisor, Executive Director and/or Administrative Director will determine if there is reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect:

- If NOT YET, the supervisor, Executive Director, and/or Administrative Director will conduct a brief investigation to determine if there is reasonable suspicion. Note that the investigation is not intended to determine whether or not actual abuse or neglect occurred, only to determine whether there is reasonable suspicion. The investigation should take no more than one hour and include speaking with any involved or witnessing parties and reviewing any available surveillance video. During this time, any parties accused or suspected of child abuse should be removed from access to the alleged victim. If reasonable suspicion cannot be determined after one hour, assume that it exists and proceed to "YES" below.
- If YES, immediately contact ChildLine, then the parent, then the Executive Director (if not already aware) to report the suspicion of child abuse or neglect. (Note: if notifying the parent/guardian may jeopardize the welfare of the child, do not contact them.)
- If NO, contact the parent by the end of the day to inform them of the investigation and its outcome.

4. Document the incident, including any allegations or suspicions, all witness interviews, and all communications with parties involved, and any actions taken, and send this report to the Executive Director via e-mail. If an employee was suspected and/or accused, copies of this documentation should also be placed in the employee's file regardless of outcome.

4.2 Medical Policies

Medical and immunization records must be submitted before the child starts in the program. A written physician's statement attesting to the health of the child and confirming a complete physical has taken place within one year prior to admission is a licensing requirement for children ages 2 and up. Younger children need a health assessment every 6 months. These records must be updated as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. We must have a copy of a physician's report and a record of immunizations on file. At the point of expiration of this time period, an updated form must be submitted. All children attending the Early Childhood and J Lounge programs must provide ongoing documentation of immunization in line with the "Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule" from the American Academy of Pediatrics linked on the Pennsylvania "Infant and Child Immunizations" website (<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/programs/immunizations/infants-and-children>). The JCC does not accept exemptions for the immunization requirement.

4.3 Accidents & Emergencies

In case of a life-threatening accident such as a head injury, severe cut, convulsion or severe trauma, a staff person will call 911. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. Parents must be reachable with up-to-date emergency contact numbers at all times. Keeping your cell phone on during the times your child is in our care is essential! In the event of an emergency, the JCC seeks parental permission to administer first aid or to obtain emergency medical treatment in the child's best interest.

This authorization is part of the Child Information Form, which will be reviewed and signed by the parents every 6 months for the duration of school enrollment.

4.4 Medication

Administration of any medication or nutritional supplements must have prior written parent authorization. (A copy of the Medication Administration form is downloadable from the JCC website or available in the department offices.) Prescription medication will only be administered on the written order of the child's physician and must be in the original container with the child's name, the name of the drug and the

directions for its administration and storage on the label. You should also write down any possible side effects as indicated on the medicine's information inserts or in the prescription information provided by the pharmacy.

For children with severe allergic reactions that require the use of Epi-Pens we will request two (2) Epi-pens within the early childhood or after-school area. One will be stored in a clearly-marked cabinet in the director's office, accessible to all staff. The other will be kept with the teacher of the child and will be available in the event of an allergic reaction. The classroom teacher will place the epi-pen in a locked bag so that it is not accessible to the children in the class, but is within easy reach in the case of an emergency.

When any prescription or non-prescription oral medication needs to be administered, every attempt will be made to verbally contact the parent prior to administration. This is a precaution relative to overdosing that is recommended by the Academy of Pediatrics. All non-prescription oral medications (cough syrup, Tylenol, etc.) or nutritional supplements also require completion of the Medication Administration Form AND the written authorization/signature of the child's physician, along with that of the parent/guardian. Consents are valid for one year.

All non-prescription topical ointments require completion of a Topical Cream Authorization form (downloadable from the JCC website).

The JCC is required to keep a written record of the administration of any medication and as such will note the time and date of each administration, the dosage, the name of the staff member administering the medication, the name of the child, and any side effects observed. The JCC will store all medications under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security and safety.

4.5 Toileting and Diapering

Toileting and diapering will be done at regular intervals throughout the day as necessary. The caregiver will use universal precautions. In Early Childhood classrooms, bathroom doors are to remain open when staff are in the bathroom with a child. For older children, staff should not enter a bathroom alone with a child, but rather wait outside while the child goes in; if a single child is entering a public bathroom by themselves, a staff member should verify there is no one else using it prior to entry.

Staff members will also ensure that children wash their hands with soap and warm running water before snacks and meals and after toileting. Individual paper towels will be provided for each child's use. Diapering is to be done only on the diapering table or in a designated area with access to diapers, wipes, parent-authorized lotions and a disposal container for soiled diapers. Diapers and lotions are provided by parents and are individually labeled. They require a Topical Cream Authorization form.

We recommend that parents send a bag of individually labeled diapers and then check the supply weekly; teachers will try to keep you informed when new diapers, wipes, and other supplies are needed.

Toilet training shall be done with consideration for each individual child's readiness and with parental input. Should you feel your child is ready to begin this process, please talk with your child's teacher/s to develop a plan together.

Children will be supervised during toilet training, and their efforts and accomplishments will be acknowledged. Toilet training will not be coerced. The individual developmental abilities of each child

shall be considered. Positive attitudes towards cleanliness, self-help and the privacy of others will be encouraged and maintained.

Any soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and hung on your child's hook in the hallway for cleaning at home. Soiled clothing will not be rinsed out by the teachers, as this additional handling adds to the possibility of contamination. Please provide sufficient extra clothing for your child in case of accidents, and be sure to replenish your child's extra clothing promptly when it is used.

4.6 Illness Policy

Please notify the JCC in writing of any special health conditions or allergies affecting your child. You will be asked to collaborate with your child's physician in completing an Individual Health Plan (IHP). All IHPs are updated at the beginning of each year and updated throughout the year as needed. Remember to keep us updated as to any changes when you become aware of them.

