



Family Handbook 2024-2025

Center for Young Children
University of Maryland

College of Education
Department of Human Development &
Quantitative Methodology

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(1) Identity

- Teachers will nurture each child's construction of knowledge and confident personal and social identities.
- Children will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.

(2) Diversity

- Teachers will promote each child's comfortable, empathic interaction with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Children will express comfort and joy within human diversity, use accurate language for human differences, and form deep, caring human connections across all dimensions of human diversity.

(3) Justice

- Teachers will foster each child's capacity to critically identify bias and will nurture each child's empathy for the hurt bias causes.
- Children will increasingly recognize unfairness (injustice), have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

(4) Activism

- Teachers will cultivate each child's ability and confidence to stand up for oneself and for others in the face of bias.
- Children will demonstrate a sense of empowerment and the skills to act, with

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Educational Philosophy

Our approach to early childhood education is based on decades of continuing research on human development and learning. Our approach is also aligned with the standards set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in several position statements including (1) [Developmentally Appropriate Practice](#), (2) [Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education](#), and (3) the [Code of Ethical Conduct](#). Further, our work training preservice teachers is aligned with the NAEYC's position statement outlining the [Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators](#).

Our decades of work with children and with researchers informs our practice:

- Our classrooms are warm, inviting, child-friendly spaces where every child feels a sense of belonging. Belonging is required for learning.
 - Teachers spend significant time building trusting, warm relationships with each child. Knowledge of each child as an individual, including their interests, abilities, and cultural and linguistic identities, is key to teaching and optimal development.
 - Teachers build a strong sense of community among the children and faculty. A sense of community aids in belonging and helps children build social-emotional skills.
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Examples of banned coercion: Rough handling (shoving, pulling, pushing, grasping any body part); forcing a child to sit down, lie down, or stay down, except when restraint is necessary to protect the child or others from harm (use of restraint for safety reasons or to support a child with postural needs may be used on an as needed basis); physically forcing a child to perform an action (such as eating or cleaning up).

Each member of the CYC professional staff understands and follows our disciplinary approach

RESEARCH

As a research center within the College of Education, research is a core mission of the CYC. Children enrolled in our program participate in studies that increase our understanding of child development and learning, which in turn improves educational and other practices across the world for the betterment of children everywhere.

Research studies approved for the CYC undergo a rigorous review process by both the university's institutional review board (IRB) as well as by our director. Only studies that adhere to all protocols of ethical human subjects research and abide by the CYC's own research protocols are permitted. When your child participates in research, they are always directly supervised by a CYC faculty or staff member.

Currently, all children enrolled at the CYC give permission for observational studies that occur while children are in their classrooms. When a study requires a child to leave the classroom to participate, separate permission is required. These permission requests will come to you in your child's cubby or via email. We have recently received permission to include our blanket consent process for children to participate in research that occurs within the CYC and under the supervision of CYC staff that have been IRB and CYC approved. These research sessions will be play-based, such as a child listening to a story and then answering questions, a child interacting with puppets and then having a conversation with an adult about the interaction, or a child playing a simple game on a tablet. This new process will be piloted during the 2024-2025 school year. Please visit our website at [www.cyc.edu](#).

For more information, please contact the CYC Research Center at research@cyc.edu or call 781-882-2222.

Affiliated families who have an established relationship with the CYC via enrollment of a child and fulfillment of their contract obligations receive highest priority on the enrollment of subsequent siblings as long as one parent/guardian retains affiliate status with USM.

Enrollment in our kindergarten program is not guaranteed for children completing preschool at the CYC. If there is more interest in kindergarten than we have room for, we will hold a lottery for admission from within our current population of preschoolers.

We are happy to note requests for specific rooms or teachers, but they cannot be guaranteed.

Re-enrollment

In January, families will be canvassed in writing about their intent to re-enroll their child for the next school year. If you fail to inform us of your intent to re-enroll, your child's placement may be offered to a child on our waiting list. Likewise, re-enrollment forms must be completed by the stated deadlines, or you may lose your child's spot.

