Young Children's Program

FAMILY HANDBOOK
2018-2019

College of Education
James Madison University
www.jmu.edu/coe/ycop

540-568-6089 - YCP
540-568-6292 - Main Office

Licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services
MISSION STATEMENT

The YCP inspires all learners by providing tools and opportunities for growth, exploration, and inquiry.

VALUES STATEMENT

We **collaborate** with our community, leveraging support and access to quality resources, diverse skill sets, and a broadened knowledge base.

We honor **intentional** experiences and interactions that provide a solid foundation for high quality early childhood education.

We build positive, respectful, lasting **relationships** with our families, students, and community partners.

We believe that learning should be **student-centered** and built upon the needs and interests of all learners.

We are an **inclusive** program where all students have the opportunity to be full and active participants.
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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Young Children's Program is an early learning program operated by James Madison University College of Education. Its curriculum, environment, and organization are based on professional standards and research related to learning and development of young children. The program operates Monday through Friday with a morning session for three and four-year olds, one 3-year old Full Day class, and two 4-year old Full Day classes. They are all team taught by master teachers, complemented by support staff of students.

The Young Children's Program recognizes that children's development is best facilitated through cooperative efforts of families and school. Family members are welcome contributors to the curriculum and are encouraged to be involved in ways that support their children's adjustment and growth. Avenues for communication varies and is personalized to meet the needs of all families.

In addition to providing a high quality educational experience for children and their families, the Young Children's Program serves as a laboratory site for JMU teacher education, occupational therapy, communication disorders, and music education students. They provide assistance to the teachers and provide individual attention in ways that are positive and supportive to children. The YCP also serves as a setting for professional observation and research within the University community.

The YCP is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

PROGRAM GOALS

The Young Children's Program provides an environment designed to help each child

- Grow in independence and self-sufficiency
- Develop enthusiasm and skills for learning
- Interact positively with others
- Increase personal awareness and self-discipline
- Use language effectively
- Value individual creativity and self-expression
- Construct knowledge through experience and inquiry
- Develop and refine motor skills
- Make choices that support personal wellness

The Young Children's Program provides an environment designed to help families

- Participate meaningfully in their children's educational experience
- Grow in their understanding of child development and appropriate early education
- Develop a support network with other families in the program
- Become more familiar with family support resources within the community
CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the Young Children's Program is dynamic, evolving, and personal. It is grounded in our mission to support the growth of each child in all areas of development--physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language. Professional training, skillful observation, and personal relationships with each child and family enable teachers to make curricular decisions that facilitate optimal growth and learning.

Program goals represent the areas of development and provide the framework of the curriculum. They are aligned with the Milestones of Child Development (Virginia Early Childhood Development Alignment Project, 2013), which define specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate for children ages 3 to 5 years of age in each developmental domain and the Foundation Blocks for Early Learning (Virginia Department of Education, 2013) which provide minimum standards for four-year olds. All choices relating to short-term and long-term planning reflect these guidelines, as well as the understanding that children construct knowledge through interaction with materials, people, and the environment. Therefore, play, investigation, communication, and reflection are daily experiences for children. The foundation of the curriculum is frequent, first-hand experiences within the classroom and the community. These experiences may take the form of special classroom activities or events, ongoing projects, field trips, walks to campus or community sites, or visitors to the school. Teachers then build on these concrete experiences by providing activities and materials which encourage growth and learning in the goal areas. These opportunities for creative expression, symbolic representation, individual research, social interaction, dramatic play, and the use of language and literature encourage meaningful learning as extensions of children’s personal experiences presented in a manner that is sensitive to each child's level of understanding. Appropriate content knowledge identified in national and state standards in the areas of literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies is integrated into extension experiences.

The physical environment of the Young Children’s Program is a critical component of the curriculum. The classrooms and outdoor learning spaces are designed to include a rich variety of materials that encourage meaningful exploration and play, therefore, supporting learning and development in all program goal areas. The learning environment constantly evolves. Teachers introduce new materials, develop unique interest areas, and display equipment in different ways to challenge children's thought and motivate involvement. The organization and presentation of classroom materials contributes significantly to the overall curriculum; intentional decisions are made that support children's cognitive development, as well as conceptual knowledge in the content areas.

The daily schedule supports the program goals by providing routines that contribute to children's feelings of security and purpose. Flexibility within the schedule supports growth in all goal areas and enables teachers to respond to the needs and involvement of the children at any time during the day. The majority of each session is dedicated to exploration and purposeful play. During this active time, children choose where they want to play and when they are ready to move to a new activity. Teachers encourage involvement in chosen activities for an amount of time appropriate for each child's developmental level, but do not impose a scheduled rotation of activities. When possible, special activities or materials are available for consecutive days in order to encourage children's involvement and in-depth investigation. The role of the teacher and support staff during this period is also active, moving among individuals or groups of children to provide supervision, observe children's use of materials, or interact in ways that support the construction of knowledge, language acquisition, personal independence, and social growth. Classroom routines for opening and concluding the session, preparing and eating snack, and the rotation of classroom responsibilities incorporate the
use of written and oral language, numeracy, science, and social studies in concrete and meaningful ways.

The success of a dynamic, child-centered curriculum is dependent on the teachers' understanding of child development and their knowledge of individual children. YCP teachers know how young children learn and incorporate this understanding as they plan activities and provide materials that will be motivating and intellectually engaging. Every aspect of the curriculum, the classroom, and the daily routine reflects extensive knowledge of child development in all areas--physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and linguistic. In addition to facilitating meaningful planning, this knowledge provides teachers with a basis for assessing the development of individual children. Assessment informs the planning of experiences that will support optimal learning and growth for each child.

