



Riverside Youth
Enrichment Center

Participant Handbook

Mission Statement

To provide a unique & high quality licensed youth enrichment program, utilizing the Riverside Facility that combines the best in educational opportunities with recreational events to assist parents and guardians with providing the skills necessary for their child's positive development and socialization.

Goal

To provide a safe and enjoyable environment where children will thrive. We will do this by providing a warm and loving atmosphere, a creative curriculum with age appropriate activities, positive and enthusiastic teachers, and low teacher to child ratios.

Hours of Operations

We are open from 7:00 a. m. to 6:00 p. m.

Program Late Pick-Up Fee

Any person arriving late to pick up a child from a program will be charged a late fee. A late fee of \$10.00 for each portion of 15 minutes will be issued for each participant picked up after their scheduled program ending time. Excessive late pickups will result in termination of the participant, student, camper, etc. The 1st – 4th late pick-ups will be the fees as indicated. The 5th late pick-up will result in 1 day suspension* from the program and late fees. The 6th late pick-up will result in 2 days suspension* from the program and late fees. The 7th late fee will be a permanent dismissal* from the program and late fees.

*Suspensions and permanent dismissal will take place on the next program day your child is regularly scheduled to attend. There are no refunds of program fees paid for suspensions or dismissals.

Registration Process

The registration packet must be complete and accompanied by the yearly registration fee prior to your child's first day. This packet includes the following:

- The enrollment form, signed and completed
- Florida Certificate of Immunization, signed and dated by a licensed Florida Physician
- Student Health Examination Form, signed and dated by a licensed Florida Physician
- Registration fee may be made by exact cash, Visa, MasterCard, debit card, or by personal check made out to "City of Palm Beach Gardens."
- Proof of Residency
 - Current Florida driver's license
 - Property tax document in addition to a photo ID

Please report any changes to the office in address and/or telephone numbers that would affect our ability to contact you in case of emergency. It is imperative that parents keep records updated. We also like to be made aware of any changes in normal routine for children. Communication between the families and school is essential.

Financial Obligations

It is possible to pay tuition by the week or by the month. However, all tuition is due on the Friday prior to the week of attendance. Monday is considered a “grace” day and payment is accepted without question. However if payment has not been received by Monday of the current week, a \$5.00 per child late fee will automatically be added to the account on Tuesday. The entire amount due including the late fees, must be paid no later than Friday of the second week in order to continue in our program. We will not allow balances on accounts.

The City of Palm Beach Gardens accepts exact cash, MasterCard or Visa, American Express, debit cards and personal checks made out to the City of Palm Beach Gardens. Please note: we will no longer accept personal checks for past due balances.

Returned Checks

Collections for fees due, cancelled checks or declined credit cards will be made by Recreation staff by personal contact then by certified mail. Persons with outstanding balances will not be allowed to register themselves or guardian children for other programs until all fees are paid, including any costs associated with the collection of payment.

Participants or guardians that produce uncollectible checks or credit cards will be placed on a cash equivalent payment plan after two instances within a calendar year. This will be in effect for 12 months after it is started.

Withdrawal

When it is time to withdraw your child from our program, two weeks written notice is required. Parents are responsible for tuition payment during this two week period.

Refunds for Medical and/or other Emergencies

A ONE WEEK NOTICE IS REQUIRED FOR REFUNDS

- Refunds will be given in circumstances of medical emergencies and other life altering changes
- A Request for Refund form must be filled out in order for a refund to be processed. Request for Refund forms are available at the front desk.
- All refund requests are subject to a \$10.00 processing fee.
- Medical refunds will be pro-rated if a child can only attend a portion of a session. We reserve the right to ask for a doctor’s note if a medical refund is requested.

Holidays and School Closings

The City of Palm Beach Gardens will close for general building maintenance one week during the normal winter break observed by the Palm Beach County Schools. We will also close two days for teacher planning and preparation each August before the new school year starts. The exact dates for the planning days will be announced each year at the time of fall registration.

We are also closed the following days:

Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Friday, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, and Independence Day.

If the actual holiday falls on a weekend, school will close on either the Friday or Monday closest to the holiday. This would be decided in advance by the City of Palm Beach Gardens.

Palm Beach Gardens Recreation Division does offer other programs for certain ages on some of these holidays. No credit on tuition is given for holidays.

Hurricanes, Extreme Weather Conditions, and other Emergencies

With regard to severe weather alerts, please listen to news reports for notices of closings. The City of Palm Beach Gardens will make every effort to notify participants and media if the facility will be closed due to weather conditions. Concerning hurricanes, generally the recreation facilities will close when the public schools close. Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will remain closed pending damage assessments and availability of water, electricity and/or staff.

Vacation/Sick Policy

- Tuitions are based on a yearly basis, broken down into weekly payments. No credit on tuition is given for scheduled school holidays and closings, emergency school closings, or random sick days.
- In order to take a sick/vacation week or more, you are asked to notify the program Coordinator in advance and pay one-half of the weekly tuition for each program week of absence. If your child attends any portion of a week, a full week's tuition will be charged. Children may take up to 4 sick/vacation weeks during the year.