The JCC operates as a well-child facility. In adherence with DHS licensing regulations, we have the right to deny entrance to, or to send home and require you to keep home, any child with the symptoms outlined below. As mandated by the Department of Human Services, the JCC has a health policy that describes our procedures in different circumstances. Our program uses Caring for our Children and American Academy of Pediatrics when establishing policies and practices regarding care plans for children with special needs, asthma, medical needs, food allergies, and medication administration. Children in groups are often susceptible to colds and contagious illnesses until they develop resistance to them. Our health policy has been carefully designed to minimize the spread of these illnesses. While it is difficult for a parent to miss work, we ask that you keep your child home if he/she is feeling ill. Please keep in mind that a child who feels ill is less able to cope with a group and may be unhappy. A sick child also requires special attention from the adults, and this makes it difficult for teachers to meet the needs of the rest of the children. Because of the chance of illness spreading to the group, we are strict regarding our health policies. Our policy is based on mutual trust and respect for the judgment of teachers and parents. It cannot work without total cooperation.

In compliance with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services regulations, parents will be notified of an outbreak of any communicable disease and will receive information regarding symptoms, treatment, recommendations and/or requirements. The notices with information about the disease will be posted at the school as well as sent through email. Any child who is not immunized will be subject to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Health exclusion requirements as mandated by the specific disease. This can include a period of exclusion from the JCC for from one to three weeks.

In general, the health policy states that parents must keep their child at home if the child:

- demonstrates modified or atypical behavior
- demonstrates unusual discomfort
- would not be able to participate in the normal activities of the day
- would require extra teacher attention

Children may be sent home at the discretion of the Director based on the child's symptoms and behavior or in conjunction with the presence of an active infectious environment at the JCC.

Please send a Brightwheel message or call the office to report any reasons for a child's absence, particularly in the case of a contagious illness. The JCC is legally obligated to inform parents of any communicable diseases but not to share the name of the patient.

When a child is kept home due to illness, he/she must be symptom free, on prescription medication, or off non-prescription medication (including Tylenol or similar remedies) for at least 24 hours before returning to the JCC. This policy is in accordance with state law.

If your child is at the JCC and becomes ill, you will be required to pick up your child within 1 hour. This includes if they are currently sleeping. Someone listed on the emergency pick-up list will be contacted if the parent is not reachable.

4.7 Individual Illnesses

H1N1 Virus

We will continue to carefully monitor all of our children for any signs of flu using information obtained from the Center for Communicable Disease and the Allentown Health Department. We will take common sense precautions to avoid transmission.

At this time, the CDC recommends the following means to reduce the spread of influenza: focusing on early identification of ill children and staff, staying home (or away from others) when ill, using good cough and hand hygiene etiquette, and incorporating environmental controls that encourage the use of these hygiene practices. If a member of the household has been diagnosed with H1N1 virus, please keep a very close watch on your other children for signs or symptoms.

If your child demonstrates any flu like symptoms (running nose, cough and/or body aches) with a fever of 100.4 or higher, please keep your child home for at least 24 hours from the onset of the symptoms. If your child has a positive rapid influenza A test, please keep your child home for seven days from the onset of the symptoms.

If a child attending our preschool is sent home because he/she demonstrates flu-like symptoms or comes in contact with a sibling who has flu-like symptoms, please keep the child home for a minimum of 48 hours after exposure to avoid the possible spreading of the influenza to others.

As you are aware, keeping emergency contact information up to date for all of our children and staff is of the utmost importance. If you need to make any changes to your information, please call the ECE office.

Antibiotics

When a child is being treated with antibiotics for a contagious condition, he/she must remain at home for the first 24 hours of treatment. This means the child will have had all doses indicated for each “day” of treatment and, when possible, the first dose for the second day. The exception to this is monilia or candida yeast infections. Remember that antibiotics are only effective when taken at their full dosage and for their full duration.

Please keep us alert to any side effects your child may experience from medication. This will help us avoid confusion with a suspected illness.

Chicken Pox

Children who have chicken pox should not return to the JCC until all of the pox are dry in order to prevent the spread of the disease. This usually means the children are kept home for 5 to 7 days.

Colds

Teachers will use discretion when asking you to keep your child at home if he/she has a cold. In general, a runny nose with a clear discharge is a common symptom of a cold. Good hand-washing at school and at home is the best way to stop the spread of infection. Any discharge from the eyes or nose that is yellow or greenish could be a sign of an ear or sinus infection and could be cause for being sent home from the JCC. While not a public health concern, it indicates a need for close observation of your child's discomfort or a need to consult your health care provider. A doctor's note is acceptable to confirm that the discharge is due to allergy rather than illness. Any child who is well enough to attend the JCC will be expected to participate with other children in usual outside activities.

Coughs or Child Complaints

Any productive cough or continuous coughing is a sign of infection. Exhibiting such a cough, or verbally complaining of sore throats or earaches, will be cause for being sent home.

Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis is highly contagious. The two kinds of conjunctivitis that typically spread in children's centers are (a) viral and (b) bacterial. Symptoms connected to allergies are not contagious, and thus do not fall into this category. This will be taken into consideration should a child with allergies on record present with similar symptoms.

There are several signs or symptoms:

- (a) Viral conjunctivitis Pink eye/s
 - Swollen eye/s
 - Watering eye/s (that may also be sensitive to light)
- (b) Bacterial conjunctivitis
 - Red or pink eye/s (may eventually become itchy or painful)
 - Yellow or green discharge
 - Eye/s might be crusted in the morning upon waking

When two (2) of these symptoms listed for Viral or Bacterial Conjunctivitis occur, you will be contacted by the JCC and asked to pick up your child. When one (1) of these symptoms is present, it will be at the discretion of the Director whether you will be called to pick up your child. Until your child is picked up, the Pennsylvania Department of Health regulations for exclusion from the group will be instituted. Your child may return to the JCC after diagnosis when treatment with an antibiotic has been in place for 24 hours. If your child is not being treated with an antibiotic, he/she may return to the JCC when free of all symptoms.

Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

Pennsylvania Department of Health policy requires that the person with Covid-19 be excluded from the facility and receive written notification from a physician or a nurse practitioner (CRNP) that they are no longer considered a threat to the health of others before they may return to the facility.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea is usually caused by a viral infection. It is highly contagious in a child care setting. A child should be kept home from school if he/she has diarrhea that is leaking through diapers and/or clothing, and/or if they have abdominal pain. Children who have bowel movements in diapers will be sent home after two instances of watery diarrhea. Children who have bowel movements in the toilet will be sent home if they are having diarrhea accidents in their underwear or a bowel movement in the toilet judged by

a teacher to be unusually loose. This is because, as a public health issue, it places other children at risk for infection. Children will also be sent home if they have more than two instances of diarrhea in an hour or if a pattern of frequent diarrhea has been established. In addition to taking teacher time away from the classroom, it places the child at risk for dehydration. Children may return to the JCC when they are no longer having diarrhea.