The final and most critical component of the Young Children's Program curriculum is the demonstration of sincere respect for every child. It is each teacher's responsibility to know the children personally--their special interests, fears or needs for dependence, out-of-school routines and activities, and family values and dynamics. This is accomplished through consistent and meaningful interaction with each child, careful observation and assessment within the school environment, and the development of a cooperative and communicative relationship with all families.

**ASSESSMENT**

Assessment of children's development and learning is an integral part of the curriculum. The information gathered through purposeful assessment enables teachers to plan experiences for children that are personally meaningful, appropriately challenging, and consistent with their development. For this reason, the YCP assessment program is an ongoing process, specifically designed to facilitate the collection of data on each child's growth in the developmental areas identified in the program goals. This is done through documentation of the observable knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the *Milestones of Child Development* (Virginia Early Childhood Development Alignment Project, 2013) and the *Foundation Blocks for Early Learning* (Virginia Department of Education, 2013). Records are kept in individual assessment booklets and supported with samples of children's work. Involvement of family members is a critical component of the assessment program because of the knowledge they contribute toward a complete understanding of each child's abilities, interests, experiences, and needs.

Early in the school year, parents are also encouraged to collaborate with the teacher in determining individual goals for their child. These goals are recorded in the child's assessment booklet. Progress toward the goals is documented in this booklet and discussed during formal and informal conferences throughout the year. Revision of goals and assessments are made when appropriate.

Communication with families about their child's development and progress toward program goals is scheduled a minimum of four times each year, at least twice in writing. This kind of sharing occurs in ways that are mutually agreeable and may take the form of formal or informal conferences, electronic contacts, phone calls, or personal conversations. Parents have the opportunity to review and contribute to the developmental information in the assessment booklet during formal conferences or on additional occasions as requested. Conferences or other formats for sharing information may be initiated by a teacher or family member at any time throughout the year.
Because the YCP program goals for each child represent assessment in all developmental domains, the data collection process constitutes an effective screening instrument. However, if significant delays or areas of concern are recognized at any time during the child’s enrollment, they are summarized and shared with the parents. Appropriate resource professionals are consulted if necessary and an intervention plan is developed in consultation with the family. If efforts to facilitate progress are unsuccessful, appropriate referrals may be made.

As much as possible, assessment of children in the YCP is conducted informally and as a part of their daily school activities. This is done through careful observation, collection of work samples, and the use of checklists and anecdotal notes. When assessment of specific, unobserved skills is necessary, it is conducted in an atmosphere that is supportive and natural for the child.

All written information collected on individual children in the YCP is confidential and is kept in a secure location. Access is limited to those persons who work directly with children or are responsible for program accountability—the child’s family, the teaching and administrative staff, and officials of regulatory agencies. Because it is critical to their teaching role at the YCP and their professional preparation, student staff members may review children’s assessment records. However, real names are never used in student projects, research, or other assignments without specific permission of the parents/guardians.

In addition to facilitating individual growth and learning, the information compiled through consistent observation within the classroom is used to make decisions that result in the improvement of the program, curriculum, teaching strategies, and classroom environment. Teachers are trained in the implementation of this program during the initial orientation process. Training is updated when changes are made.

Assessment of Program Effectiveness in Meeting Goals for Families

- An annual survey is conducted in the spring. This survey includes objective statements for response, as well as the opportunity for written feedback.
- Twice during the year contact is made with families for the specific purpose of soliciting feedback and ideas for program improvement.
- The YCP Family Advisory Board, which consists of a family representative from each class, meets 4 times a year as a forum for input and suggestions for program direction and improvement.
GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD

Our Advisory Board consists of our YCP director, the YCP teachers, the Department Head of the Early, Elementary and Reading Education Department, and one parent as representative from each of our currently enrolled classes. The role of the Board is to support the ongoing operation of the Young Children’s Program, establish long-range goals, and recommend policy that is in the best interest of the program and its mission. The Advisory Board meets quarterly during the school year with additional meetings scheduled as needed.

For liability reasons, the playground and the loft room are not available for use by YCP families before or after school.

ARRIVAL- Families and children should always enter and leave through the main doors beside the playground.

The morning session operates 8:30am - 11:30am; the Full-Day sessions operate 8:00am-3:30pm with optional after-school care available 3:30-5:30pm. For students receiving Harrisonburg City Public School scholarships the school day is 9:30am-3:30pm, with optional school care available from 8:00am-9:30am for a fee of $100 per month.

The YCP exists as a laboratory setting for students in the Elementary Education Program, Inclusive Early Childhood Education Program, Occupational Therapy Program, Communication Disorders Program, and Music Education Program. For this reason, in addition to the teachers' responsibilities to the children in the YCP, they have significant responsibilities for supporting the professional development of the JMU students. Both roles require time and planning which must happen before and after school hours. **Program arrival and dismissal times must be observed in order to provide the teachers with the time needed for daily preparation of the classroom, and for meeting with student staff.**

Parents or authorized persons are responsible for checking children into the room upon arrival and checking them out at the end of the school day. A Sign In/Out sheet is posted in each classroom for this purpose.

All children must wash their hands upon arrival. The adult who brings your child to school is responsible for seeing that this is done thoroughly (refer to the hand washing section of this handbook). We encourage all children to follow the routine of using the bathroom, then washing hands as they arrive.

We realize that saying goodbye at the beginning of the school day is sometimes difficult. The teacher will help with this in a way that is sensitive to the needs observed in your child. Parents are encouraged to remain in the classroom as long as the child needs their presence, but staying beyond this time may be counterproductive to our goal for each child to grow in independence and self-confidence. We ask that you trust the teachers as they work to provide an environment that is welcoming, secure, and challenging for each child. Feel free to talk with your child's teacher if you have concerns about leaving your child and would like to develop a specific plan for easing this transition.
It is important for teachers to be aware of situations or experiences that may affect children's behavior (loss of sleep, absence or illness of a parent or family member, visitors in the home, etc.) Please share this information at a level that is comfortable and will help the teacher and staff be more responsive to your child's needs. Please remember, however, that the beginning of the school day is an especially important time for the teacher to be free to make contact with each child. If there is lengthy information that must be shared, provide it in writing or arrange a time that is convenient to both of you.

