PARENT'S MANUAL

2016-2017 School Year

for
South County Recreation Center
(Pre-K)
Program

Anne Arundel
RECREATION AND PARKS
ENJOY • EXPLORE • RESTORE
CHILD CARE DIVISION
www.aacounty.org/recparks
1 Harry Truman Parkway, Suite 105, Annapolis, MD 21401
410-222-7856 410-222-7300 301-261-8036
FAX 410-222-4478 Tax ID #52-6000878

This online version is made available for all parents. Paper copies of the Parent's Manual are available upon request, and you will be asked to sign an Acknowledgement of Policies on your child's first day.

Any parents needing accommodations at any of our events/conferences should contact the Child Care Administrative Office at 410-222-7856, ext. 0, or via e-mail at sacc@aacounty.org at least 7 days prior to the event/conference. TTY Users, please call Maryland Relay 7-1-1.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN

LET'S MOVE! Child Care

Revised 7/2016
Please note that SACC/MSTG Centers & 2-day Child Enrichment Centers have a separate Parent's Manual

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WELCOME TO PRE-K

The Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks is pleased to offer state-licensed School Age Child Care (SACC), Child Enrichment Centers (CEC), full-day & before-and-after-school Pre-K, and Middle School Teen Group (MSTG) programs located within your neighborhood school and/or recreation center facility. Please be advised that SACC/MSTG operates as a separate entity from the school/facility. We have prepared this manual for your convenience and as a guide for you and your child. We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have for us.

It is our desire to provide safe, appropriate and consistent child care programs for your child. We are looking forward, with pride and confidence, to continuing successes in this endeavor.

MISSION OF RECREATION AND PARKS

The Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks is essential to the well being and quality of life of every individual, family and community in Anne Arundel County. Our mission is to enrich the lives of our citizens by offering quality active and passive recreational opportunities and accessible youth and adult services while pursuing the preservation and enhancement of our natural, cultural and historic resources.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHILD CARE DIVISION

The Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks' state-licensed Child Care programs provide a safe, supportive environment that promotes social interaction, community integration, physical development, and intellectual growth in accordance with the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care and National After School Alliance standards.

PROGRAM HISTORY

The Child Care Division's programs began in September 1990 with 7 centers. Today, we operate 39 school year programs and several Summer SACC programs.

CHILD CARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE CONTACTS

- Child Care Administrative Office PHONE: 410-222-7856, Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm
- Child Care Administrative Office FAX: 410-222-4478
- Please be aware that the Child Care Administrative Office follows the holidays and emergency closings schedule of Anne Arundel County Government.

CHILD CARE CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

- Belle Grove ES Mon/Wed Child Enrichment Center (CEC) *TBA*
- Benfield ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-544-0687
- Bodkin ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-360-7502
- Broadneck ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-757-3855
- Brock Bridge ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 301-206-2082
- Brooklyn Park ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-222-0987
- Cape St. Claire ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-757-1657
- Crofton Meadows ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-721-6917
- Crofton Middle School Teen Group (MSTG) 410-451-3092
- Davidsonville ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-798-9047

- Edgewater ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-956-6598
- Folger McKinsey ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-544-1014
- Four Seasons ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-672-7097
- Freetown ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-590-2720
- Glendale ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-590-5963
- Hebron-Harman ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-684-3857
- High Point ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-360-0862
- Hilltop ES School Age Child Care (SACC)
    - Pre-K (4 yr olds)-Kindergarten program & 1st-5th Grade program 410-590-7677
- Lake Shore ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-439-0372
- Lothian ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-867-1103
- Marley ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-766-2657
- Maryland City ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 301-776-8729
- Mayo ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-798-1852
- Nantucket ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-721-8534
- Oak Hill ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-315-9603
- Oakwood ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-222-0978
- Park ES Tue/Thurs Child Enrichment Center (CEC) *TBA*
- Pasadena ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-544-5034
- Quarterfield ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-969-1157
- Severn ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-551-7479
- Severna Park ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-315-9994
- Shady Side ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-867-4517
- Solley ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-439-9438
- South County Recreation Center (Pre-K: 3-5 yr olds) 410-222-1517
- South Shore ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-729-3898
- Tracey's ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-867-4514
- Waugh Chapel ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-672-6743
- Windsor Farm ES School Age Child Care (SACC) 410-626-8016