If your child comes to the JCC with occasional diarrhea due to antibiotics, teething, etc., we may request written or verbal assurance from your health care provider that the diarrhea is not contagious.

Ear Infections

Many ear infections are accompanied by fever. In these cases, please follow the policy below regarding fevers. Occasionally, however, ear infections are not accompanied by fever. While the infection may not be highly contagious, a child with an ear infection is often very uncomfortable and out of sorts. In these situations, we feel that the child should not be in group care. For the sake of your child, we ask that he/she be kept at home until the symptoms resolve, either on their own or with the assistance of antibiotics.

Eye Redness or Foreign Bodies in the Eye

Apart from a possible indication of conjunctivitis, eye redness or tearing may sometimes reflect a foreign object (often very tiny). We are not equipped to distinguish these different conditions or authorized to irrigate an eye, even if a foreign body is evident. Your health care professional, in either case, will assume responsibility for appropriate diagnosis and treatment. We recognize that eye redness and tearing are also characteristics of allergies or colds. This is taken into consideration, along with a child's medical information, when implementing this policy.

Fever

The fever policy reflects the general health care policy. A fever is a sign of a viral or bacterial infection. Parents will be called and asked to pick up their child if the child

- demonstrates discomfort or modified/atypical behavior
- would not be able to participate in the normal activities of the day
- would require extra teacher attention and/or has a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 orally or via non-contact forehead thermometer (99.4 armpit)
- is exhibiting onset symptoms of a contagious disease already present in the JCC or community

The child may return to the JCC after he/she has no longer been exhibiting the behaviors for which he/she was sent home and he/she has had a normal temperature for 24 hours without the use of an analgesic.

Foreign Objects in Ears, Noses and Skin

We are prohibited from any attempts to remove foreign objects from ears, noses and skin (e.g. splinters). This is to prevent any potential harm. In the event a bean, seed, or other object, often the result of the natural curiosity of children, enters a child's facial orifice, the parents will be called to either remove the object or to engage the aid of an outside health care provider.

Impetigo

Impetigo is a bacterial infection of the skin. It is highly contagious. If the Teacher/Director suspects impetigo, you will be asked to have your child seen by your health care provider. If antibiotics are prescribed, the child may return after 24 hours on the antibiotic and when he/she is no longer having oozing lesions.

Lice

Head lice are tiny tan-colored bugs that are easily transmitted through eggs (nits). The nits are tiny, ovalshaped and grayish-white. They adhere to the hair strands about 1/2 to 1 inch from the scalp. The most noticeable symptom of lice is itching (and a child's constant scratching). Treatment involves a fairly simple shampooing and combing with an over-the-counter kit, among other remedies. Children with head lice will be sent home for treatment. In the rare instance that an infestation occurs affecting multiple children in the same classroom, we will, at our discretion, notify all parents in the classroom and issue guidelines for eradicating these organisms. In accordance with state law, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control, and the National Association of School Nurses, children may return to school immediately following treatment.

Monilia (candida or yeast)

This is a yeast infection that appears as a rash in the genital area and is one cause of diaper rash. It can be contagious but is usually not caught from another child. Transmission can be controlled by careful handwashing and sterilizing of changing tables. It is treated with anti-fungal ointment. If we suspect that your child has monilia, we will notify you promptly so that you can arrange for your child to be seen by your health care provider and get medication before he/she returns to the JCC the following morning.

Pinworms

Pinworms are small, white, threadlike worms that live in the large intestine. The signs and symptoms are itching and irritation around the anal or vaginal area. They are spread by fecal-oral route. Directly or indirectly by sharing toys, bedding, clothing, toilet seats, or baths. Pinworm eggs remain infective for 2 to 3 weeks in indoor environments. Infestation with pinworms commonly clusters within families. You can control them by good hand hygiene. Pinworms are not dangerous. They are relatively common among preschool and school-aged children and easily shared within these groups. Report the infection to the director of the child care program. This person will in turn alert possibly exposed family members and staff to watch for symptoms. Wash toys and napping bedding frequently, along with hand washing and toilet sanitizing. See a health professional for treatment recommendations.

Physical Injury

We may ask you to pick up your child after a bump, fall, or other incident that suggests a possible need for medical evaluation.

Rashes

Rashes must be seen and identified by a physician. A child will be admitted back into the JCC when accompanied by a note from a physician indicating that either (1) the child is free of any infectious or contagious disease or (2) the child has started a course of either topical or oral antibiotics. It is understood a child might have a diaper or allergic rash. This is taken into consideration, along with a child's medical information, when implementing this policy. A child cannot remain at the JCC with an unidentified rash. If your child is prone to skin reactions, please be sure this is noted in our records.

Ringworm

Ringworm (tinea) is a fungal infection that may affect the body, feet or scalp. It is spread by personal contact with infected persons, infected animals or contaminated objects. On the skin, the rash usually forms a ring consisting of a red, scaly edge and a more pale central area. On the scalp there may be redness and scaling of the scalp, with some loss of hair. Sometimes pimples with pus may occur on the scalp. Tinea is contagious as long as infected lesions are untreated. It is advised to consult your health provider for diagnosis and a treatment plan. Body lesions should be covered. Scalp lesions do not have to

be covered, but a dandruff shampoo should be used to decrease shedding of infectious material. Children may return to the JCC after treatment has been in place for 24 hours (oral medication to treat the scalp; cream applied to the skin).

Strep Throat

Strep throat is a bacterial infection that can cause a variety of symptoms. If your child has a fever, a rash and/or a sore throat, you should have him/her evaluated for strep. Please note that strep is highly contagious. If the diagnosis is confirmed, your child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the JCC.

Teething

Toddlers sometimes have unique problems due to teething. Teething can be accompanied by a slight fever, diarrhea and general cold symptoms, none of which are contagious, but they do make your child uncomfortable. We will try to ease your child through this time, especially following those methods that have been successful at home. If the day is particularly difficult for your child, we may suggest that you pick him/her up early.

Vomiting

A child who is vomiting must stay home or go home until the vomiting has stopped and there are no indications of any incipient illness.