Custody Considerations

Please provide us with a copy of any legal custody documents and share with an administrator and your child's teachers any specific details that may be important for us to know, such as if a parent or someone who might otherwise have legal right to your child is prohibited from removing your child from the CYC. We must have a copy of any applicable court order to guide us in releasing a child.

Requirement for Toilet Training

Toilet-trained children are expected to be able to do the following on their own:

- Decide when they need to use the toilet
- Pull down and up their own pants/skirt/underwear
- Have sufficient aim to keep clothing and floor dry
- Get their body onto a child-sized toilet
- Wipe/clean themselves with toilet paper

Please note: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we will admit and accommodate children with disabilities for whom toilet training is delayed or inhibited.

Children should come to school in regular underwear, not diapers or Pull-up type training pants. To enhance children's independence, please dress your child in clothes they can manage on their own, such as elasticized waistbands. Refrain from sending children in belts and overalls unless your child is proficient at removing them and putting them back on.

We expect that preschool children will have occasional accidents. We will keep a record of the accidents, inform the family of them, and discuss what might be causing them. If accidents continue to occur, a meeting may be scheduled with the family to discuss goals and suggest prevention methods that can be put into place, such as scheduling frequent bathroom trips. If accidents continue and are excessive, the policy below will be followed:

Children who enter the CYC but are not toilet-trained cannot remain enrolled. Families will have the option of paying to hold the space for one month to complete the toilet training process. If at the end of one month training is still not complete, the child will not be able to return that school

year. If this happens, the child will remain on the waitlist with their original date of application for potential enrollment the following year.

Special Needs Inclusion

Children Identified with Special Needs/Disabilities

We welcome all children to the CYC. If a child has identified special needs, families are requested to share evaluations and reports with the administration and special educator prior to the start of the school year to ensure a smooth transition. In your enrollment paperwork there is space for you to request a meeting with our special educator, who will partner with you to ensure that we are best equipped to meet your child's needs. You may also schedule a meeting with our special educator at any time to obtain referral information, to ask questions about development, or to problem solve.

Consent to Release Information

Our program is most effective when we collaborate. Children are best supported with families,

Flexible Spending Accounts

UMD participates in a childcare flexible spending account program in which most employees are eligible to participate. The FSA program allows you to set aside money for your CYC tuition account expenses before taxes and have this money reimbursed to you once you have paid your tuition bills, up to a certain maximum amount. Please consult with UMD Personnel Benefits for more details on this program, including maximum reimbursements.

To receive reimbursement, please email your completed claim forms (available online for most FSA companies) to the Program Coordinator. We will certify that you have already paid for the amounts and dates reflected in the reimbursement request, sign off on the claim form and return it to you via email. Please allow 48 hours for this to be completed. We are unable to sign off on forms that are requesting tuition reimbursements for service dates that have not yet occurred.

Tax ID

For tax purposes, our tax ID number is 52-

and wants in ways that others aren't hurt; we wash our hands before lunch to take care of our own bodies. Our approach to preventing the spread of illness is similar. We do what we can (even when it's not our preference) to keep ourselves and each other safe and healthy.

Our greatest priority is to ensure the health and safety of the children in our care, making it imperative that we limit the spread of disease. We use the following symptoms to determine when a child is too ill to attend school.

Exclusion Symptoms

- **Fever:** any reading over 99.5° F when taken under the arm (100.0° F taken orally).

Child may return when they are fever-free without the use of medication for 24 hours. If the child has a fever on a Sunday, they may not come to school on Monday.

- **Diarrhea:** defined as an increased number of stools compared to the child's normal pattern, with increased stool water and/or decreased form.

Child may return after a minimum of 24 hours. If the diarrhea continues, the child will be excluded until the child's physician is consulted.

- **Vomiting:** two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition.

Child may return after 24 hours since last episode.

- **Rash,** with fever or behavior change.

Child may return after a doctor has determined it is non-communicable.

- **Conjunctivitis ("pink eye"):** if white of the eye is red, even without seeping. (If red eyes are from allergies, please send in a doctor's note stating they are not infectious).

Child may return after 24 hours from start of medication. A note from the doctor clearing the child to return to school must be provided.