FROM THIS POINT FORWARD, THIS MANUAL WAS FORMULATED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE SOUTH COUNTY RECREATION CENTER PRE-K PROGRAM ONLY*.
*PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS A SEPARATE MANUAL FOR THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE (SACC) & MIDDLE SCHOOL TEEN GROUP (MSTG) PROGRAMS, AND FOR THE CHILD ENRICHMENT CENTERS (CEC) LOCATED AT BELLE GROVE & PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

We are so pleased to serve you and your family! If you have any comments, concerns or suggestions for our programs, please email us at sacc@aacounty.org, inform your Center Director, or feel free to contact our Child Care Administrative Office to speak with one of our Child Care Program Specialists at 410-222-7856, ext. 0.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

ELIGIBILITY

- Children must be at least 3 years old by their first day of attendance in our 3 year old Pre-K program.
- Children must be at least 4 years old by their first day of attendance in our 4 & 5 year old Pre-K program.
- Children must be toilet trained.
    - Your child must be able to be ***self-directed*** and ***self-sufficient*** in the restroom and to be able to care for their own hygiene needs.
- **Every child must have all of the State mandated forms completed and on file at the center prior to their first day.** Forms for admission are available on our website at http://www.aacounty.org/departments/recreation-parks/child-care/forms-and-publications/.

No one will be permitted to attend without this information on file*

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

- Prior to your child's first day, the Child Care Administrative Office must receive a completed registration, registration fee, and the first month's payment. Depending upon the date of registration, you may also be charged a pro-rated fee for the month.
- Please be aware that online registration does not complete the registration process. You will immediately receive an email that your online registration was received. You must keep this for your records to verify the date of your registration.
    - After completing the online registration, the next step is to download the Required Forms for Admission. Go to: http://www.aacounty.org/departments/recreation-parks/child-care/forms-and-publications/.
    - Your child's enrollment will not be considered complete until all required forms and the fee have been received by the Child Care Division.

HOW TO REGISTER

- Registrations may be completed on-line at our website: www.aacounty.org/recparks > Child Care, in person at the Child Care Administrative Office, or mailed to:
    - Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks
      Child Care Division
      1 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Suite 105
      Annapolis, MD 21401
- **The center staff is not permitted to accept registrations.**
- **Do not include registrations with your monthly payment.**
- For additional information**,** contact the Child Care Administrative Office at: 410-222-7856 x0.

REQUIRED FORMS FOR ADMISSION

All SACC/MSTG Parents & Guardians are REQUIRED to provide their child's Forms for Admission (located at: http://www.aacounty.org/departments/recreation-parks/child-care/forms-and-publications/) prior to their child attending the child care program. Maryland child care regulations require us, as your child care provider, to maintain these required forms for your child while they are in attendance at our program. Please understand that your child(ren) will **NOT** be permitted to attend without this information on file at the child care center.

Required Forms for NEW Participants (first time in any of our child care programs):

- Emergency Form
- Health Inventory (completed by the parent/guardian and physician; Includes Blood Lead Testing for children living in at-risk zip codes)
- Immunization Certificate
- Acknowledgment of Policies form (A copy of our Parent's Manual can be found at www.aacounty.org/recparks > Child Care > Forms & Publications. You may review the Parent's Manual electronically prior to your child's first day of attendance. On your child's first day, the center staff will require the Acknowledgement of Policies form to be completed. Paper copies of the Parent's Manual are available upon request at your child's center or by contacting our Child Care Administrative Office.)
- Custody Orders *(as needed)*

