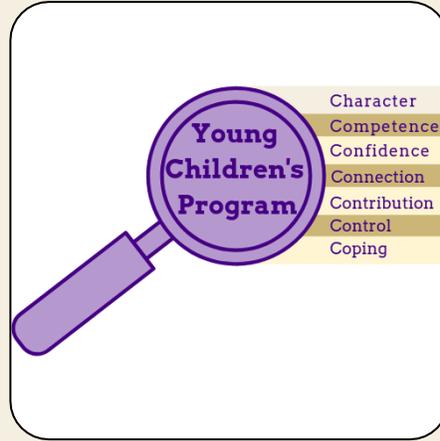


# James Madison University Young Children's Program



# FAMILY HANDBOOK

2022-2023

**COVID-19 policies and procedures may replace policies and procedures in this handbook. Please see the *COVID-19 Policies and Procedures* attachment.**

[www.jmu.edu/coe/ycp](http://www.jmu.edu/coe/ycp) | 540-568-6089 | [youngchildrensprogram@jmu.edu](mailto:youngchildrensprogram@jmu.edu)

*Licensed by the Virginia  
Department of Education*

An Affiliate of **naeyc**



**Virginia  
Quality**

Committed to Quality  
Early Learning

## MISSION STATEMENT

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



## TENETS

The teachers and staff of the YCP support the following learner-oriented tenets:

- We nurture resiliency, responsibility, and the capacity for learners to connect to themselves, others, and their world.
- We value learner's interests and offer [scaffold] experiences that provide [challenging] play-based opportunities to explore, investigate, and discover.
- We connect to our natural world daily.

# VALUES STATEMENT

## The YCP...

- **Collaborates** with the community, leveraging support and access to quality resources, diverse skill sets and broadened knowledge.
- **Creates** intentional experiences that provide a foundation for high-quality early childhood education.
- **Builds** positive, respectful relationships with our families, students and community partners.
- **Believes** that learning should be student-centered and built upon the needs and interests of all learners.
- **Is** an inclusive program where all students have the opportunity to be full and active participants.

# YCP Goals

- Goal 1: Grow in independence and self-sufficiency.
- Goal 2: Develop enthusiasm and skills for learning.
- Goal 3: Grow in the ability to interact positively with others.
- Goal 4: Increase personal awareness and self-discipline
- Goal 5: Grow in the ability to use language efficiently.
- Goal 6: Value individual creativity and self-expression.
- Goal 7: Construct knowledge through experience and inquiry.
- Goal 8: Develop and refine more skills.
- Goal 9: Make choices that support personal wellness.



## Dr. Ginsburg's 7 C's of Resilience

- Connection: "I need you and you need me. We are the YCP community."
- Character: "I make choices that help my world."
- Contribution: "I can help other people make a difference."
- Coping: "I practice healthy ways to respond to my feelings."
- Confidence: "I can do this. I will try."
- Competence: "I am capable. I know how."
- Control: "I am in control of my actions."

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Young Children's Program is an early learning program operated under the direction of 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 from 8 am-3:30 pm. Classes are all taught by a Lead teacher along with a classroom assistant complemented by a support staff of JMU students.

The Young Children's Program recognizes that children's development is best facilitated through cooperative efforts of family members and the 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 vary and are 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 assist 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

Our Program Goals represent areas of student development and provide the framework for our curriculum.

**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
- Increase personal awareness and self-discipline
- Use language effectively
- Construct knowledge through experience and inquiry
- Develop and refine motor skills
- Make choices that support personal wellness
- Develop resiliency skills

**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
- Share their values, beliefs, and experiences with children, families, and teachers

## CURRICULUM

The 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, activities, 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.

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. Assessment results, both formal and informal, guide individualized learning plans.

Program goals represent the areas of development and provide the framework of the curriculum. They are aligned with Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards (VDOE). All choices relating to short-term and long-term planning reflect these guidelines with the understanding that children construct knowledge through interaction with materials, people and the environment, as such interactions are important to learning. These curriculum tools can be modified to meet the languages spoken by families in our program.