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Parents are to sign their child in and out in the Sign In/Out Books in the lobby. Parents bring their child to their classrooms. No child may ever sign in or out and we cannot release children to minors less than 16 years of age.

Children will only be released to persons authorized in writing by a custodial parent. Please submit written authorization if your child is being picked up by someone other than persons listed on your child's enrollment form. Everyone will also need to show photo identification.

In the case of emergency only, we will take a phone request. At the time of the phone call we will give you specific instructions to be followed. This is only to be used in the case of a true emergency. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter to ensure the safety of your children.

Inclusion

In an effort to provide everyone the same opportunity to experience the quality of our programs, we include children with special needs in our programs. If your child has special needs, we encourage you to tour our facilities and meet with the Early Childhood Coordinator ahead of time to discuss ways to accommodate your child.

Health and Safety

Medical Forms Required by the Health Department

Chapter 77-620, Special Acts, Laws of Florida, requires all children to have the following on file:

- A physical form DH 3040, (the yellow form) signed and dated by a licensed Florida physician, stating the child is healthy, free from communicable diseases, and may attend child care. The physical form needs to be updated every two years.
- Complete immunization record on DH 680, (the blue form), also signed and dated by a licensed Florida physician.

These forms need to be replaced on or before their expiration dates.

Communicable Diseases in Children

Any child showing symptoms of illness will be sent home. We do not accept doctor's notes to explain such symptoms as diarrhea, fevers, etc. If these symptoms are present, the child will not be able to attend, whether or not they have a doctor's note. The child shall be kept home until 24 hours after all symptoms are normal. This is to protect all children and staff. Signs and symptoms of illness are:

- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or make whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Stiff neck
- Diarrhea (more than one (1) abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period)
- Temperature of one hundred (100) degrees Fahrenheit or higher taken under the arm when in combination with any other sign or illness
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)

- Untreated infectious skin patch(es)
- Vomiting
- Pediculosis (head lice)
- Any other unusual sign or symptom of illness

If your child contracts a contagious illness, please notify us so that we may pass the information on to other parents. Your cooperation will help us keep the number of illnesses to a minimum. When children are out sick no credit is given on tuition.

Medication

The City of Palm Beach Gardens prefers not to administer medicine of any kind to any child.

When necessary, only prescription medication will be dispensed. The name of the doctor, child, and medication directions for administration must be written on the label. All medication must be in the original prescription container. A written request signed by the parents shall accompany the medication stating the time and amount of dosage and the name of the medication to be given to the child. The staff at Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will record the name of the child, medication, date, time, amount and method of dosage administered.

Medications shall be plainly labeled and stored in a locked Medicine Box.

Administering of Epipens: The City of Palm Beach Gardens will retain on staff persons who have been trained by our EMS department for the administering of "epipens" for those participants who are in the care, custody and control of childcare programs offered by the City and make known the need for such assistance. This training and supervision will be in accordance with "administration of epinephrine", Florida statutes 381.88.

Administering Topical Non-medicated Physical Barriers

Physical barrier lotions, ointments, and creams such as sunscreen, insect repellent and diaper ointment are generally not medications. The Riverside Youth Enrichment Center program will apply non-medicated lotions, ointments, and creams with written parent permission. Parents must first fill out the parental permission form, sign and date it. Parents are to supply all lotions, ointments and creams.

Boo Boos, Accidents, and Other Minor Incidents

In most cases parents will be notified of boo boos and accidents by a Boo Boo or Accident Report. Please sign and return immediately. County regulations limit first aid provided at the school to cleansing properly and applying band-aids or ice packs.

Discipline

The City of Palm Beach Gardens strives to create a stimulating and creative environment where children learn and play while participating in age appropriate activities. Children are encouraged to control their own behaviors and actions. We set clear and reasonable limits and give positive directions. Inappropriate behavior will be discussed with children and model behaviors suggested. We prefer preventive discipline, positive reinforcement, and redirection. The use of physical punishment is not permitted.

Children who do not respond to these methods of discipline will be temporarily removed from the group and not permitted to continue an activity for a short period of time. Continued misbehavior will be brought to the attention of the Early Childhood Coordinator. On certain occasions, parents will be contacted and possibly even asked to attend a private conference concerning their child's behavior. If necessary we will suspend a child from our program for a day. We reserve the right to remove a child from the program when necessary.

Biting is fairly common amongst young children. It is very possible that at some time in every young child's life, he or she will either bite or be bitten. We will deal with each occurrence on a case by case basis. Children play in small groups and are closely supervised. We will make every effort to work with children who bite to teach them other appropriate ways to express themselves. However in certain cases continued biting may lead to dismissal from our program. If you would like more information on children biting, contact the Early Childhood Coordinator.