Required Forms for RETURNING Participants:

- Emergency Form (the center staff will require this form to be renewed or updated at the close of the school year and/or at the center on your child's first day of attendance)
- Updated Immunization Certificate (only necessary if your child has received updated immunizations since their last Health Inventory with us and/or attends the Pre-K program)
- Acknowledgment of Policies form (A copy of our Parent's Manual can be found at www.aacounty.org/recparks > Child Care > Forms & Publications. You may review the Parent's Manual electronically prior to your child's first day of attendance. On your child's first day, the center staff will require the Acknowledgement of Policies form to be completed. Paper copies of the Parent's Manual are available upon request at your child's center or by contacting our Child Care Administrative Office.)
- Updated Custody Orders *(as needed)*

The following As Needed Medical Forms are also available for ALL Participants at our website. Medical Forms must be renewed on an annual basis (*as indicated by the expiration dates your health provider has noted on the forms)*:

- Acknowledgment of Allergies/Medical Conditions
  - REQUIRED if you/physician list an allergy/medical condition on your child's Emergency Form or Health Inventory but you are not providing us with any medication/treatment for the condition
- Allergy Action Plan
  - REQUIRED if your child is to receive an epi-pen or antihistamine during the child care program, in addition to the Medication Authorization form
- Asthma Action Plan
  - REQUIRED if your child is to receive an inhaler or nebulizer during the child care program, in addition to the Medication Authorization form
- Medication Authorization Form (MSDE OCC Form 1216)
  - REQUIRED if your child is taking a prescription OR non-prescription medication during the child care program
  - Please be aware that this form REQUIRES a physician's signature.
- Medication Authorization Addendum Form
  - REQUIRED if your child is taking any medications during the child care program
- Permission to Apply Over-the-Counter Creams & Ointments Form
  - REQUIRED if your child will be applying over the counter creams or ointments, such as sunscreen or lip moisturizers, during the child care program
- Seizure Medication Administration Authorization Form (MSDE OCC Form 1216A)
  - REQUIRED if your child is to receive seizure medication during the child care program

CUSTODY

- Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Park's School Age Child-Care is responsible for the safety of all the children at the center.
    - Parents who have court awarded custody of their child must have the custody papers, along with any updates, on file at the center. It is the parents' responsibility to provide this information to our staff.
    - Pre-K staff **must release** a child to his/her natural parent unless custody papers are on file stating otherwise.
    - Once the custody papers are on file, staff must follow those orders, until either the order has expired or new papers are on file. **Staff cannot accept verbal notification of changes**. Any and all changes MUST be submitted in writing and signed.

WAIT LIST

- Some of our locations may have a wait list prior to and/or during the school year. When an opening occurs the Child Care Administrative Office will contact the next person on the wait list and determine whether or not that person still needs the program.
- Please be aware that if your child is still on the wait list when registration opens for the following school year, you must **re-register** during the open registration period for the coming school year.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM

- We recognize that a family's needs may change during the course of the school year. **We require written notification to the Child Care Administrative Office that you will be withdrawing your child from the program.**
    - If you no longer require child care services, please visit our website at http://www.aacounty.org/RecParks > Child Care to submit a *Withdrawal Form*. You must log in to your account and select the "Manage Your Account" tab to access the link to the *Withdrawal Form*.
    - If you have already made payment and are requesting a refund the following must be adhered to:
        - If payment was made with a credit/debit card, your refund will be credited to the card used for payment**.**
        - If your payment was made with a check, money order, or cash, your refund will be a check mailed directly to you from the Anne Arundel County Office of Finance.
        - The new child registration fee of $25 is non-refundable.
        - A $25 processing fee for each payment transaction will be assessed.