Therefore, play, investigation, discovery, communication, and reflection are daily experiences for children. The foundation of the curriculum is first-hand experiences that take the form of events, ongoing projects, field trips, walks to campus or community sites, or visitors to the YCP. Appropriate content knowledge identified in national and state standards in the areas of literacy, mathematics, science and social studies is integrated into extension experiences.

## FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD

Our Advisory Board consists of our YCP director, the YCP teachers, the Dean of the College of Education, and one or two parents as representatives 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. It also allows the YCP families to help with program fundraising. The Advisory Board meets quarterly during the school year with additional meetings scheduled as needed.

## 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.

Early in the school year, parents are also encouraged to collaborate with the teacher in determining individual goals for their child. Progress toward goals is documented 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 two times a year. This kind of sharing occurs in ways that are mutually agreeable. Parents have the opportunity to review and contribute to the developmental information during formal conferences or on additional occasions as requested. Conferences may be initiated by a teacher or family member at any time throughout the year.

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 and meet the needs and interests of each learner. Every aspect of the curriculum, classroom and the daily routine, reflect extensive knowledge of child development. 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.

Because the YCP program goals represent assessment in all developmental domains, the data collection process constitutes an effective screening instrument. However, if 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.

### **Program Survey 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 (typically January and June), contact is made with families for the specific purpose of soliciting feedback and ideas for program improvement.

## **Language and Inclusivity**

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. Parents are encouraged to contact a teacher or the YCP Director if the family is unable to receive electronic communication (via the web, email and Seesaw) or need to communicate in a language other than English.

If your child speaks a language other than English, please communicate with the teacher about ways we can work together to support language acquisition.

## **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.

## **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.

## CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Families and children should always enter and leave through the main doors beside the playground. 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 meetings with student staff.

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 with you. If there is lengthy information that must be shared, provide it in writing or arrange a time that is convenient to both of you.

### Morning Procedure

#### Arrival Time

The full-day session operates from 8:00am—3:30pm (doors open at 7:55am) with optional after school care from 3:30pm—5:30pm (see after school fee chart).

#### Check-In

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

#### Handwashing

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. We encourage all children to follow the routine of using the bathroom and washing their hands as they arrive.

One of the most reliable ways of controlling the spread of germs is proper and consistent handwashing. This is emphasized with the children and modeled by all adults working in the YCP classrooms. 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 bodily fluids
- Before AND after preparing, serving, or eating food
- After playing in water shared by multiple people
- After handling animals or materials that may be contaminated by animals
- After playing outdoors

Adults are also required to wash hands at the following times:

- Before and after administering medication
- After cleaning or handling garbage



- After feeding a child
- After assisting a child with toileting

**The proper handwashing technique consists of the following steps: (refer to the chart hanging above the sink)**

- Get a paper towel before starting to wash hands
- Use liquid soap and running water, rubbing hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds including the back of the hands, wrists, and between the fingers
- Dry hands thoroughly with a paper towel
- Use the paper towel to avoid contact with the spigot when turning off the water

### **Goodbyes**

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.

## Classroom structure

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 the 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 that is appropriate for each child's developmental level but do not impose a scheduled rotation of activities. 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.

## Dismissal

**Children will be dismissed to parents or authorized persons only.** 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 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 3:30 p.m., they are placed into the after-school program and a \$10 late fee is charged.

***Children not picked up from AFTERSCHOOL by 5:30 pm will be charged \$10 for every 5 minutes until they are picked up. At 5:30 pm, 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.***

## After School Policies

Policies and procedures for our After School Program are listed in our After School Contract. Please contact our Director, Amy Taylor for more information.

## GENERAL PROCEDURES

### 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. All family members **MUST** wash their hands upon arrival. If siblings engage with any classroom materials, parents need to ensure they are put away before leaving.