DISMISSAL

Children will be dismissed to parents or authorized persons only. To prevent confusion at dismissal, it is helpful if after-school visiting among children can be arranged in advance. The school must be informed in writing when a child is to be dismissed to someone other than a person listed on the authorization form.

Children must be picked up at the dismissal time. The teachers have scheduled meetings with student staff at the end of each day and cannot be responsible for after-hours care, unless your child is enrolled in the after-school program. If a child is not picked up at 3:30pm, they are placed into the after-school program and a $10 late fee is charged.

Children not picked up from afterschool by 5:30pm will be charged $10 for every 5 minutes until they are picked up. At 5:30pm, afterschool staff will begin calling listed emergency contacts. If no one can be reached Child Protective Services and/or the Harrisonburg Police Department will be notified.

ATTENDANCE

Children are expected to have regular attendance when well enough to participate fully in all activities of the program, including daily outdoor activities.

Parents or caregivers are required to notify the teacher when their child will NOT be attending school. This may be done in writing via email or Seesaw or by leaving a phone message at the Young Children's Program (568-6089). In the event a child has not arrived 30 minutes after the beginning of the school day, the program is required to notify the family by calling the numbers listed on the Emergency Information Form.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays may be celebrated simply at school if the child and parents wish, but without gift bags, balloons, or favors. Birthday snacks should be nutritious and easy to serve. Foods that come from home must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. In addition to nutritional requirements the YCP is committed to avoiding products with excessive sugar and high fructose corn syrup as much as possible.

The distribution of written invitations to special events for a select group of children is not appropriate at school.
WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS, DELAY POLICIES, AND EARLY RELEASE DECISIONS

**IF JMU IS CLOSED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER, THE YCP WILL BE CLOSED**

Any closings or delays will be sent via Seesaw, email and posted on the WHSV-TV 3 list of closings. If you DO NOT receive an email or Seesaw notification, or see it on the WHSV-TV 3 list of cancellation announcements, then the YCP is open and operating on time.

**DELAYS** - If JMU has a delayed opening, the YCP will also have a delayed opening. The YCP opening time will be announced on Seesaw, the YCP Facebook page, WHSV-TV 3, and via email. If the delayed opening is after 10:00 am, the ½ day morning program will be cancelled.

Days missed due to weather emergency are not made up.

**EARLY RELEASE** - If the YCP director and EERE Department Head deem it necessary to close the YCP early due to inclement weather, or the possibility of inclement weather, an announcement will be made through Seesaw, the YCP Facebook page, WHSV-TV3, and via email. From the time of the notification families will have a two-hour time span to pick up their children. For example, if the YCP closes at 12noon, all children must be picked up by 2:00pm.

The YCP goal is to keep all our children, JMU students and staff safe. These decisions will be made keeping this goal in mind. Ultimately, it is up to each family to determine if it is safe for you to travel with your child to the YCP. Keeping your child home, due to inclement weather, will not affect your child's attendance record.

**CHILD RECORDS**

Child records include all documents described in the Registration Forms section, as well as attendance and assessment records. This information is considered confidential and is stored in a secure location at the YCP. Access is limited to those persons who work directly with children or are responsible for program accountability—the child's family, the teaching and administrative staff, and officials of regulatory agencies. Because it informs their teaching at the YCP and their professional preparation, student staff members may review children's records. However, confidentiality is always required and real names are never used in student projects, research, or other assignments without specific permission of the parents.

Duplicates of the Emergency Information Form are kept in the departmental office, and in designated locations in the classrooms for easy access in case of emergency.

It is the responsibility of each family to update registration and health forms as needed during the year in order to maintain accuracy. Parents have the right to inspect and review all records directly related to their children who are under eighteen years of age and/or who are dependents under the tax law. Unless a legally binding instrument or a court order governing divorce, separation, or custody provides to the contrary, both parents shall be permitted to inspect and review educational records of their children.

Child records are retained in the departmental office for seven years after the child's final date of attendance at the YCP and then are destroyed.
CLOTHING

Children should dress in comfortable, washable clothing appropriate for active play. Clothing that is easy to manage encourages independence (mittens instead of gloves, velcro fasteners on shoes, pants with elastic at waist, etc.).

Shoes with non-skid soles that are safe for climbing and running are strongly recommended. Flip-flops, crocs, and stiff boots interfere with a child's safe use of equipment and should not be worn to school.

The class will spend some time outdoors daily except in severe weather. When the temperature (including wind chill) is above 25 degrees, the regularly scheduled outdoor time will be followed; between 20 and 25 degrees, the class will go outside for an abbreviated amount of time. Under 20 degrees, the children will be kept indoors. Because the classroom temperature is always comfortable, it is suggested that children dress in layers of clothing that will enable comfort for both indoor and outdoor play. On snowy days the classes often go outside to play in the snow. Families are asked to send children with the necessary protective clothing such as boots, mittens, and toboggan.