- **Severe Cold Symptoms:** severe sneezing, coughing, nose drainage, etc. If due to an allergy, please send in a doctor's note stating they are not infectious.

Child may return: please see following respiratory illness policy for additional information.

- **Other Signs of Possible Severe Illness:** may include unusual lethargy, irro(gy)85 (,)-6.-4.3 (et) -3 to s2

If a child seems sick without obvious symptoms, please keep them at home. This includes pallor, irritability, exhaustion, or disinterest. We reserve the right to isolate or send children home for exhibiting these symptoms whether a fever is present or not.

Handwashing

It is your and our responsibility to teach children about frequent and thorough hand washing before eating, after bathroom visits, after coughing, sneezing, or blowing noses, and at other times of the day.

Respiratory Illness Policy and Guidance

administered with your signature on a [topical preventative care form](#). We recommend non-aerosol sunblock. Please label all items with your child's full name.

- (7) **Do not** place any medication or preventative topical salve in your child's cubby, lunch box, pocket, backpack, etc. All medications and preventative care items must be given to an adult for administration.
- (8) You may choose to come to school and administer your child's medications.

All teachers have received 6 hours of training in medication administration as required by the state.

Allergy Action Planning

Please alert us to any allergies or sensitivities. This information is requested on the Personal History Form (at enrollment), on the Emergency Medical Consent Form, on the Emergency Information Form, and on the Maryland Health Inventory Form. If an allergy is indicated, we will follow up with an [Allergy Action Plan form](#), which details each allergen and what actions we should take in case of exposure or reaction. The allergy action plan will be kept in the child's file and in the classroom. All reported allergies, including seasonal allergies, must have confirmation from a medical professional.

Please keep us updated with any changes to your child's allergy status.

Asthma Action Planning

Any child with an asthma diagnosis must have an [asthma action plan](#) on file, signed by both the parent and the doctor.

Extreme Weather

Children benefit from playing outdoors in all kinds of weather. Children should dress daily for the weather, including the cold. Please send coats, boots, mittens, hats, and if possible, snowsuits for very cold days. Layer clothing for warmth and comfort indoors and out.

Medical professionals have advised us that children who are recovering from mild respiratory infections and earaches can play outdoors without affecting the course of their recovery so long as they are properly dressed. We do not have the staff to keep your child indoors when the rest of the class is outside.

Extreme Cold

In extremely cold weather, children go out for abbreviated times depending on temperature and wind chill.

If the temperature + windchill is:	We will go outside for:
30 degrees F	30 minutes
Between 15-30 degrees F	20 minutes
Between 0-15 degrees F	10 minutes
< 0 degrees F	0 minutes

Extreme Heat

Every effort will be made to get children outside for much needed playtime in the hot summer months. However, in extremely hot weather children will be outdoors for abbreviated times.

If the temperature + humidity equals:	We will go outside for:
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A heat index of 95-100 degrees F

In preparation for our summer program and for each new school year, we are closed for two weeks in early June, and for three weeks in August. We use this time for school repairs, maintenance, and heavy cleaning.

Emergency Closures

We follow Prince George's County Public Schools determinations on inclement weather closings such as snow and ice.

The CYC maintains the following procedures in the case of inclement weather:

When Prince George's County Schools... We will:

No tuition will be refunded in the event of an emergency closing. If an emergency closing lasts more than 10 school days for reasons beyond the university's reasonable control (e.g., pandemic, major building structural damage, etc.), the CYC will use its best efforts to implement a distance learning program and services. At the time such program and services will begin, and for all remaining days of the emergency closing, in consideration of the distance learning and support provided by the CYC:

- Preschool families will be responsible for fifty percent (50%) of the Core Day tuition
- Kindergarten families will be responsible for one hundred percent (100%) of the Core Day tuition.

Should such an emergency closure extend longer than 60 school days, we will work in good faith with university officials to determine if an updated plan is necessary.

Emergency Closing Text Sign-Up

We maintain a subscription to an emergency texting service that we use to notify you of weather related and other emergency closings and schedule changes. You can sign-up for this text service using the QR code available in the CYC newsletter or posted around the school.