The JCC is legally obligated to inform parents of any communicable diseases. Please call the department office to report any reasons for a child's absence, particularly in the case of a contagious illness.

4.8 Air Quality Alerts

The Child Care Weather Watch index is used for guidance as to safe weather conditions for outdoor play relative to wind chill in the winter and heat index in the summer. The JCC professional staff will make decisions based on the health and safety of the children, who are of primary importance.

4.9 Napping

All children two or under will have an afternoon nap time. The JCC provides a nap mat or cot that is routinely sanitized. Parents provide sheets, a blanket and any other items that will help the child's comfort (pacifier, doll, blanket, etc.). Items are sent home weekly for cleaning. The length of rest/nap time varies according to each age group. While offering nap time to all toddlers is mandatory, preschoolers will be offered the option to participate in a quiet activity on their mat after a brief rest period. Teachers help children ease into their nap by paying attention to the individual preferences of each child.

4.10 Evacuation

Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

- ***On-Site Evacuation:*** Students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.
- ***Off-Site Evacuation:*** If total evacuation of the facility is necessary, children will be taken to our designated relocation facility, and parents will be contacted to pick their children up as soon as possible.

- ***In-place Sheltering:*** Sudden occurrences, weather- or hazardous materials-related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- ***Modified Operation:*** May include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities.

These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make the environment unsafe for children, but they may be necessary in a variety of situations.

Please check the WFMZ website (www.wfmz.com), sign up for JCC e-mail alerts, subscribe to our Facebook page, and monitor the Brightwheel app for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above. Please note that you will not be notified in advance of scheduled emergency procedure drills.

We ask that you not call during the emergency. This will keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay information. Professional staff will use our cell phones to keep families up to date if the main lines are not available.

You have given your authorization on our enrollment form for those individuals designated with permission to pick up your child. Please ensure that only those persons you list on the form attempt to pick up your child. Please also make sure the phone numbers are written clearly, are correct, and are updated as needed.

You are urged not to attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties.

4.11 Supervision Policy

To ensure that children are supervised throughout the day, in accordance with the PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and the Department of Human Services (DHS), the following policies and procedures are implemented in our program.

1. Staff should be aware of how many children are in their care and where all children are at all times. Children of any age are not allowed out of the classroom or activity area without adult supervision. Infants, toddlers, preschool and Pre-K children are supervised by sight and sound at all times, including while in the bathroom.
2. “By sight” means the child is being actively observed. “By sound” means the child can be heard from where the caregiver is positioned. While supervising children in these age groups, staff should position themselves so that they can see and hear all the children and re-position themselves as children move about the room or activity space.
3. When children are sleeping or resting, staff should position themselves so that all children are continuously supervised by sight and sound.
4. The room should never be completely dark and should be bright enough for:
 - a. everyone to see clearly.
 - b. children to move around the room safely without assistance.
 - c. staff to maintain full sight supervision for all age groups.
5. Cots/mats should be fully visible to staff during naptime. However, if the environment prevents full visibility, then teachers need to circulate to provide full supervision. When infants are sleeping, staff should position themselves so that all children are continuously supervised by sight

and sound. Sleeping infants should be in close proximity and checked individually at least 3 times each hour (every 20 minutes).

6. At least two staff members (or administrators) must be in the building at all times when children are present. If children remain after closing, two staff members (or administrators) must remain until the last child is picked up.
7. The playground is considered an extension of the classroom with the same supervision standards and ratios. Staff members should know how many children are in their care at all times, and consider other supervision challenges which the outdoor environment presents. Staff should position themselves so that at least two areas of the playground can be viewed and are easily accessible. Staff should move about the playground, depending on where the children are at any given point in time, while continuing to interact with the children. If there are areas that cannot be supervised by sight, they should be blocked off and inaccessible. Staff use Transition Tracking to track the children throughout the day, including during transitions (i.e., moving from the classroom to the playground, while transitioning to a different space within the center, etc.).

Through this practice, teachers are required to:

- Know the names and the number of children in their care at all times.
- Use Transition Tracking to account for the children in their care.
- Conduct and record transitions with “name-to-face” roll call.
- Conduct a “name-to-face” whenever a transition through a door or gate occurs.
- Conduct periodic “name-to-face” throughout the day, in addition to those required during transitions.
- Log in and out whenever they join or leave a group.

4.11.1 Supervision Policy for Changing Rooms During Summer Camp

Changing policy. The JCC will consider the following things when organizing changing facilities for children:

- Where possible, use designated single-gender changing rooms or areas. If this is not possible and boys and girls change together, think about using furniture, screens, or different areas of the room to provide separate areas.
- Mixed-gender changing areas are less appropriate as children get older and staff need to be sensitive to those who physically mature at a much earlier or later age than their peers.
- The JCC will treat all children fairly and with respect for their privacy and dignity.
- The JCC will make adequate and sensitive arrangements for changing which take into account the needs of children with disabilities and children from different religions, beliefs and cultural backgrounds or gender identity.
- Adults must always change or shower privately, and never in the same space as children.

Staff supervision. When a single child is changing in a room, the staff member shall stay outside the room but nearby the door, to monitor audially and ensure the privacy of the child. When more than one child is changing in a room, a staff member shall also be in the room with the children. Staff should also consider the following:

- Depending on the specific changing environment, it may be possible to leave the door of designated changing rooms slightly open.
- If there is a need for an adult to enter the room occupied by a single child, it is recommended they should alert children to this by announcing it to give children the opportunity to cover up if they want to.
- Where possible, female staff should supervise girls and male staff should supervise boys. It should be noted that this is not always possible, especially among younger age groups.

- Adults should only be present in a children's changing room as necessary for required supervision purposes.
- Children who express concern about the behavior of a member of staff or other children should be listened to, and appropriate inquiries should be conducted by the appropriate department director or administrative staff.

For children who need assistance with getting changed:

- Ensure all staff are aware of any intimate care issues for individual children. It is best practice to involve children and parents in making decisions which involve intimate care.
- Encourage children of all ages to be as independent as possible; consider prompting and giving verbal help/encouragement before offering physical assistance.
- Be especially careful when helping children with underclothes and swimsuits
- If necessary, offer assistance openly and not out of sight of others.