Children must have a seasonal change of clothes in their cubbies at all times (including several pairs of underpants). Place clothing in a gallon zip-lock bag labeled with your child's name. Occasionally it is necessary for children to borrow clothing from the school. When this occurs, the items should be washed and returned as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

Because the YCP views early education as the shared responsibility of home and school, it is critical that we communicate often and effectively about all aspects of a child's school experience. Communication during the year is oral and written, informal and formal, and may be initiated by family members and school personnel. In an effort to promote environmental responsibility, communication will be electronic as much as possible. Parents are encouraged to contact a teacher or the YCP Director if the family is unable to receive electronic communication (via the web and email) or needs to communicate in a language other than English.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The safety and well-being of our YCP family is of utmost importance to us all. In an effort to respect the privacy of all families, and to ensure that our children are safe, we ask that families do not post photographs of YCP activities and events that contain images of individuals other than your own family to any social media outlet. The YCP does not have a Twitter nor Instagram account. If you see such an account, it has been generated by the social media outlet, or an uninformed individual. We ask that you do not post or participate in these social media forums.

Communication initiated by the YCP is in the following forms:

Facebook

Facebook allows the director to upload photos and video, announce upcoming events, and send messages to YCP families.
HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES

This publication is posted on the YCP web site and contains information about program goals, curriculum, assessment, policies, tuition payment schedule, as well as descriptions of licensing and accreditation standards. At their initial conference with the teacher, all parents are given the opportunity to ask questions about information in the handbook and are asked to sign a contract indicating commitment to abide by program policies. Teachers continue to share program information and classroom expectations when appropriate throughout the year. Questions are always welcome.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Classroom bulletin boards

The bulletin board outside each classroom is used to post weekly adventures and other pertinent information. Families are encouraged to view these boards regularly.

Family bulletin board

The family bulletin board is located to the left as soon as you enter the building. The weekly snack schedule, licensing visits, babysitter list and other pertinent information is posted here. Families are encouraged to view this board.

CONFERENCES/HOME VISITS

Conferences are a time for parents and teachers to share information. Formal conference or home visits days are scheduled before school begins in August, and at the end of the school year in May. They may be as informal as a short discussion at the end of a school day, a phone call, or in a more formal scheduled meeting for private conversation and sharing. Parents or teachers may initiate a conference at any time during the year. It is expected that all conference participants communicate respectfully and demonstrate openness to the perspective and concerns of others.

DIRECTOR UPDATES

The YCP Director will email all program updates, details of family meetings, and information related to program accreditation and licensing.

PROGRAM WEB SITE

Program information, announcements, forms, and updates are posted on the YCP web site at www.jmu.edu/coe/ycp.

SEESAW

The YCP utilizes this app for the majority of its communication with families. Pictures, videos and announcements are posted daily. It is STRONGLY encouraged that families download this free app.
COMMUNICATION IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY (see Appendix 1 for emergency procedures)

During an emergency, if there is sufficient warning and it is safe to do so, YCP staff will strive to reunite children with their parents before the event occurs.

If this not possible and an emergency response is required the YCP will:

- Notify parents (by phone, text or Seesaw) when children are evacuated from the facility to a nearby or distant location
- Assign an individual (staff member or assistant) and a backup to be responsible for each child's safety during the event.
- Release children only to individuals the parents have designated as approved to take the child from the program; require any such individuals to show photo identification before releasing a child to them.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND SERVICES

The YCP staff makes a consistent effort to notify families of local events that may be of interest to children such as special activities at the Harrisonburg Children's Museum, campus theatre performances, storytellers, and community concerts and programs. We encourage everyone to share announcements of events for children by placing them on the bulletin board in the entrance hall.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parents are always welcome at the Young Children's Program. It is our desire to work in partnership with families to provide the best possible experience for each child. We want you to understand the curriculum, learn class routines, and be comfortable with the guidance techniques that are used. Let your child's teacher know how and when you would like to be involved in the classroom so a schedule that is mutually accommodating can be developed. If your child speaks a language other than English, please communicate with the teacher about ways we can work together to support language acquisition.

Our student staff usually provides the YCP with an adequate number of adults in the classroom, but family assistance is sometimes needed during field trips, special events, and exam week. The teachers will communicate information regarding trip dates and arrangements for each class.

Family members are encouraged to notify the teacher of special ways they can share with the class (playing a musical instrument, sharing cultural information that is unfamiliar to the children, arranging a visiting presenter or reader, sharing a family pet, etc.). Licensing standards require that all adults who supervise children alone must have background checks and medical clearance, so please understand when the teacher makes decisions that reflect this regulation.

When family members visit in the classroom or participate on field trips, it is important to recognize that young children's behavior is often different than it is at home. At school the child learns to look to the teacher for security, support, and guidance. When a family member is present in this environment, children are sometimes confused about who is in authority or feel reluctant to share the
special person with others. Therefore, behaviors such as challenging rules, aggression, and clinging to the family member are common as children attempt to understand each adult's role in this new situation. It is important for the teacher and family member to communicate about the behaviors they observe and develop consistent responses that will ease the child's discomfort and make participation with the class a positive experience for everyone.

Attendance is encouraged at YCP family nights. A minimum of four are planned during the school year. Topics for meetings are recommended by parents and staff. Notify your child's teacher if you would like to assist with planning or if you have program suggestions.

FIELD TRIPS

Because first-hand experiences are vital to learning, many field trips are scheduled during the school year. Some are walking trips to nearby locations and others involve travel to sites that are farther from school. The YCP relies on public transportation for all non-walking trips. The Field Trip Permission statement must be signed by a parent or guardian of every child.

Field trips are considered an extension of the YCP classroom with specific learning objectives and expectations for appropriate behavior. JMU student staff and parent chaperones support the teachers' goals for the trip and help to assure the children's safety. Care is taken to avoid an excessive number of adults on a field trip so the children have the opportunity for group experiences that support their learning.

If siblings are invited by the teacher, parents are responsible for their safety and behavior. They should be removed from the area if they are disruptive to the trip leader or the YCP class.