SAFETY

Attempt to Pick-up While Under the Influence

If, in the opinion of CYC faculty or staff, a parent or authorized person picking up appears to be intoxicated or otherwise under the influence, we will attempt to keep that person from leaving the CYC with the child. An administrator will call for another adult to drive the parent and child home. If the intoxicated person refuses an administrator's request to find alternate transportation, the police and/or child protective services will be called.

Authorization for Pick-up

We will only release your child to someone for whom we have your written authorization to pick up your child from the CYC. You will indicate on the attendance sheet who is picking up your child each day. If that pick-up should change during the course of the day, please call the CYC at (301) 405-3168 to let us know. A phone call will suffice if the alternate pick-up person is already authorized to pick your child up. If they are not, you must send an email to CYC administration at cyc-admin@umd.edu, and call to let us know to look for that email. If you would like to permanently add someone to your authorized pick-up list, please stop at the front desk to do so.

Anyone who arrives to pick up your child may be asked to show photo ID. Please make sure they know to bring ID with them.

NOTE: We are not permitted to release your child to another parent who volunteers at the last minute to pick up your child if you're running late, unless the procedures outlined above have been followed.

Food safety

We take food safety seriously at the time of purchase, storage, preparation, and service to children. These practices reduce the risk of foodborne illness and provide for the safe consumption of food by children.

Your role in food safety:

- Please label all food items to be refrigerated with your child's full name
- Place items to be refrigerated in the classroom container designated for those foods
- Please do not include the following potential choking hazards in your child's

Security

Our school uses a keypad/keycard entry security system. The building's front door is always locked, and each family is assigned a unique code to use to enter the building during business hours. This system is designed to allow only authorized people access to the building. Please do not allow those unknown to you to enter the building when you input your code. Parties without approved access must ring the bell, identify themselves, and be buzzed into the building. You are responsible to notify others picking up your child about this process. Please do not share your family's code with anyone other than those authorized to pick up your child.

Photographs

To protect the confidentiality of children, please do not publish photos of other enrolled children without the express permission of those children's parents. Photos of school birthday parties and school social events are permitted for family albums, but not for university publications or other published materials, including social networks or other websites. Please do not take photographs or videos from the observation booth.

Confidentiality

We take the confidentiality of children's records, information, and photos seriously.

- Children's files are maintained in a secure location in the administrative offices
- Children's files are only made available to parents/guardians, teachers who need information for the child's education, representatives of the state of Maryland Division of Early Childhood as required by law
- Materials contained in children's files are never disclosed without express written consent of parents. Such requests to share information must appear on the official letterhead of the school or agency requesting information.
- We require a FERPA waiver to write letters of recommendation for children. You can obtain a waiver from the rece6 (o w)ne0.6 (P)78.1 (A)56.3 ()J[w]27 (n a w)0.5 (i)2.6 nefo wsdrfwndrom

in any part of our building, on the playground, or in the parking lot. When entering the building, please accompany your child to the classroom, sign the child in on the clipboard, and alert the teacher to your presence. At sign out, please sign your child out, alert the teacher that you are leaving, and keep your child with you as you exit the building. They may not be out of your sight at any time during this process.

DAILY ROUTINES

Drop Off

The academic day for preschool is 9:30 am to 12 noon, and for kindergarten is 9 am to 3:30 pm. Children should arrive for preschool by 9:15 am and for kindergarten by 8:45 am. If necessary due to doctor's appointments or therapies, children may be dropped off by 12 noon.

Children may never be dropped off or picked up at the CYC between 12 noon and 3 pm as this is disruptive to the classroom. Only on the rare occasion of a doctor's appointment or other significant circumstance may children be dropped off or returned to school after 3 pm, and only if pre-arranged with the teacher.

If your child is going to be absent, please notify us by 9 am using the [Absentee Form](#) located on our website.

Sign In

Please sign your child in on the attendance sheet every day. Indicate the full name of who will be picking up that day. Please alert the teacher to your arrival, and let them know any important information they might need to know (child didn't sleep well, a parent is on a work trip, they are getting picked up at a different time than usual, etc.)