SUMMER

- SACC also offers a summer program at selected elementary school locations for children entering Kindergarten. Locations and dates of operation are determined on an annual basis.
- A separate registration for the summer program is required.
- Information regarding the summer programs is distributed through the centers and schools starting in February.
- *A separate Summer SACC Information Packet that contains information that is unique to Summer SACC will be distributed to all parents on the first day of summer.*

REGISTRATION FOR UPCOMING (2017-2018) SCHOOL YEAR

- Re-registration information for the 2017-2018 school year will be made available to all parents of children who are currently registered via the e-mail address on file.

BILLING INFORMATION

ELECTRONIC STATEMENTS

- Please be aware that all communication from the Child Care Administrative Office will be automatically sent to the primary email address attached to your account. This includes, but is not limited to: the monthly newsletter, monthly billing statements, late payment notices, registration information, etc.
- If you would like to receive a paper billing statement, you may request this via e-mail at sacc@aacounty.org. If you do not have access to e-mail, please contact the Child Care Administrative Office at 410-222-7856 ext. 0 for further assistance.
    - You can also manage your account online by going to our website at www.aacounty.org/recparks>Child Care >Log in> Manage Your Account

FEES

- The fees for child care are established on a yearly basis and are determined by program costs. These program costs include the expenditures for staffing, administration, snacks, supplies, special events, and building usage.
- The annual expense is then divided into nine equal payments. There is no reduction in fees for months with a relatively few number of school days, just as there is no increase in fees for months with a greater number of days. There is no additional fee for the scheduled early dismissal days.
    - We cannot deduct days missed from your fee.
    - When you enroll in the program, you are reserving the time, space, staffing, and provisions whether or not your child attends.
- If you registered your child in the middle of the month, you will be billed for the pro-rated amount for the remainder of the month plus the coming month.
- The list of fees by center location is available on our website at www.aacounty.org/recparks.

MONTHLY PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- A monthly billing statement will be sent to the e-mail address on file. If you would prefer a paper bill, you must notify us in writing at sacc@aacounty.org. Payments are due by the 10th of each month with the first payment due July 10, 2016.
- Contact the Child Care Administrative Office at 410-222-7856, ext. 0 if you have any questions in regard to your billing statement.
- Payments are numbered one through nine and correspond to the months as follows:
    - Payment #1 due July 10th for August/September
    - Payment #2 due September 10th for October
    - Payment #3 due October 10th for November
    - Payment #4 due November 10th for December
    - Payment #5 due December 10th for January
    - Payment #6 due January 10th for February
    - Payment #7 due February 10th for March
    - Payment #8 due March 10th for April
    - Payment #9 due April 10th for May/June
- Please note that Payment #1 is for both August and September and Payment #9 is for both May and June.

EXPLANATION OF MONTHLY BILLING STATEMENT

- Previous Balance: Prior payments not received and posted to your account by the due date.
- Late Pick Up Fee: Charges for picking up your child(ren) after 6pm. The fee is $3 per minute, per family, per location.

- Late Payment Fee: Charges for payments not received and posted by the due date (a $25 fee will be assessed for any payment received after the 15th of each month).
- Current After School Fee: Charges for the next month of service.

EXPLANATION OF PAST DUE BILLING STATEMENT

- PM FEE: Payments that were not received by the due date for your session (by the 10th of the month for the coming month's service)
- LATE FEE: A $25 late fee is added to your account if payment is not received by the 15th of the month.
- LATE PICK UP FEE: Payments that were not received by the due date for picking up your child after 6pm.