Dress

We suggest comfortable, easy for them to unbutton or unbuckle clothing. Children should have the freedom to explore with paint, glue, sand, and/or play dough without having to worry about getting their clothes messy or dirty. For safety reasons, sneakers and socks are recommended. No sandals or open-toed shoes please! Children need to be comfortable running and climbing. Children should also clearly label all sweaters and jackets with their names. We are not responsible for lost articles of clothing.

All children should have at least one extra set of clothes, clearly labeled with their name. Please place clothes in a Ziploc bag marked with your child's name on the outside of the bag. When children are in the process of potty training we recommend sending more sets of clothes. Remember to think about changes of weather. During winter months, send long pants and shorts in the summer.

Children must wear program t-shirts on field trips. This is for their safety. T-shirts are available for purchase in the front office.

Lunch/Snacks

Lunches should be sent in a lunch box labeled with your child's name on the outside. All plastic containers and eating utensils should be labeled also. Many lunch boxes, plastic containers, and cups are identical. Please do not send sodas, chocolate, or any glass containers. Due to health department regulations, we do not microwave food. You may

send food in a thermos to keep it warm or cold. On Fridays we order pizza. This is optional and there is an additional cost. You must sign up in advance.

We provide a morning and an afternoon snack with juice. There is a menu posted on the parent board of the snacks we provide. Please advise the staff if your child has any allergies! Gum is not allowed in our program!

Formula and baby food for the infants must have the child's name on each container, lid and/or cap. Parents are required to provide pre-made bottles labeled with their child's name on a daily basis. Bottles will be refrigerated.

We prefer children to eat breakfast at home. Snack is generally given between 9:00 and 10:00 a. m. However, children who come before 7:30 may bring breakfast in with them.

Birthdays

We do celebrate birthdays! If you wish to bring something in, we recommend healthy snack items for celebrations in our program. Please check with your child's teacher for suggestions as to what the children would enjoy. All food and refreshments must be store bought.

Parent Involvement/Visitors

We welcome parent involvement in our classrooms. At times we will even invite you into the classrooms to participate in certain activities. We can always use volunteers, either parents or grandparents to help in our school. All visitors other than custodial parents must be approved by the custodial parent and the City of Palm Beach Gardens.

There are times if a child is having a hard time adjusting to preschool, when it is better not to spend extra time in the classroom. A quick "good-bye" is usually best. You may always call during the day to find out how your child is doing. Speak with your child's teacher for suggestions on how to make the transition easier for your child.

Personal Belongings/Toys from Home

For naptime, we suggest a small blanket. You may also send a crib sheet to cover the mat and/or a small pillow. Over-sized pillows, blankets, and/or sleeping bags will be sent home due to lack of storage space. Remember to label everything with your child's name!

Toys from home are not permitted in the program and may be taken away by the teacher. On certain days, teachers may ask children to bring in a particular item from home. (Show and Share days are a perfect example.) No toy guns or weapons of any kind are ever permitted!

The City of Palm Beach Gardens and the members of the staff are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property; this includes items such as electronic games, jewelry, money, sports equipment, etc.

Field Trips

Various field trips will be arranged throughout the school year. A permission slip will be sent home indicating the time and place of the field trip and any fee involved. Children are required to wear a program t-shirt. This is for their safety. It is easier to keep children together when they are all wearing the same t-shirt. T-shirts are available for purchase in the front office. Remember children must have a signed permission slip and a program t-shirt to participate on a field trip.

After School Program/Camp Days

We pick up children from local Palm Beach Gardens Elementary Schools. We make every effort to provide a secure, comfortable, and enjoyable place for your child to spend his or her time after finishing the day at school. There will be assistance with homework, computers, arts and crafts, games, and various other activities offered daily. In addition we will also offer an optional activity daily that children may choose to sign up for. Soccer, Basketball, Dance, and Karate are some of the possibilities for extra activities. As always we will keep our low staff to child ratios even in the elementary school age groups.

After school children are offered a snack and juice in the afternoon. There is a menu of the snacks we offer on the parent board. Please advise the staff if your child has any allergies. Gum is not allowed in the program.

We also celebrate birthdays with this age group. Ask your child's teacher for suggestions on what to bring in for the group!

Gift Policy

The commercialization and media pressure to buy, buy, buy at holiday times and end of the year celebrations is overwhelming. We prefer to focus on other meaningful ways to celebrate without spending money. Therefore, we ask that no gifts be given to staff and that you find other ways to show your appreciation (a flower, a nice note, a donation to the class, or some other small token gift, for example). Our gift policy for our staff is based upon state law which defines the size and extensiveness of gifts to state employees. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions, please contact the Early Childhood Coordinator.

Updated 2/17/09

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

I hereby agree to comply with the rules and regulations regarding health, absences, scheduled times, fees, etc. in the Participant Handbook. I agree that the Riverside Youth Enrichment Center has the right to withdraw my child if I do not follow these rules.

Signature: _____