The teachers will communicate guidelines for individual trips.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Self-control grows as children are given opportunities to interact with others, make choices, and solve problems. The Young Children's Program provides a supportive and caring environment that encourages this kind of growth. The classroom is arranged so that negative behavior and conflicts are minimized. Guidelines are stated positively. Guidance techniques are non-punitive and accompanied by an explanation of expectations. Adults help children express their feelings in positive ways and encourage them to recognize and respect the feelings of others. Teachers use conflict resolution strategies to help children resolve problems.

If a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, staff intervenes immediately to protect all of the children. The usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. Time out and other punitive strategies are NEVER used.

If a child exhibits persistent behavioral difficulties, the teacher will initiate a meeting with the family to discuss the cause of the behavior, a plan for providing positive support, and a procedure for regular communication. Additional professional input may be sought with the permission of the Director and the family. Family members are welcome to request a meeting to discuss behavioral concerns at any time.
Disciplinary actions described in Section 22 VAC 15-30-487 of the Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers (VA Dept. of Social Services, 2012) are NEVER used. These include physical or forceful punishment, withholding or forcing food or rest, demeaning or threatening remarks, punishments for toileting accidents, forced confinement, and separation from the group so that the child is away from the hearing and vision of a staff member.

HAND WASHING

One of the most reliable ways of controlling the spread of germs is proper and consistent hand washing. This is emphasized with the children and modeled by all adults working in the YCP classroom. Children and adults are expected to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the following times:

- Upon arrival at school
- After using the toilet
- After touching body fluids
- Before AND after preparing, serving, or eating food
- After playing in water shared by two or more people
- After handling animals or materials that may be contaminated by animals
- After playing outdoors

Adults are also required to wash hands before and after administering medication, after handling garbage or cleaning, after feeding a child, and after assisting a child with toileting.

Children and adults should get a paper towel before starting to wash their hands. Use liquid soap and running water, rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including the back of the hands, wrists, and between fingers. Dry hands thoroughly and then use the paper towel to avoid contact with the spigot when turning off the water (refer to the chart hanging above the sink). **We seek the assistance of all families in helping our children develop this important habit.** Children in the Full Day 4-year old program should bring a toothbrush to school in order to be able to brush their teeth after lunch.

ILLNESS

When a child becomes ill at school, a YCP staff member contacts the child's parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized to pick up the child from school. It is expected that the child will be picked up as soon as possible following notification. Illness is assumed if the condition prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities or creates a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

If it is suspected that a child's condition is contagious and requires exclusion from others, the child is made comfortable in a location where he or she is supervised by a familiar caregiver until the parent arrives.
Children are not to attend the YCP during a contagious period when they have communicable diseases such as roseola, measles, chicken pox, or when they have had any of the following symptoms within the previous 24 hours:

- A fever of 101 or higher
- Signs of a newly developing cold or persistent cough
- Diarrhea (two abnormal stools), vomiting, or an upset stomach
- Unusual or unexplained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability or headache
- Any discharge or drainage from eyes, nose, ears or open sores (conjunctivitis, impetigo)
- Nits or live lice
- Untreated conditions: pinworm, scabies, or ringworm
- Parents will be contacted and are expected to pick up a child who becomes ill with any of these symptoms while at school.

*The Communicable Disease Reference Chart for School Personnel in Appendix 3 provides information about communicable diseases common to school age children. Families will be notified as soon as possible (within 24 hours or the next school day after the program is informed) if their child is exposed to a communicable disease.*

**Parents are required to inform the school within 24 hours or the next school day after their child or any member of the immediate household has developed any reportable communicable disease.** In both cases, life-threatening diseases must be reported immediately.

The class will spend some time outdoors daily except in severe weather. If children are not well enough to play outside under normal conditions, school attendance is not appropriate.

**INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the YCP Director if their child has an IEP or is receiving specialized services. The teacher and Director will meet with the family and school division officials prior to the child's attendance to confirm the appropriateness of the placement and specific expectations for the child's progress in the YCP setting. Program staff will cooperate with resource persons and support IEP goals.

**INJURIES**

Children at the YCP are always within sight and sound of a supervising adult. However, despite efforts to maintain the safest possible environment, minor injuries such as scrapes and bruises sometimes occur as children work and play together. A well-stocked first aid kit is maintained at the YCP and teachers are certified in first aid and infant/child CPR. If a minor injury is unusually upsetting to a child or poses reason for concern, parents are called immediately. Otherwise, parents are notified of the incident and the treatment that was given at the end of the school day.

An accident/incident report is completed on every incident in which a child is hurt. Reports must be signed by the parent to verify notification. These documents are used to track the kinds of incidents that occur and help YCP staff consider ways to avoid future injuries. If an injury, that occurred at school, requires medical treatment the parents must notify the Director within 24 hours of treatment.
The procedure for responding to serious injuries or medical conditions is outlined in the *Emergency Procedures, Appendix 1.*

**ITEMS FROM HOME**

YCP teachers welcome contributions to the class science table or other materials that extend experiences and learning. Toys from home often create a distraction from the activities planned for the day and should not be brought to school without prior permission. Guidelines for sharing special items will be provided by the teachers.

**JMU STUDENT STAFF**

The student participants in the YCP are in professional preparation programs and are enrolled in courses that focus on child development and curriculum. They have a dual role at the YCP-serving as both observers and teaching assistants-and will be involved in these very different capacities throughout the semester. They are expected to document their experiences, as well as children's interaction, responses to specific activities, and use of equipment. Confidentiality of children and families is a requirement in all practicum settings. Real names of the children at the YCP are NEVER used in written assignments.

Students participate at the YCP for two to three sessions each week. Because of their limited professional experience and participation time, their knowledge of individual children is minimal. Questions regarding a child's involvement at the YCP should always be directed to the teacher instead of a student staff member.