PAYMENT METHODS

- Credit or Debit Card: Payments may be made online at http://www.aacounty.org/RecParks.
    - Click on "Child Care" (left side of menu)
    - Click on "Login to your Account" (gray button on right side of screen)
    - Enter email address and password
    - Click on "Submit"
    - Click on "Make Payment"
    - The minimum payment due has been pre-selected in grey. This amount is due or past due at this time. Additional boxes may be selected if you would like to pay in advance for additional months of service.
    - Click on "Process Payment"
    - Click on "Accept" or "Decline" credit card terms and conditions. If you click on "Decline" your credit card payment cannot be processed.
    - If you click "Accept" then follow the prompts for completing your credit card transaction.
    - If you encounter any problems with the above outlined process, please call the Child Care Administrative Office at 410-222-7856, ext. 0.
    - Please be aware that Anne Arundel County does not store credit card information. Therefore, you must enter your payment information for each online transaction.
- Check or Money Orders: Payments may be mailed directly to:
    - Anne Arundel County
Recreation and Parks Child Care
1 Harry Truman Parkway Suite 105
Annapolis, MD. 21401
    - If mailing, please **allow 10 business days** for your payment coupon to be received in the Child Care Administrative Office. Please contact our office at 410-222-7856 ext. 0 if you would like labels sent to you.
    - Make check or money order payable to ***Anne Arundel County***. **Be sure to add your child's name and child care center location to ensure your payment will be posted to your account in a timely manner.**
    - Mail the bottom portion of your billing statement with your payment. We need this to post your payment to your account.
- Auto Bill Pay: Set up through YOUR personal banking establishment. Please contact your personal banking establishment to set up automatic bill pay. Please **allow 10 business days** for processing, and make sure to add in the memo line your child's name, and the name of the center that he/she attends.
- In Person: Payments may also be made in person at the following Cashier's Office locations from 8am-4:30pm Monday-Friday (cashier office locations also follow the holiday schedule of Anne Arundel County Government):

- Arundel Center (downtown Annapolis, first floor): 44 Calvert St. Annapolis, MD. 21401
- Anne Arundel County Cashier's Office North (corner of MD 648/B&A Blvd., first floor): 101 Crain Highway Glen Burnie, MD. 21061
- Heritage Complex (first floor): 2664 Riva Road Annapolis, MD. 21401
- Cash payments will not be accepted at the Child Care Administrative Office. They MUST be made at a Cashier's Office. Do not place payments in the mailbox outside the Department of Recreation and Parks office. This will result in up to a 4-day delay in your payment being posted.

- **Payments are NOT accepted at the Child Care Center or accepted over the phone.**

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA)

- Flexible Spending Account forms can only be completed by the Child Care Administrative Office.
- Forms cannot be accepted or completed by center staff.
- Please scan and e-mail your form to sacc@aacounty.org, or fax to 410-222-4478.
- Please allow two (2) business days for processing.

RETURNED CHECK FEE

- There is a charge of $25 for each check or similar written instrument that is not paid in full by the financial institution on which it is drawn for a reason other than the fault or neglect of the County, when on first return "no funds", "payment stopped", or "account closed" is indicated, or when presented a second time for payment it is dishonored regardless of reason.
- The charge shall be imposed against the person presenting the check or instrument to the County.

DELINQUENT PAYMENTS

- Payments not received by the 15th of each month will be considered late and the following policy will be adhered to:
  - A late fee of $25 will be added to the monthly payment.
  - A late payment notice will be sent to the e-mail address on file and mailed to the address on file and the $25 will still apply.
  - If payment is not received in full (including any late fees or late pick-up fees) by the end of the month, it will be assumed that you want your child withdrawn from the program. Your child will be unable to attend the SACC/MSTG program on the 1st of the month, the wait list will be called, and your space may be given to someone else. If you wish to make payment after this has occurred, you will have to re-register for the program.
  - There will be **no** exceptions to this policy.
- You will be responsible for payment unless we receive a *Withdrawal Form* from you.
- If you attempt to continue to send your child after the 1st of the month (after you have been notified that payment has not been received), the following steps will be taken:
  - During the AM program: The Center Director/staff will not accept your child at the time of drop-off in the morning.
  - During the PM program: The Center Director/staff and/or Child Care Administrative Office will contact you for immediate pick-up from the SACC program. If you cannot be reached, all of the contacts you have listed on your *Emergency Form* will be contacted until someone can be reached to pick up your child.

