



FIELD TRIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES JMU Young Children's Program

The procedures described in this document are intended to protect the safety of children, staff, and volunteers while participating in field trips planned by the Young Children's Program. All adults transporting children or sharing supervision responsibilities must be familiar with these procedures and demonstrate commitment to abide by them. In order for a child to participate in field trips, a parent must sign the *YCP Field Trip Permission Form* (included with initial registration materials). Parents have the right to withdraw permission for a specific trip by keeping their child home on that day. There is no supervision at school for children who do not attend a field trip.

Field trips are considered an extension of the YCP classroom with specific learning objectives and expectations for appropriate behavior. JMU student staff and parents support the teacher's goals for the trip and help to assure the children's safety. Care is taken to avoid an excessive number of adults on most field trips so the children have the opportunity for group experiences that support learning. Trips are for YCP children only, unless siblings or guests have been specifically invited by the teacher.

The YCP must rely on families to provide transportation for all non-walking field trips. Parents who are unable to do so are encouraged to make travel arrangements with another YCP family. Teachers notify families at least a week in advance of trips and communicate the following information:

- Destination and purpose of the trip
- Date
- Directions
- Meeting time and location
- Specific information that will support the children's comfort and safety (special clothing or footwear, sunscreen, etc.)

TRANSPORTATION

All children on YCP field trips must be in compliance with the Virginia Child Passenger Law. Families are expected to use approved child safety or booster seats and provide specific installation instructions if another adult is responsible for transportation of the child. Persons transporting children must follow these guidelines:

- Complete the *Safety Verification for Field Trip Vehicles and Drivers* and give it to the teacher (this is done at the beginning of the school year and updated as needed).
- Be sure the teacher has your cell number prior to the trip so you can be contacted in the event of an emergency or change of plans (the number on registration materials will be used unless the school is otherwise notified).
- Assure that all vehicle doors are closed properly and locked while traveling.
- Assure that each child's arms, legs, and head remain inside the vehicle.

- Arrive promptly at the designated time and location for the field trip (teachers are not expected to wait for latecomers). At the conclusion of the trip, children should be picked up at the announced time.
- Load and unload children in the safest manner possible (on the curb side or in a protected parking area or driveway).
- Remain in the meeting area if you arrive early. A field trip begins when the teacher arrives and assumes responsibility for the class. Until that time, each parent or transporting adult is responsible for supervision of his or her child(ren).
- Make verbal contact with the teacher to be sure she is aware of your child's arrival. Initial the attendance form if one is available.
- If you will not be participating with the class, you may leave the trip site and return at the time and location designated by the teacher.
- At the conclusion of the field trip, notify the teacher before leaving with your child and others you may be transporting. Initial the attendance pad if one is available.

PARTICIPATION

- If you would like to participate with the class, confirm that this is acceptable with the teacher and ask how you can be helpful.
- Follow the teacher's lead at all times. The teaching staff is ultimately responsible for the safety and behavior of all children participating in the trip. For this reason, the teacher or a JMU staff member may step in to provide direction for your child. Please don't be offended by this; it is their job.
- Avoid carrying children (even your own) unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Communicate with the teacher if you observe a child experiencing difficulty or if you notice conditions that may affect the safety of children or adults.
- Siblings will occasionally be invited to participate in class trips. Parents who accept this invitation must assume full responsibility for the sibling's safety and behavior. A non-YCP child who becomes disruptive to the class or the trip leader must be removed from the group.
- A handbook of emergency procedures, contact information, and first aid supplies are carried in the trip bag (in the possession of the teacher or a JMU student staff member). In the event of an emergency that involves the teacher, steps to protect the children should be taken immediately, appropriate emergency services should be contacted, and procedures in the red handbook should be followed. Contact the Coordinator (Sue Hutchinson) and the Early, Elementary, and Reading Department Office as quickly as possible. Phone numbers are on the back of the handbook and on the card you received at the beginning of the school year.

EMERGENCY

In the event of an emergency on a field trip, the following procedures will be followed. All adults are expected to follow the direction of the teacher and participate in ways that will ensure everyone's safety.

- Remove children from the scene to a safe location as quickly as possible. If adults have been injured, assure that all children are adequately supervised.
- Call appropriate emergency authorities.
- When emergency personnel arrive, follow their instructions related to the location, safety, and dismissal of children from the scene.
- If a child is injured, the parents should be called immediately and provided with specific information about the child's location and plans for transporting the child to the hospital if necessary. If parents of an injured child cannot be reached or it is necessary for the child to be transported to the hospital before parents arrive, a staff member should be designated to accompany the child and rescue personnel.
- Contact the Early Childhood Education Office (Becky Elia or Juanita Swartz, 568-6292, 568-6255). Communicate details of the emergency and the names of children, staff, and volunteers present. Direct that parents should be called to pick up their children at the present location (provide specific directions). Leave a phone number for communicating with the teacher or a staff member. If an adult has been injured and is being transported to the hospital, request help contacting a family member.
- Contact Sue Hutchinson, YCP Coordinator, to inform her of the existing emergency.
- Contact parents using the Emergency Contact forms. If neither of a child's parents can be reached, attempt to contact other persons authorized to pick up the child. Continue efforts to reach a parent or authorized person as long as possible. Contact the family of injured children and adults as necessary.
- As parents or authorized persons arrive, record the name of the person who picks up each child.
- Children should remain in the care of a YCP staff member until released to a parent or authorized person. After a reasonable amount of time and attempts to reach all persons on the Emergency Contact and Child Release Authorization forms, local police should be contacted for assistance in locating the child's family.