Each semester the YCP publishes a list of JMU student staff members who are interested in babysitting. Parents will be given a copy of this list as soon as it is complete. The students agree to have their contact information published with the understanding that the list is for distribution to YCP families only.

**MEDICATION**

Long term prescription drug use and over the counter medication can be administered with written authorization from the child's physician and parent. If it is possible a child will need medication, the *VOSS Written Medication Consent* (available from the YCP web site) must be completed and signed by his or her physician, parent, and the YCP teacher or Director prior to the child's attendance. A staff member with current Medication Administration Training (as certified by VOSS) is on-site at all times who will administer the medication. The medication shall be labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage amount, and the time/times to be given. Nonprescription medication shall be in the original container with the direction label attached. Medication will be stored in a locked place. All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed. When an authorization for medication expires, the parent shall be notified in writing within 14 days that the medication needs to be picked up or the parent must renew the authorization.
OVER THE COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS  
(sunscreen, lip balm, moisturizer, etc.)

It is recommended that you apply all over the counter skin products before your child arrives at school. YCP staff can apply over the counter skin products in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations. To administer these products there must be written authorization noting any known adverse reactions. Products must be in their original container and labeled with the child’s name. YCP staff will NOT apply insect repellent.

All procedures mandated by the Virginia Department of Social Services are followed.

OUTDOOR PLAY/PLAYGROUND

The class will spend some time outdoors daily except in severe weather. Because the classroom temperature is always comfortable, it is suggested that children dress in layers of clothing that will enable comfort for both indoor and outdoor play. On snowy days the children often go outside to play in the snow. Families are asked to send children with the necessary protective clothing such as boots, mittens, and hat. On sunny days it is recommended that children wear sun-protective clothing or have applied skin protection. Teachers are not allowed to apply sunscreen or insect repellent on children without specific written permission, so, if needed, we suggest that this be done before bringing your child to school.

The playground is maintained for the exclusive use of the Young Children’s Program during its operating hours. It is not available for use before or after school.

PARKING

Parking lots for families of the Young Children’s Program are I on the south side of Anthony-Seeger Hall and Son the north side (off Grace Street). Seven spaces near the playground in I Lot are designated as temporary parking for drop-off and pickup ONLY. Persons who plan to stay for more than ten minutes should park in a regular parking space in I or S Lots.

Emergency access to all campus buildings is critical. For this reason, all drivers must park in legal spaces and avoid blocking the flow of traffic through the lot. Violators may be ticketed and exceptions will not be made for YCP families. Drivers who receive a ticket should contact JMU Parking Services (568-3300). Special parking permits will be available for YCP families.

JMU faculty and staff must display YCP passes when parking in reserved spaces for drop-off and pickup. Use of YCP reserved parking for other University business is prohibited.
PETS

The following procedures apply to classroom and visiting pets in the YCP:

- Classroom pets must have an appropriate temperament for being around children.
- Classroom pets that are handled by children must be in good health as documented by a licensed veterinarian.
- Children should be taught to handle animals gently and respectfully.
- Animal cages or containers must be kept clean.
- Animals, cages, and supplies must be kept away from areas used for food preparation, eating, and storage.
- In the event a child is allergic to a classroom pet, the appropriate response will be determined through consultation with the family.
- Visiting animals must be in good health and always controlled by a responsible adult.
- All persons must wash hands thoroughly after handling animals and cleaning cages.
- Parents are responsible for notifying the teacher in writing of animal-related allergies.

Virginia Department of Social Services

The Young Children's Program is licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services. The VOSS licensing requirements for early childhood programs can be found at the following link:

Safety Plan to Meet VOSS Standards

1. Inspect teacher files to ensure that all necessary paperwork is present and current.
2. Inspect child files to ensure that all necessary paperwork is present and current.
3. Complete weekly safety inspections to include the following:

**Inside the Building:**

uncovered electrical outlets
light bulbs that have burned out
loose floor boards or bricks
crack in concrete sidewalks or steps
nails sticking out
loose hand rails
loose or broken locks or handles on doors that go outside or that are used to lock away poisons

**Outside the Building:**

holes in the ground and in fences
exposed roots that might cause tripping
broken playground equipment
head and neck entrapment spaces on playground equipment
lack of resilient surfacing under playground equipment
hot spots on metal playground equipment
splintered wood
broken latch on gates
poisonous plants

YCP practice zone supervision while outside on the playground.

**Toys or Equipment:**

toys that are inappropriate to age group (small enough to be swallowed by children under four years of age)
toys with loose parts that might have sharp edges, springs, or small pieces
allowing inappropriate use of toys so as to pose a dangerous situation
too many toys scattered around on the floor
REGISTRATION FORMS

The following forms must be on file for each child before school begins:

• **Registration Form**: General information about the child and family, a description of the child's interests and experiences, and specific health information (additional medical forms are needed if medication is to be administered at school or the child has special health needs)

• **Emergency Information Form**: Information required in the event of emergency including contact names and phone numbers, child's physician and health insurance coverage, permission for the YCP staff to initiate emergency care, and a list of persons authorized to pick up the child from school

• **Commonwealth of VA School Entrance Health Form**: Verification by a physician that the child has received all necessary immunizations and is in adequate health to attend school

• **Program Permission Form**: Permission for field trip participation, display of the child's art, use of photos on the YCP and departmental web sites, and verification of family support of the mission of the YCP as a laboratory school

• **YCP Policy Contract**: Verification of understanding of YCP policies as stated in the *Handbook for Families* and a willingness to abide by them (located on last page of the handbook)

• **Verification of Identity and Age**: Licensing standards require proof of identity and age of each child attending the YCP. Families do this by presenting a certified birth certificate or other official record to the teacher at their initial conference.