SCHOOL YEAR REFUND POLICY

If you have already made payment and are requesting a refund, the following will be adhered to:

- A non-refundable $25 registration fee will be assessed for all children that are new to the program.
- A $25 processing fee for each payment transaction will be assessed on all refunds.

- No refunds will be processed until the Child Care Administrative Office receives your *Withdrawal Form*. If the *Withdrawal Form* is received after your child's last day of attendance, the refund will be processed from the date the Child Care Administrative Office receives the *Withdrawal Form*.

Allow 30 business days from the date of processing to receive the requested refund. Payments received via check, money order or cash will be processed as a check refund which will be mailed. Payments received via credit card will be processed as a credit to the card used for payment.

SUMMER REFUND POLICY

- *Specific information in regard to the Summer Refund Policy will be listed in the Summer SACC Information Packet.*

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Financial assistance for child care programs is available through the Purchase of Care voucher system, funded by the Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services.
    - Parents are responsible for payment unless an approved voucher has been submitted to the Child Care Administrative Office.
    - Parents are responsible for any co-pay and must complete the required Attendance Log.
    - For more information, please contact the Department of Social Services at 410-269-4500.
- Any other subsidy programs or third parties that parents wish to pay for their child's account must submit a formal letter of intent for payment.
    - Parents are responsible for obtaining and submitting this letter of intent *from the subsidy program or third party* that will be making the payment.
    - Parents are responsible for payment unless the letter of intent has been submitted to the Child Care Administrative Office.

ANNUAL TAX STATEMENTS

Annual tax statements are printed on the first business day on or after the fifth day of January. The tax statement will be sent to the address of record in mid-January of each year. Our Federal ID # is 52-6000878.

BILLING, REGISTRATION AND/OR RECORDS REQUESTS

- All requests for documents or information must be made in writing to the Child Care Administrative Office. You may fax your written request to 410-222-4478, or e-mail us at sacc@aacounty.org.
- Please be aware that requests for center documentation (such as daily attendance sheets from our centers) require specific written notice, and must be requested by the legal guardian of record. Once your written request is received, a member of the Child Care Administrative Office will contact you to discuss.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The Pre-K program operates Monday through Friday, every day that schools are in session for students.

- The 2016-2017 school year Pre-K program at the South County Recreation Center operates from 9:00am until 3:00pm.
- There will be no Pre-K on days when Anne Arundel County Public Schools are closed for students. Visit www.aacps.org > School Calendar to view days schools are closed for the coming year.

PROGRAM CONTENT

- Although there are separate locations for our programs, the staff will have consistent rules, regulations, and policies in place that are in accordance with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Office of Child Care (OCC) regulations. The specific content of each program will be based on guidelines established by the Department of Recreation and Parks.
- There will be a minimum and maximum amount of children attending at each site. This maximum is based upon the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care (MSDE-OCC) regulations including square footage, staff availability, the availability of space in the facility, and the availability of restroom facilities.

STAFF

- Each program will have the appropriate number of staff for the number of children registered. Each position meets or exceeds the minimum requirements as established by the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care (MSDE-OCC). This includes a criminal background investigation. All Anne Arundel County employees are also required to successfully complete pre-employment drug testing, and are subject to random testing thereafter.
- Staff members trained in CPR and First Aid, as required by MSDE-OCC, will be on duty at all times.
- There will also be staff available that is trained in Medication Administration and Behavior Management.
- All staff is required to maintain the certification for their position and obtain a minimum of 6-12 hours of continuing education (dependent upon position) per school year.
- On occasion, centers may also utilize volunteers or Professional Educators (i.e. teachers that provide additional educational enrichments). Both volunteers and Professional Educators must also meet or exceed the minimum requirements as established by the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care (MSDE-OCC).

BASIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- The program welcomes children of all abilities, and strives to reflect the interests, primary language and cultural backgrounds of the children in our care.
- The program will include opportunities for individual and group participation while providing a balance between self-selected and staff-directed activities. All of our Child Care programs are licensed child care centers through the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care (MSDE-OCC). We are proud to offer a variety of enriching opportunities that reflect our philosophy of *"Education Through Recreation".*

- ***Curriculum***
    - Each of our Pre-K programs utilizes the MSDE-OCC approved Starfall Curriculum. The Starfall Curriculum strives to "Give children a love of learning and a running start in kindergarten with the Starfall Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum. This exciting program integrates math, science, health, creative arts, social studies, physical movement, early

literacy, and social-emotional development, all under a framework of guided instruction and imaginative play." For more information, check out their website at http://more.starfall.com/info/curriculum/pre-k.php.

- Each month, your Center Director will also plan weekly themes and activities that reflect and incorporate the monthly themes that align with the Starfall Curriculum.

- ***Activity Stations***
  - Your child will be offered a rotation of the following *"free play"* activity stations on a weekly basis. These stations give your child an opportunity to explore different materials & learn through play with their peers:
    - *Arts and Crafts Station(s)*
      - There will be opportunities for self-directed and staff-directed arts and crafts
    - *Engineering Station(s)*
      - This station includes such things as legos, kinex, blocks, gears, etc. and encourages building, construction, engineering abilities, and fine motor skills.
    - *Literacy & Language Station*
      - This station includes a library of books, writing materials, language resources, etc.
    - *Science & Math Station*
      - This station includes materials that encourage children to explore math and science concepts and resources, and critical thinking skills.
    - *Other Stations*
      - Depending upon the interests of the children at their site, and the space available, Center Directors may also offer a variety of other stations, such as: Computers/Electronic Games, Drama, Dress-Up, Geography, Health & Wellness, Housekeeping, Music, Movement, Sewing, etc.

- ***Nutrition and Wellness***
  - Snacks will be provided daily during the Pre-K program. Please review the *Daily Schedule* & *Curriculum Calendar* posted in your center's Parent Information Center for times when snack is served, and the planned menu. Please be aware that the menu is subject to change. The center staff will note any changes on the posted menu as they occur.
  - All of the centers follow the basic guideline of 10/10/200 for snacks. A snack cannot exceed 10 grams of fat, 10 grams of sugar and no more than 200 calories (does not include beverage).
  - Please be aware that centers are permitted to exceed the 10/10/200 rule for one special celebration day per month.
  - All of the centers are also required to offer fruits/vegetables & whole grains as a part of their snack menu.
  - Water is highly encouraged as the drink at snack time to keep children hydrated, but 100% juice or 1% milk may also be offered.
  - If your child indicates they do not like the snack offered, an alternate snack (such as saltines, graham crackers, etc.) will be made available to them.
  - At the South County Rec Center Pre-K program, students must bring their own lunches. 1% milk will be offered by center staff as a drink. Please write your child's name on the lunchbox and any interior containers that you use. Please pack your child's lunch in containers that he/she can open. Unfortunately, we cannot warm food. We will send home uneaten food so that you may gauge the amount of food your child eats and make the appropriate adjustments. We emphasize to children the importance of not wasting food.

- **Children are not permitted to consume food/meals brought in from outside of the center at snack time unless it is medically necessary (with a doctor's note) or for religious purposes. *This includes food purchased and/or prepared by parents for special events, such as birthday celebrations.***

- ***Physical Fitness***
  - The program will also include opportunities for your child to play organized group games.
  - Children will play outdoors each day except during inclement weather, so your child must wear appropriate clothing and shoes for outside activities (or gym).
  - Please note that shorts/pants and tennis shoes are preferred attire, rather than skirts and flip-flops/sandals/crocs; and **children's participation in certain activities may be limited based upon their attire for their safety**.
  - Parental requests for outdoor restrictions must be submitted to the Child Care Administrative Office for review. Additional documentation may be requested, based on the restriction request.