### Parking

Parking lots for families of the Young Children's Program are on the south side of Anthony-Seeger Hall and on the north side (off Grace Street). Reserved spaces in the S Lot are designated as temporary parking for drop-off and pickup **ONLY**. Persons who plan to stay for more than fifteen minutes should park in a regular parking space in I or S Lots. If all spaces are occupied, please continue driving around until a spot becomes available. Vehicles must be turned off (idling is not permitted).

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). Parking permits are done online and will be available for YCP families. Use of YCP reserved parking for other University business is prohibited.

### 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.

## 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 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. After one hour, children may be given a quiet activity. During this time, children rest on their own cot. Each cot is covered with a sheet that is laundered each Friday. Families can provide a blanket (not to exceed 36" X 40") that is sent home each week to be washed. Children may bring a small, soft stuffed animal (not to exceed 8" X 11") to be used at rest time. If possible, medical appointments should NOT be made during rest time. If this is unavoidable, send a Seesaw message to your child's teacher and they will bring the child to you. Please do not enter the classroom. If your child is returning to school, the teacher will advise of the best time.

## COMMUNICATION

Communication is initiated by the YCP in the following forms:



**Facebook:** Facebook allows the director to upload photos and videos, announce upcoming events, and send messages to YCP families



**Family Handbook:** This publication is posted on the YCP website and contains information about program goals, curriculum, assessment, policies, tuition payment schedule, as well as descriptions of licensing and accreditation standards. All parents are given the opportunity to ask questions about information in this handbook and are asked to sign a contract indicating commitment to abide by program policies.



**Conference + Home Visits:** Conferences are a time for parents and teachers to share information. They may be as informal as a phone call, or as formal as a scheduled meeting for private conversation. Parents or teachers may initiate a conference at any time of the year.



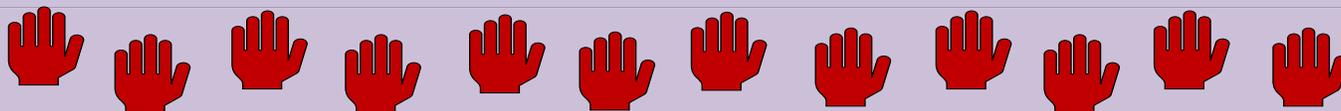
**Director Updates:** The YCP Director will email program updates, details of family meetings, and information related to program accreditation and licensing.

**Program Website:** Program information, announcements, forms, and updates are posted on the YCP website at [www.jmu.edu/coe/ycp](http://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 app.**

# EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION



During an emergency—if there is sufficient warning and it safe to do so—the YCP staff will strive to reunite children with their parents before the event occurs. If this is 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 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 designated by parents as approved to take the child from the program

Require any such individuals to show photo identification before releasing the child to them

## 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.

## WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS AND EARLY RELEASE

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

Any closings or delays will be sent via the YCP Facebook page, Seesaw, email and posted on the WHSV-TV 3 list of closings. If you DO NOT receive an email, 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 half-day morning program will be canceled.

### DAYS MISSED DUE TO WEATHER EMERGENCIES ARE NOT MADE UP AND THERE IS NO TUITION REIMBURSEMENT.

**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 noon, all children must be picked up by 2:00 pm. 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.

## ATTENDANCE

Children are expected to have regular attendance when well enough to participate fully in all activities of the program, including daily outdoor activities. Regular attendance ensures that the students are engaging as much as possible and effectively building community with their peers.

**Parents or caregivers are required to notify the teacher when their child will NOT be attending school by 9:30 am.** 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 their scheduled start time, the YCP staff may call to verify the absence.

**If you need to pick up your child early, please pick them up before or after nap time. Keeping your child home, due to inclement weather, will not affect your child's attendance record.**

## 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 within the hour, or 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 children are not well enough to play outside under normal conditions, school attendance is not appropriate.