*It is the responsibility of each family to update the information on the above forms as needed in order to maintain their accuracy. This may be done by contacting the child's teacher or downloading and submitting a revised form.*

TRANSLATION SERVICES:

We celebrate the cultural diversity at the YCP, as well as in the JMU and Harrisonburg Communities. Our enrollment forms are available in both Spanish and English. In addition, we have translation and interpretation services available for a variety of languages including Arabic, Kurdish, Russian, Spanish, Tigrinya, and Ukrainian.

SNACKS

A nutritious snack is provided each day. Children in the full day classes receive two snacks each day. Children in the half day program receive one snack each day. VDSS regulations (which reflect USDA guidelines for Child and Adult Care Food Programs) require that snacks include two offerings (drink and/or foods) chosen from the following four groups: milk, fruit/vegetable, grains/bread, meat/meat alternate. Children are not required to eat; they are invited to come to the snack table during the activity period and serve themselves. Snack preparation and eating is organized to include valuable learning experiences such as counting and measuring, as well as the development of fine motor control and independence. Frequently the children prepare their own snack by following pictorial and simple written instructions on recipe cards.
Licensing and accreditation standards also mandate the following practices:

- Foods that come from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

- Children younger than age four may not be served these foods: hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, or chunks of raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

In addition to established nutritional requirements, the YCP makes an effort to offer whole grain crackers and cookies, avoid products with excessive sugar and high fructose corn syrup, and include fresh fruits and vegetables in snack menus as much as possible. We invite family support and participation as we seek to increase the children’s awareness of the importance of good nutrition.

Parents are responsible for notifying the teacher in writing of specific food allergies or special dietary needs. Snack menus are posted on the website and on the classroom bulletin board.

**LUNCH:**

Children in the full day programs eat lunch together in their classroom. Since lunch is provided from home, we recommend an insulated lunch box and ice pack to keep food fresh. We are unable to refrigerate or microwave children's lunches.

The preschool lunch is a good place to start developing good nutrition habits in children. Therefore, we encourage parents to pack protein foods, fruits, and vegetables, and to strictly minimize chips, cookies, fruit snacks and sweets. Please do not send candy, soda, or glass containers to school. We do not place restrictions on the order in which your child eats the foods placed in his/her lunch box.

Because of individual dietary restrictions, children are not permitted to share food from their lunches.

**ALLERGIES:**

We discourage children from sharing food because of allergies. If your child has an allergy, it is essential to include that information on your child's health form. If we have children with life threatening peanut and tree nut allergies enrolled in the preschool, we will require that you refrain from sending peanuts, tree nuts, peanut/nut butter or products made with peanuts or tree nuts in your child’s lunch or for treats to share with the class. Foods other than peanuts and tree nuts may be restricted in your class. **If a child in your child’s class has a life threatening allergy to another food, you will be informed.**

**TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment of a child in the YCP may be terminated for the following reasons:

- The child's parents/guardians fail to submit required documents or abide by program policies or procedures as described in the Handbook for Families.
- A tuition payment becomes one month past due.
- The child's behavior is a threat to the safety of other children, adults, and/or the child himself/herself as determined by the teacher and YCP Director.
The Young Children's Program staff (the teacher and/or Director) will communicate with families as soon as a problem is identified. In cases of incomplete paperwork, policy or procedure infractions, or delinquent tuition, a final date and conditions for resolution will be established in writing.

In situations regarding the inappropriate behavior of a child, the teacher will initiate a meeting with the family to discuss the cause of the behavior, a plan for meeting the child's needs, and a procedure for regular communication. A plan for ensuring the safety of other YCP children and staff while working with the aggressive child will be developed by the teacher and the Director. While a reasonable effort will be made to accommodate to each child's individual needs, the Young Children's Program reserves the right to immediately terminate the enrollment of any child whose behavior becomes a threat to other children or staff. This decision will be made by the teacher and YCP Director.

TOILETING

Bathroom accidents are common, especially during the first months of school. Families are asked to keep a seasonal change of clothes at school so we can respond to accidents quickly and avoid embarrassment for the child. In compliance with licensing regulations, soiled underwear and clothing will be returned in a sealed plastic bag with minimal handling.

Children do not have to be completely potty-trained to attend the YCP. The teacher must be notified if a child is not completely potty-trained and wears a diaper or pull-ups to school. Families must provide diapers/pull-ups and wipes. These need to be labeled with the child's name.

REST TIME/NAPS

It is important for young children in a full day program to have a time to rest. The children in our full day program have one to one and half hours of rest time each day, typically 12:30 - 2:00. During this time, children rest on their own cot. The room is darkened, and quiet music is played. Each cot is covered with a sheet that is laundered each Friday. Families can provide a blanket that is sent home each week to be washed. If you need to pick up your child early, please pick them up before or after nap time.
ENROLLMENT OF YOUR CHILD

Children can be enrolled at any time during the year for classes as long as there are open slots. If your child has just completed a 3-year-old class at the YCP, they are given first priority for the 4-year-old classes. Siblings of children currently enrolled in the YCP are also given first priority into the 3-year-old or mixed-age class. We maintain Waiting Lists for each class and children are enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

If your child is not 2 years/10 months of age at the beginning of the program year and you wish to enroll your child as a late starter into the 3-year old class, or if your child has not yet turned four and you wish to enroll your child as a late starter into the 4-year old class, full tuition must be paid to reserve a slot. If enrollment is not reserved with payment of full tuition, available slots will be offered first to children who have reached the age requirement.

If there are openings during the school year, your child has reached the minimum age, and you wish to enroll them at that time, your tuition will be pro-rated and you will be charged the monthly payment rate beginning with their enrollment month.