Gender identity: JCC policy permits all individuals to use the gender-specific bathrooms and changing rooms consistent with their gender identity. Likewise, JCC employees are permitted to supervise children in gender-specific bathrooms and changing rooms consistent with the employee's gender identity. Private, gender-inclusive bathrooms and changing areas are available and may be requested by anyone for any reason (although no reason is required). As previously noted, adults shall always change in private, out of sight of children, and should never be alone with a child in a private area.

5.0 PARENT POLICIES

5.1 Arrivals and departures

Parents will establish arrival and departure times when enrolling their children. We staff the program depending upon the number of children scheduled daily. Consequently, we appreciate your cooperation in strictly adhering to these designated times. Please notify the department director in advance of any changes to your schedule.

If an emergency situation arises and you are going to be late, please inform the ECE or Youth & Camp office as soon as possible. The names and contact information for all individuals authorized to pick up your child must be registered in the department office. To ensure the security of your child, you must contact the office in writing or by phone if there will be a change. We will not release your child without this information.

Staff will also require a picture ID. Individuals without authorized entrance into the children's areas of the building will be met at the JCC Welcome Desk in the main lobby, and the child will be brought there by a JCC staff member.

5.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality regarding the child and family is of paramount importance. All conversations regarding personal information are held in private and not within hearing range of children or non-program staff. Due to child protection and privacy rights, no information is shared with persons other than the child's legal guardians. There are two exceptions: (1) with the written consent of the child's parent/guardian or (2) if there is reasonable cause to make a child abuse/neglect report and informing the parent might put the child in jeopardy. Should a staff person be approached with an inquiry about a child for whom the individual is not a parent or guardian, the staff person is restricted from even any acknowledgement that the child attends the JCC.

Children's Files

The Department of Human Services requires that we maintain a file on each child and family. In addition, we gather information during the child's time at the JCC. Parents may be assured that any information regarding their child/family or any matters that are discussed with the Director or staff will be held in the strictest confidence. Family files are only accessible to administrators and teachers. A child's parent or guardian will always have access to his/her child's files and maintains the right to add information to the child's record and/or to request, through a conference, deletion of information in the child's records. The JCC shall, within one week after the conference, render to the parents a decision in writing stating the reason(s) for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parents, steps shall be taken immediately to put the decision into effect.

Information is released to third parties only with written permission from the parents, and parents will be notified if a child's record is subpoenaed. Parents may request in writing that the JCC transfer the child's record to any other person after the child has left the JCC. The JCC will charge a reasonable fee for copies of information contained in a child's record. Each time information is released or distributed from a child's record, the following information shall be recorded in a written log: the name, signature and position of the person releasing or distributing the information; the date; the portions of the record which were distributed or released; the purpose of such distribution or release; and the signature of the person to whom the information is distributed or released if done in person. In cases where records are sent to a receiving school, this last signature requirement may not be possible. The log will be made available only to the child's parent, the personnel responsible for record maintenance, and JCC staff.

Non-discrimination policy

The JCC welcomes applications from all interested persons. While our program is rooted in Jewish values and JCC membership is required, we do not discriminate on the basis of economic, racial, cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic or physical differences, nor on the basis of the marital status, sexual orientation or political beliefs of parents or guardians.

Harassment policy

The JCC is committed to providing a work environment which is free from harassment based on an individual's gender, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability or age. Harassment in any of these forms is unlawful and violates both the spirit of equal opportunity and the rights of the individual. It undermines the integrity of the employment relationship and can destroy the morale and commitment of the individuals involved.

Harassment covers a range of behaviors, including subtle and not-so-subtle, verbal and non-verbal behavior. It can be engaged in or experienced by both males and females. Harassment will not be tolerated in any form at any level by the JCC, whether committed intentionally or unintentionally.

5.3 Grievance Procedure

The JCC is dedicated to making your experience and that of your child strongly positive and successful. If you have any concerns or complaints, we invite you to voice those issues to us, so that we can work with you towards a satisfactory resolution. You may do this on an informal basis with the teachers or administrative staff involved at any time. If informal efforts are not successful, please take advantage of the following grievance procedure that we have established for your benefit:

Group Supervisor (Lead Teacher): Issues relating to the care of your child or to a conflict with another child or family at the JCC must be brought to the Lead Teacher for your child's class. The Lead Teacher will meet with you to discuss the issue, will investigate as necessary, and will work with you towards a resolution. If the issue cannot be resolved, or if the issue involves the Teacher, please contact the Early Childhood Director.

Department Director: Issues relating to the operation or policies of the JCC or to issues that were not resolved with the Group Supervisor must be brought to the Early Childhood Director or the Youth & Camp Director. The Director will meet with you to discuss the issue, will investigate as necessary, and will work with you towards a resolution. If the issue cannot be resolved by the department director, or if the issue involves this person, please contact the Executive Director of the JCC.

Executive Director: Any issues not resolved may be brought to the Executive Director of the JCC. At a meeting with the Executive Director, an attempt to resolve the issue will be jointly worked on. While the Executive Director is responsible for all operational and administrative aspects of the JCC, parents may contact the President of the Board of Directors (president@lvjcc.org) if they feel that an issue poses a legal risk to the JCC or rises to the level of a governance issue.

An investigation at any step of this grievance procedure may include any or all of the following actions: meetings with you, meetings with other interested parties or witnesses (including, but not limited to, the Executive Director, administrative staff, teachers, parents, community members, or others), and/or gathering evidence. The investigation will be conducted in a manner to discover the facts, to preserve the confidentiality of all involved in the investigation to the extent possible, to prevent retaliation against the person bringing the grievance or against anyone who assists in the investigation, and to ensure fair treatment of anyone accused of misconduct. When necessary, legal counsel may be consulted. In all cases, our goal is to work together for a satisfactory relationship between all parties and a good experience for families and their children at the JCC.

6.0 TUITION AND FEES

6.1 Payment Options

Membership in good standing at the JCC is required for enrollment in the early childhood and J Lounge programs. These programs operate on a year-round schedule, roughly in line with the public school calendar. Families are required to sign an annual contract that assures their responsibility for payment of tuition through the term of their child's scheduled attendance. JCC has the right to collect remaining fees for the rest of the contract period upon any breach of contract or if a family has indicated that they plan to unenroll their child from the ECE or JLounge program. JCC membership must be maintained in good standing during the entire duration of the contracted school year.