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, chickenpox, or when they have had any of the following symptoms **within the previous 24 hours**:

- A fever of 100.4 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
- Symptoms of the COVID-19 virus as outlined by the Center for Disease Control

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.**

## 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 through Seesaw and at the end of the school day.

An 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 and the Director and the teachers via Seesaw within 24 hours of treatment. *The procedure for responding to serious injuries or medical conditions is outlined in Emergency Communication.*

## MEDICATION

The YCP staff will not administer prescription medicine. Non-prescription medication (sunscreen) shall be in the original container with the direction label attached. All non-medications should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Non-prescription 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.

### Over-the-counter 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 and re-apply over-the-counter skin products as needed in accordance with the 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.

*All procedures mandated by the Virginia Department of Education are followed.*

## INTERACTIONS OUTSIDE OF YCP

### JMU Students

The JMU practicum 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 in interacting with the children, 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. Practicum students participate at the YCP for sessions one day 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.

### 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.

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. Children are sometimes confused as to 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. 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.

### **Adventures On and Off Site**

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.

### **Community Events and Service**

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 notifying your child's teacher via Seesaw.

## GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Self-regulation and coping skills develop as children are given opportunities to interact with others, make choices and solve problems. Conscious Discipline is embedded within the curriculum which incorporates social-emotional learning and discipline into everyday events. Conscious Discipline strategies teach that once children are connected, they are more willing to see from another's point of view and understand the impact of their behavior on others. Each classroom is arranged in a way that helps minimize negative behavior and conflicts. 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. 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. **Time out and other punitive strategies are NEVER used.**

*Disciplinary actions described in 8VAC20-780-400/410 of the Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers (VA Department of Education, 2021) 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.*

## ITEMS FROM HOME

YCP teachers welcome contributions 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.

### 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.

**Due to the possibility of allergies, please notify your child's teacher one week in advance to discuss what you will be providing. The distribution of written invitations to special events for a select group of children is not appropriate at school.**

### Clothing

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. Classes often go out on rainy and snowy days. Families are asked to send children with the necessary protective clothing such as boots, mittens, toboggan, and raincoat. We ask that a pair of rubber boots or old sneakers be provided to be kept at school. 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. Please write your child's name on all of their clothing. 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.

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. We ask that a pair of rubber boots or old sneakers be provided. 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. Please write your child's name on all of their clothing. 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.

## Pets

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

- Parents are responsible for notifying the teacher in writing of animal-related allergies
- 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.
- All persons must wash hands thoroughly after handling animals and cleaning cages.

## OUTDOOR PLAYGROUND

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. 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. **For liability reasons, the playground is not available for use before or after 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.
- If the weather is between 20 and 25 degrees, the class will go outside for an abbreviated amount of time.
- If the weather is under 20 degrees, the children will be kept indoors.
- We often go outside if it is snowing or raining lightly. Families should prepare their children for the weather each day based on our policy.

## FOOD

### Snacks

Parents are responsible for notifying the teacher in writing of specific food allergies or special dietary needs. Parents are responsible for packing their child's snack each day. There is time scheduled for a morning snack and then again during the after-school program.

#### *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, spoonful 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.

### 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 on 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. We encourage families to send smaller foods cut up and served in a manner that reduces choking hazard. (For example, carrots as shredded or as waffle carrots, grapes and tomatoes cut into quarters.)

### 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 food allergies enrolled in the preschool, we will require that you refrain from sending products containing that ingredient in your child's lunch or for treats to share with the class. Some common life-threatening food allergies could include peanuts, tree nuts, soy, etc. If a child in your child's class has a life-threatening allergy to another food, you will be informed.

## ENROLLMENT

### 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 three-year-old class at the YCP, they are given first priority for the four-year-old classes. Siblings of children currently or formerly enrolled in the YCP are also given first priority into the three-year-old or mixed-age class. We maintain Waiting Lists for each class and children are enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**Your child must be 2 years and 10 months old to attend the YCP. If your child turns 2 years and 10 months in the middle of the school year, your child will be unable to attend class until they are of age. However, to lock in your child's spot in the program, you will be required to pay the full year's tuition payments. If enrollment is not reserved with payment of full tuition, available slots will be offered first to children who have reached the age requirement.**

### 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.

### 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 YCP 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 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.