TUITION & FEES

Tuition for the 2018-2019 Young Children's Program is $3,000.00 per year for our Half-Day Program, and $5,625.00 for the Full Day Programs. The payment schedule is located on page 26 of this handbook. After-school care is available for an extra $10.00 per day from 3:30-5:30pm.

Checks should be written to the JMU Young Children's Program. All payments must be mailed or delivered to the following address. Prepaid envelopes are available for your use. Do not mail or deliver payments directly to the Young Children's Program site or teachers.

Young Children's Program
MSC 6909 - Memorial Hall 3100-A
James Madison University
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Because YCP tuition is an annual fee divided into monthly installments for the convenience of our families, payment amounts are unrelated to the number of school days in each month or days missed because of weather emergencies.

The YCP depends on the timely collection of tuition payments in order to meet budget and salary obligations. Enrollment may be terminated if a payment becomes one month overdue.

JMU Faculty and staff are encouraged to use payroll deduction. Credit card payments are not accepted by the JMU Business office.
VISITORS

Non-enrolled children visiting the Young Children’s Program must be supervised at all times by an accompanying adult. Teachers and student staff members are responsible for enrolled children only and should not be asked or expected to provide additional supervision.

When parents with siblings wish to visit the YCP beyond normal arrival and departure times, the teacher should be consulted in advance. Siblings present during arrival and departure must remain with a parent or accompanying adult. Toys and materials used by siblings should be put away before leaving.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Temporary withdrawals from the Young Children’s Program are not permitted. Tuition payments must be made when children are absent from school due to illness, family travel, or other reasons.

If parents choose to permanently withdraw their child from the program, a minimum of one month advance notification is required. Full payment is due for any month in which a child attends one or more days.

WHAT IS A NAEYC-ACCREDITED PROGRAM?
National Association for the Education of Young Children

• Accreditation is the status given to an early childhood program reviewed by a national commission composed of recognized experts in child care and early childhood education. The program must be judged to be in substantial compliance with the NAEYC Academy criteria for high quality early childhood programs. Accreditation is granted for a five-year period.

• An early childhood program-child care center, preschool, kindergarten, or before- and/or after-school program-voluntarily applies for accreditation by the NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation. The program then engages in an extensive self-study based on the Academy's criteria for high quality early childhood programs. The accuracy of the program's self-study is verified during a site visit to the program by volunteer validators. The validated self-study, including the program director's responses to the validation visit, is reviewed by a national commission.

• NAEYC Accredited early childhood programs are committed to ongoing program evaluation and continuous improvement. They agree to act upon the commission's suggestions regarding areas needing improvement and to submit annual written reports documenting improvements and continued compliance.

• NAEYC has created 10 standards that measure the quality of early childhood programs. The standards were created by a blue-ribbon panel of early childhood experts and are based on the latest early childhood research.

1. Promote positive relationships for all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth.
2. Implement a curriculum that fosters all areas of child development: cognitive, emotional, language, physical, and social.
3. Use developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate effective teaching approaches.
4. Provide ongoing assessments of a child's learning and development and communicate the child's progress to the family.
5. Promote the nutrition and health of children and protect children and staff from injury and illness.
6. Employ a teaching staff that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development, and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
7. Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with each child's family.
8. Establish relationships with and use the resources of the community to support the achievement of program goals.
9. Provide a safe and healthy physical environment.
10. Implement strong personnel, fiscal, and program management policies so that all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.
Organization Chart

Teresa Harris
Dept Head

Pat Kennedy
Director

Loretta Lombardi
Administrative Assistant

Lauren Caffrey, Teacher
Ebony Cleveland, Teacher Assist

Donna Young, Teacher
Emily Heatwole, Teacher Assist

Kathryn Pallister, Teacher
Kristin Sheehan, Teacher Assist

Joanna Showalter, Teacher
Kaleigh Shorb, Graduate Assist.

STAFF CONTACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Member</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Office</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat Kennedy</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kennedpa@jmu.edu">kennedpa@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Memorial 3125D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren Caffrey</td>
<td>Lead Teacher (4)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:caffrele@jmu.edu">caffrele@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebony Cleveland</td>
<td>Teacher Ass. (4)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:clevelen@jmu.edu">clevelen@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Heatwole</td>
<td>Teacher Ass. (4)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:heatwoej@jmu.edu">heatwoej@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn Pallister</td>
<td>Lead Teacher (3)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:palliskm@jmu.edu">palliskm@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristin Sheehan</td>
<td>Teacher Ass. (3)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sheehakn@jmu.edu">sheehakn@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kaleigh Shorb</td>
<td>Graduate Assistant</td>
<td><a href="mailto:shorbks@dukes.jmu.edu">shorbks@dukes.jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 12B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joanne Showalter</td>
<td>Lead Teacher (1/2 day class)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:showaljg@jmu.edu">showaljg@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 12B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donna Young</td>
<td>Lead Teacher (4)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:youngda@jmu.edu">youngda@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6089</td>
<td>Anthony-Seeger 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loretta Lombardi</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lombarlj@jmu.edu">lombarlj@jmu.edu</a></td>
<td>568-6292</td>
<td>Memorial 3100-A</td>
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TUITION SCHEDULE

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After-school care available at $10.00 per day

Tuition payments must be received on or before the above due date and made payable to:

JMU Young Children's Program

Please mail or deliver to:

Young Children's Program
MSC 6909, Memorial Hall 3100-A
James Madison University
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Please note: A $50.00 handling fee will be assessed on all returned checks
I have read the *FAMILY HANDBOOK* and have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the stated policies of the James Madison University Young Children’s Program.

I agree to abide by these policies while my child is enrolled in the YCP.

________________________________________
Signature of parent or guardian

________________________________________
Date

________________________________________
Child's full name (please print)

*This page must be signed and given to the teacher at your initial conference*