Weekly registration options for ECE toddler and preschool students during the summer for ECE students, based on availability. Students entering Pre-K and above are served by the JCC's youth summer camp program during the summer months, and must register for these programs on a weekly basis to participate; participation in the ECE program does not guarantee space availability or trigger automatic enrollment in this program.

There are two tuition payment options:

- Option 1: single annual payment, paid in full prior to the start of the school year

- Option 2: monthly installments, paid in full on the same date each month

An Enrollment Form will be signed by all parties prior to the first day of the program.

The payment contract must be reviewed and initialed every six months. All payments to your account will be applied to the older outstanding balance.

Tuition must continue to be paid regardless of absence for any reason, including absences due to illness or vacation. No deductions will be made for JCC closings due to holidays, weather-related closures, or other emergencies necessitating closure of the JCC facility, and there will not be any make-up days. In case of extraordinary circumstances (such as extended illness), the parents may notify the department director, and special consideration may be given at the director's discretion.

The JCC reserves the right to make modest changes to the calendar as well as to raise tuition in order to maintain the integrity of the JCC. Notice of a tuition increase will be given via e-mail no less than four weeks prior to the first increased payment due date.

6.2 Registration Fee

To guarantee your child a space in the JCC's Early Childhood Education program, a Registration Fee of \$99 must be paid to the JCC along with the Enrollment Agreement. This is a non-refundable fee. The JCC reserves the right to modify this fee from time to time.

6.3 Payment Dates and Fees

Enrollment forms are issued prior to the first day of school and must be signed and returned before school or camp begins.

ECE and JLounge: The first monthly payment must be made prior to the child's first day. Monthly payments are generally due on the 20th of each month, unless other arrangements are made in writing. Tuition payments made after the due date will be assessed a late payment charge of \$35.00.

Camp: Deposits are due at the time of registration, with the remainder of fees being due in full on the payment due date prior to the summer. Any registrations received on or after the payment due date will require payment in full at the time of registration.

A fee for returned check and bounced EFT or credit card transactions of \$35.00 will be added to the account for any check returned for insufficient funds or any charge denied. The JCC reserves the right to discontinue service should one or more payments be overdue.

6.4 Withdrawal

ECE and JLounge: The JCC must be notified in writing by July 1 of an intent to withdraw an enrolled child from the next school year's ECE or JLounge program. If a parent/guardian withdraws their child from one of these programs at any time during the school year, any pre-paid tuition, fees and deposits are non-refundable and will not be applied to any other JCC program fee, dues, campaign pledge or tuition. Further, the JCC has the right to collect the remaining fees for the rest of the contract period immediately.

Camp: Changes and cancellations are permitted prior to the cancellation deadline with no penalty the any fees paid being returned in full to the original method of payment. After the cancellation deadline,

registrations may be cancelled or changed no later than two weeks prior to the start of a program session, with fees being refunded as a credit toward future JCC programs and fees, less a \$25 administrative fee. Within two weeks of the start of a program session, no changes or cancellations are permitted.

If the JCC cannot provide a developmentally-appropriate program for an enrolled child, the JCC will work with the parent to identify an appropriate program. In this situation, the JCC, at its discretion, may forgive fees not yet paid or fees paid for future months or program sessions.

6.5 Financial Assistance

The JCC has limited resources for need-based tuition assistance. An application fee must be submitted online through the FACTS website. Additional documentation, such as recent tax forms or pay stubs, may be required. It is strongly recommended that applicants speak the JCC's financial aid coordinator prior to applying. The evaluation process and the information supplied is kept confidential and shared only with the volunteer Financial Aid Committee.

We accept Child Care Works (CCW) subsidies from the Early Learning Resource Center on a limited basis for our ECE and JLounge programs. Children enrolled in ECE and JLounge may also utilize their CCW subsidy for camp until they begin Kindergarten. For more information or to participate, please contact the Early Childhood Director.

6.6 Schedule Changes

Permanent schedule changes are based on availability of space and are made by contacting the ECE our youth and camp office. All changes must be requested and confirmed in writing.

7.0 PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

7.1 Parent Visits

Parents are encouraged to participate by visiting or volunteering in the classroom. Background checks may be required for classroom volunteers. Some ways family members can help are by being a guest reader, sharing a special talent, discussing their occupation, or assisting with a project or event.

Family Engagement Policy Early Childhood Education Program

To foster strong, collaborative relationships between families and the ECE program, and to recognize families as vital partners in their children's learning and development. Policy Statement: Our ECE program is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful environment where families are actively encouraged to participate in all aspects of their child's early learning experience. We recognize that meaningful family engagement supports children's success in school and beyond.

Practices to Support Family Engagement:

1. Open Communication:

- Maintain regular two-way communication with families through newsletters, emails, parent-teacher conferences, daily reports, and digital communication apps.

- Provide translation or interpretation services as needed to support multilingual families.
- Family Involvement Opportunities:
- Invite families to participate in classroom activities, field trips, celebrations, and curriculum planning.
- Encourage families to share their cultural traditions, talents, and experiences to enrich the learning environment.

3. Flexible Scheduling:

- Offer flexible meeting times for family conferences and events to accommodate different work schedules.
- Provide both in-person and virtual options for participation when possible.

4. Decision-Making and Leadership:

- Include family representatives on advisory boards or parent committees
- Seek family input on program policies, curriculum planning, and school improvement efforts.

5. Support and Resources:

- Connect families with community resources and services based on their needs and interests.
- Offer workshops or family education sessions on child development, parenting, and school readiness.

6. Respect for Family Diversity:

- Honor and value the diverse backgrounds, languages, and family structures represented in the program.
- Create culturally responsive materials and environment

7.2 Communication

Ongoing communication between parents and staff is something we value and encourage. To keep you up to date about your child's life at the JCC, we distribute e-mails, write notes, have photo displays, and post information on the JCC website. A strong home/school communication system is a critical piece of the parent/school partnership.

The early childhood department's primary method of communicating general information with families will be through the Brightwheel app. The youth department also utilized Brightwheel for the JLounge program. All parents/guardians with children in these programs are expected to utilize this app with notifications enabled.