Settling In

After signing in and greeting the teacher, please guide your child to put their things in their cubby and to wash their hands with soap and water before engaging in the classroom. Create a short but consistent drop off routine for the smoothest transition. Please let your child's teacher know if you need help separating from your child in the mornings. Administrators are also happy to talk about transition routines.

Classroom Meeting Time

Classroom meeting time is an important part of the academic day. Missing meeting affects children's learning. Your child's teacher will give you the morning meeting time for their classroom. Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to meeting to help your child get settled in. If you arrive after meeting has started, you will have to wait with your child in the observation

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underwear, pants and tops. If you bring home soiled clothing, please bring fresh clothes to replace them the following day.

Shoes

Ensure your child wears rubber soled, enclosed-toe shoes to school every day. We go out in all kinds of weather, including rain and snow. Please bring warm boots when winter is predicted to be snowy and keep rain boots at the CYC. Extra sneakers are a great idea if possible.

Dressing Your Child

We play hard at the CYC. Please dress your child in comfortable clothes that can get dirty. We regularly paint, dig in sand and dirt, jump in mud puddles, and engage in other messy activity. Please choose clothes with fasteners that your child can manage. Elastic waisted pants without belts are a superb choice. If your child's pants have snaps, please help them learn to unsnap and re-snap them.

Daily Schedule

Your child's teachers will share their daily schedule with you.

Rest Time

We are required by regulation to offer all children a rest period. Accepted practice in preschool is a two-hour rest/nap period. Kindergarten children typically rest for 50-60 minutes. Children who do not sleep are asked to rest quietly on their cots. Each class has special routines to prepare for rest time and maintain a quiet, relaxing environment.

When a child has difficulty setting down, thus disturbing other children, teachers work hard on expectations with that child. If the difficulty continues, teachers may request a meeting with you to discuss strategies for success.

We are unable to accommodate requests to deliberately keep children awake during rest time.

Please bring a standard sized crib sheet, a small blanket, and a small pillow for your child's use. This will be brought to school every Monday and taken home to wash every Friday.

Toys from Home

Your child may bring one soft, cuddly stuffed animal (no toys with small parts) for the day.

Late Pick Up Fees

Your child anticipates your arrival at the end of the day, and teachers are ready to go home to their own families. If you arrive late, a late fee will be assessed. Late fees are paid directly to the teacher who stayed late with your child and are due within 48 hours.

Late fees per child: \$10.00 – First 1 to 5 minutes
 \$5.00 – each additional 5-

Program Coordinator

The program coordinator manages enrollment processes and paperwork, billing, and works closely with the rest of the administrative team to ensure the smooth operation of the program.

Teachers/Faculty

CYC teachers are university faculty of practice with either bachelor's or master's degrees and

Gradual entry allows children to come for shorter days, in smaller groups, and facilitates children's transition to the school year, new classmates, new teachers, and new routines. It also allows children to form trusting bonds with teachers and classmates, which are foundational for a successful school year.

In late July, you will receive a packet that includes a welcome letter, class assignment, and gradual entry schedule. Occasionally, we may observe that an individual child needs more time to adjust. In these cases, the family may be asked to participate in an extended gradual entry period. We will work together to discover the best way to support the child.

Open School Night

You will be invited to attend our annual Open School Night scheduled in September. During this event, you will hear from the director, other administrators, and your child's classroom teachers about school and classroom policies and practices, important procedures, and the curriculum. Much valuable information is shared at this event, so we encourage you to attend. This is an adults-

Parking Permits

You will be assigned two YC one-hour parking permits during Gradual Entry week. These permits should be displayed on your rearview mirror at all times when dropping off or picking up your child from the CYC. They may also be used for other CYC events. The CYC has no ability to remove parking tickets received while parked in the YC lot or anywhere else without a proper

My signature indicates that I have read and understand all policies contained in the Center for Young Children Family Handbook, 2024-2025 edition, including the CYC Calendar.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Date

_____/_____
(Print child's name/room)