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN (NAEYC)

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.

## STAFF

<b>Staff Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Office/Room</b>
<b>Amy Taylor</b>	Director	<a href="mailto:taylo8al@jmu.edu">taylo8al@jmu.edu</a>	568-7098	Anthony Seeger 14B
<b>Nicole Gray</b>	Lead Teacher (4)	<a href="mailto:farrhn@jmu.edu">farrhn@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony-Seeger 11
<b>Christina Martin</b>	Teacher Asst. (3)	<a href="mailto:mart26cm@jmu.edu">mart26cm@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony-Seeger 11
<b>Denise Grove</b>	Lead Teacher (4)	<a href="mailto:grovedd@jmu.edu">grovedd@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony-Seeger 9
<b>Leslie Conklin</b>	Teacher Asst. (4)	<a href="mailto:conklild@jmu.edu">conklild@jmu.edu</a>		Anthony-Seeger 9
<b>Amber Hess</b>	Lead Teacher (3)	<a href="mailto:pierceam@jmu.edu">pierceam@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony Seeger 12
<b>Heather Hansohn</b>	Lead Teacher (3)	<a href="mailto:hansohhm@jmu.edu">hansohhm@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony-Seeger 10
<b>Melissa Gaines</b>	Teacher Asst. (3)	<a href="mailto:gaine8md@jmu.edu">gaine8md@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony-Seeger 10
<b>Caitlin Wood</b>	Lead Teacher (4)	<a href="mailto:woodch@jmu.edu">woodch@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony-Seeger 13
<b>Isobel Baxter</b>	Teacher Asst.	<a href="mailto:baxterim@jmu.edu">baxterim@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony-Seeger 13
<b>JoAnna Jedamski</b>	Program Assistant	<a href="mailto:jedamsjk@jmu.edu">jedamsjk@jmu.edu</a>	568-6089	Anthony Seeger 14C

## TUITION AND FEES

Tuition for the 2022-2023 YCP is \$6,000 for the full-day programs. After-school care is available from 3:30-5:30 p.m. for an additional cost. Please request an afterschool brochure for more detailed information.

Envelopes are available for your use. Do not mail or deliver payments directly to the Young Children's Program site or teachers.

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.

If there are openings during the school year 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.

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.

## TUITION SCHEDULE

<b>Full Day Program 8 am -3:30 pm</b>	
August 1	\$600
September 1	\$600
October 1	\$600
November 1	\$600
December 1	\$600
January 1	\$600
February 1	\$600
March 1	\$600
April 1	\$600
May 1	\$600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

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:

JMU Young Children's Program  
Anthony-Seeger Hall, Room 14C  
821 S Main St, MSC 6811  
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

***Please note: A \$50.00 handling fee will be assessed on all returned checks***

## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (VDOE)

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

<https://doe.virginia.gov/cc/files/final-8vac20-780.pdf>

### **Safety Plan to Meet VDOE Standards**

Inspect teacher files to ensure that all necessary paperwork is present and current.

Inspect child files to ensure that all necessary paperwork is present and current.

Complete weekly safety inspections to include the following:

#### **Inside the Building:**

- Uncovered electrical outlets and light bulbs that have burned out
- Loose floorboards or bricks
- Cracks in concrete sidewalks or steps
- Nails sticking out
- Loose handrails
- Loose or broken locks on doors

#### **Outside the Building:**

- Holes in the ground and in fences
- Exposed roots that may cause tripping
- Broken playground equipment
- Hot spots on metal playground equipment
- Splintered wood
- Broken latch on gates
- YCP practice zone supervision while outside on the playground

#### **Toys or Equipment:**

- Toys that are inappropriate (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

## 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

**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.*

**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)

*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.*

## CONFIDENTIALITY

### Child Records

Child records include all documents described in the 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.

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.

# YOUNG CHILDREN'S PROGRAM POLICY CONTRACT

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.*