Contact from families via e-mail, phone calls, or notes is welcome and appreciated. Face to face contacts are also welcome, but lengthy conversations are not possible when the staff member is in ratio and responsible for supervising other children. If you have a specific concern that requires a lengthier contact with the teacher, you may gladly schedule an appointment.

A downloadable Information Change Form is available from our website to submit to the ECE or youth and camp office if:

- You wish to edit emergency contact information.
- There is a change to the list of people authorized to pick your child up.
- Your address, phone number, or e-mail address has changed.

7.3 Staff Contact

Be confident that staff members will share any observations or special concerns about your child as they arise. We also ask you to inform us about unusual events at home (e.g., a parent away on a trip or ill, a sleepless night, a houseguest, etc.); children often display changes in their behavior while in our classrooms in response to such situations, even if they do not demonstrate this at home. Some extra attention from the teachers can make the day easier for everyone.

Taking the time to read the daily posted note outside the classroom, to check out the website, or to find other means for knowing about your child's program provides resources for talking with your child about his/her day.

Teachers and other staff are not permitted to contact parents or children outside of the JCC's official communication channels (JCC e-mail accounts, Brightwheel app, JCC office phones, etc.). Any unapproved contact must be reported to the department director immediately.

7.4 Forms

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires two forms be completed by the parent/guardian to facilitate familiarity with the child:

1. The Developmental History form providing physical and temperament history
2. The Getting to Know You form providing personal habits, likes and dislikes, routines and family information, giving a perspective of the child's passage through milestones, self-help skills, and management

The information from these forms will be utilized by your child's teachers in individualizing an approach and developing a rapport with your child. It will also provide a foundation of dialogue for your first general conference.

Additionally, health forms including a Child Health Report, Tuberculosis Assessment, Permission To Administer Medication, and proof of required vaccinations are required prior to a child's first day in a child care program.

7.5 Conferences and Reports

Early childhood teachers and JLounge staff are responsible for ongoing observation, documentation and assessment of your child's growth through the continuum of development. This is intended to support their observational assessment. This information is also utilized in planning both your child's individualized curriculum and the program for the classroom as a whole. Information you offer is also included in the ongoing documentation of your child's progress.

Parent conferences are an opportunity for our staff and you to share observations and information about the daily life and progress of your child. It is also a time for parents to raise questions or concerns with the staff. Conferences are offered twice yearly. As mentioned above, parents/guardians will receive written

information for review in advance of the conference to allow time to reflect and to prepare any comments or questions. We will always try to accommodate an unusual work schedule. Most conferences are held before and after school program hours, as well as in the early evening. We ask for the courtesy of 24-hour advance notification for the cancellation of any conference.

A parent can request a conference at any time. Teachers often request a conference for any discussion that would best be served by a longer timeframe than is possible at the beginning or end of your child's day. Teachers will not discuss your child in front of him/her or any other child or parent.

7.6 Age Transitions & Staff Ratios

Infants will transition to the next classroom based on age, developmental milestones, space available, and other factors at the JCC staff's discretion. Before a child is moved, the parents will have an opportunity to meet with the new teachers and visit the new classroom. The child will also visit the new classroom before the move becomes permanent. This is a very exciting time and should be viewed as a big step forward in your child's education. The transition process dependent on each child, as each is different and some may need more time. Children are typically not otherwise transitioned between groups during a summer or school year. More transition information is available from the ECE Director and you should not hesitate to contact her with any questions or concerns.

Daily Staff:Child Ratios (as mandated by the Department of Human Services)

- Infants (6 weeks - 12 months): 4:1
- Young Toddlers (1-year olds): 5:1
- Older Toddlers (2-year olds): 6:1
- Preschool (3-year olds)/Pre-K (4-year olds): 10:1
- Young School Age (grades K-4): 12:1
- Older School Ages (4th grade through age 15): 15:1

Groups are sometimes mixed temporarily based on staffing needs, or during early drop-off and late pick-up times. In groups with mixed ages, the required staff ratio is determined by the ratios required by the youngest child present.

7.7 Developmental Support and Referrals

Inclusion Policy

The JCC supports the policies of the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning, the US Departments of Health and Human Services and US Department of Education regarding the benefits of inclusion for all children. The JCC promotes inclusion and supports children with disabilities being enrolled alongside peers without disabilities in the same classrooms. We support the right of every young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of community and society.

The JCC believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs. Families are encouraged to share their child's Individualized Family Service Plan ("IFSP") and/or Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") with us to help a child who has special needs accomplish their individual goals. If, during a school year, the lead classroom teacher and the Director feels a child's needs

are not being met in the current classroom environment, our program reserves the right to require a professional screening to determine how best to help the child in his/her growth and development. It is the family's responsibility to obtain an appropriate services team and to bear the financial burden of the services. Please note that many services are available at no charge through the Lehigh County Intermediate Unit and/or other agencies and community-based organizations.

Here at the JCC we believe that exclusionary measures should be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. Even in such extraordinary cases, the program should assist the child and family in accessing services and an alternative placement through, for example, community-based child care resources and referral agencies. Should a situation arise where the JCC feels that all possible interventions and supports have recommended to the parents but have been unsuccessful in enabling the child to effectively participate in our program, all parties should work together to develop a plan to transition the child out of the JCC's care.

The JCC may engage the services of a consultant to observe the classrooms for general well-being in the room. This includes components such as but not limited to teacher-child interaction, child-child interaction, teacher-teacher interaction, connection and responsiveness between the children and the environment, general tone, etc. No individual children are observed without the specific written consent of the parents. A researched-based developmental screening tool (Ages and Stages) is used within 45 day of enrollment to identify children who may need additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies. The results of the screening are communicated with families, and support for referrals are offered as needed.

Ongoing communication regarding a child's development and classroom observations takes place between the teachers and the family. Whenever a concern or question is identified – whether social, medical, educational or mental health – the department director will talk with the parent to ascertain whether the parent has had similar observations and to gain any relevant insight or information. The teacher will provide the anecdotal information upon which this question or concern is based and continue to document accordingly. Please note that teacher/parent communication is ongoing and does not necessarily indicate that a question represents a significant concern. Often, communication provides important information that helps to answer or resolve the situation within a short timeframe.

The department director will spend additional time observing the child during the part of the day when the behavior in question is likely to exhibit itself and will keep an anecdotal record of what is observed. A meeting between the teacher and/or department director and the parent/s will be held for the purpose of creating a Support Plan outlining strategies and goals. Depending on the nature of the situation and the calendar, a follow-up meeting will take place in two to four weeks. This will be a time to review progress and re-evaluate the plan. An alternative plan may be developed. The teachers or parents may request or suggest outside consultations be utilized as a means of gathering more information or suggestions for alternative strategies. As noted above, this will only be done after a Consent for Observation form is completed. If it is decided further information or testing is advisable, the JCC staff will provide guidance or resources to facilitate this process.

It is the practice of the Early Childhood and J Lounge programs to plan and implement activities that support language development and academic, social and emotional development of children who are culturally and linguistically diverse. This is achieved through a combination of daily activities that include manipulatives, culturally diverse dolls and toys, visuals, and word recognition through spoken and sign language.

Program practices and policies include individualized plans for children and inclusive group activities. JCC and community wide resources are available and utilized for communication efforts and proper strategies to ensure the adaptability and comfort of all children. Information is disseminated to staff through daily interactions, weekly updates, and monthly all staff meetings. Parent communication on diversity is disseminated weekly through newsletters to ensure understanding of all daily curriculums.

7.8 Termination Policy

The JCC will make every reasonable attempt to develop an effective support or intervention plan, as described above, to facilitate the success of the child. Parent partnership and cooperation is essential and required. We must, however, recognize our program may not be appropriate for or meet the needs of every child. If after careful observation, consultation, testing (if applicable), review of the child's progress, and/or professional recommendations it is determined the JCC program is not an appropriate match for the child, a Termination Plan will be implemented. The plan will outline the steps of bringing the child's participation in our program to termination. This will include a timeframe and financial responsibilities, along with assistance to help guide the family to a more appropriate setting. It is possible that in cases of repeated unsafe behavior, termination will be immediate. As noted in the Enrollment Agreement, tuition and fees will be forgiven.

7.9 Continuity of Care Policy

Continuity of Care and Minimizing Transitions Policy

Purpose: This policy outlines our commitment to implementing practices that promote *continuity of care*, support stable, nurturing relationships between children and caregivers, and minimize unnecessary transitions across the child's day, week, and throughout their enrollment in our program. This is especially critical for our youngest children—from birth to age three—whose development depends heavily on secure, consistent relationships and predictable routines.

Policy Statement: The JCC is dedicated to providing a stable, responsive, and developmentally appropriate environment for all children, particularly infants and toddlers. To support optimal social-emotional and cognitive development, the program will ensure that each child is consistently cared for by a limited number of familiar caregivers throughout their participation. We seek to minimize disruptions and transitions within the daily schedule, across program years, and in the staffing and grouping of children.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Primary Caregiving Assignment:

- Each child will be assigned a primary caregiver who will be the main point of contact for both the child and the family.
- The primary caregiver will be responsible for the child's developmental observations, daily care routines, and ongoing communication with families.

2. Continuity Over Time:

- Children in the infant rooms may transition to a new classroom during the school year depending on developmental milestones and needs.
- Whenever feasible, teachers will remain with the same group of children for the entirety of the school year.

- Children will move up with their classmates at the start of the next school year and will remain with the children in their age group until the following year.
3. **Minimizing Daily Transitions:**
 - Children will remain in their assigned classroom for the majority of the day, with the exception of the first half hour or last half hour of the program's operation. During this time, children may be moved to a different classroom and combined with other groups to ensure staff-to-child ratio requirements are maintained.
 - Changes in caregiving or classroom assignments during the day or week will be avoided unless necessary for health, safety, or program operations.
 4. **Supporting Transitions When They Occur:**
 - When transitions (e.g., to another classroom or caregiver) are necessary, families and children will be prepared in advance with a thoughtful transition plan that includes gradual visits, family engagement, and collaboration between sending and receiving caregivers.
 - Transition periods will be planned and supported to ensure emotional security and continuity in care practices and routines.
 5. **Family Engagement:**
 - Families are seen as essential partners in continuity of care. The program will ensure frequent, consistent communication with families about caregiving practices, developmental progress, and upcoming transitions.
 - Family feedback will be regularly solicited and incorporated into transition planning and continuity practices.
 6. **Staffing and Scheduling Practices:**
 - Staffing schedules will be developed to maximize consistency in caregiver assignments and reduce turnover.
 - Staff will receive ongoing professional development focused on attachment theory, responsive caregiving, and strategies for promoting continuity.
 7. **Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:**
 - Program leadership will annually review transition data, staff assignments, and family feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of continuity practices.
 - Adjustments will be made based on this review to strengthen the stability and quality of care.

8.0 PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

8.1 Parking Procedures

Parking lots at the JCC provide ample space for drop-off and pick-up of the children. Unattended vehicles may not be left in the circular driveway in the front of the building for any period of time, as this is a fire lane for emergency vehicles. Short-term drop-off/pick-up spaces are available in the loop in the Washington Street parking lot, adjacent to the ECE entrance.

For children in the summer camp program, curbside drop-off is available in the short-term drop-off/pick-up area during designated times in the morning and afternoon when staff are present. These spaces may not be used for parking during these times.

8.2 Transportation

The JCC does not provide transportation services for the early childhood program; parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from the JCC.

The J Lounge program has arranged transportation from specific schools (Jewish Day School, Parkway Manor Elementary, and Kratzer Elementary). We also walk children over to the JCC from Muhlenberg Elementary School. The drivers are trained and experienced in transporting young children and they have been screened to work with our youth. Booster seats or car seats are provided by the JCC. There is always a staff person in the vehicle while the children are being transported from school to the JCC.

9.0 COMMUNICATION

The phone number for the JCC is 610-435-3571. The Early Childhood Director's extension is 127. The Youth & Camp Director's extension is 185. The Assistant Youth & Camp Director's extension is 180. If direct contact with a teacher is requested, please ask for the classroom extension. Please refrain from calling classrooms during scheduled nap times.

In the case of a phone outage at the JCC, please communicate with us via e-mail or Brightwheel.

Our address is 702 N. 22nd Street, Allentown, PA 18104.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing below, I acknowledge the receipt of the JCC Child Care Family Handbook, including the Health and Illness Policy.

Print Name

Date

Signature