- ***Additional Opportunities***
  - *Community Service Projects*
    - Opportunities are given throughout the school year in which children can participate in service to their community. Your Center Director will provide more information for your individual center's selected projects.
  - *Take 25 Program*
    - In conjunction with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, SACC participates in the Take 25 safety initiative each May.
    - The Take 25 Campaign encourages parents, guardians, educators and others to take 25 minutes to talk to children about safety.
  - *Special Events/Speakers*

- ***Developmental Assessments***
  - In our full-day Pre-K programs, each child will be evaluated developmentally by our staff each school year. This is a requirement of the Maryland State Department of Education's Office of Child Care of all licensed Pre-K programs in the state.
  - We will be utilizing the MSDE-OCC approved "Ages & Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (ASQ-3)" which "pinpoints developmental progress in children between the ages of one month to 5 ½ years. Its success lies in its parent-centric approach and inherent ease-of-use – a combination that has made it the most widely used developmental screener across the globe."
  - The Center Director will notify you with a copy of your child's results.

- ***Family Communication & Participation***
  - <u>August/September Parent Orientation</u>
  - <u>December/January Annual Parent Survey</u> – We highly encourage parents to complete our Annual Survey upon receipt. These are carefully reviewed each and every year, and utilized to make program improvements!
  - <u>Parent Events</u> planned by the Center Director at each center
  - <u>Monthly Parent Newsletter</u> sent to the e-mail address on file
  - <u>Parent Information Center</u> available at every center
  - <u>Parent Conferences</u> – Center Directors (and/or the Child Care Administrative Office) will contact you if they feel there is an immediate need for a parent conference. Otherwise, Center Directors will also present an opportunity twice a year for parents to choose to sign

up for a conference to chat about their child with the Center Director. The sign-up sheet will be made available in your center's Parent Information Center in November and March.
    - Mailboxes – At the South County Rec Center Pre-K program, there will also be "mailboxes" set up for each child so there can be two-way communication between the center and home. We believe this is of the utmost importance for your child's growth and development, so please check your child's mailbox daily for important information. Unfortunately, teachers cannot always confer at length at the beginning or end of the day beyond a quick message. We encourage you to make an appointment if you would like to speak with a staff member at length.
    - Also, at the South County Rec Center Pre-K program, there may be opportunities throughout the school year for parental help during classroom activities. These occasions will be announced ahead of time and noted in your child's mailbox.
    - Parents are *always* welcome to share their comments, concerns, send congratulations, or request a conference by speaking with your Center Director, via our e-mail address at sacc@aacounty.org, or by contacting the Child Care Administrative Office

- ***Child Personal Property Policy***
    - Children **are not permitted** to bring toys, games, collectible cards, electronics, CD's, CD players, Game Boys, Tablets, I-Pods, MP3 Players, etc. from home to the center.
    - On special occasions, your child's individual center *may* utilize a *Toy From Home Permission Slip* in order for your child to bring a special toy. The form must be completed in advance for your child to participate.
    - The SACC/MSTG program is not responsible for money, cell phones, or other personal items your child may bring to the program.
    - Children may not use, activate, or display their cell phone during SACC/MSTG hours unless previously approved by the Child Care Administrative Office. Parental requests may be submitted to sacc@aacounty.org for review by the area supervisor.

- ***Pet Policy***
    - You may not bring your family pet to visit the center when picking up your child.
    - Some centers have implemented a "Class Pet" *(typically fish)* as part of their Science Station at the center and/or may schedule an enrichment – such as ZooMobile – that includes animals. If your child has pet allergies, please alert the center staff so we may take the appropriate precautions.

- ***Anne Arundel County Facility Non-Smoking Policy***
    - Please be aware there is no smoking allowed on facility grounds or in/around the child care centers.

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

- **Parents must go into the building to sign their child in for the morning program and out at the time of pick up each afternoon.**
    - For your child's safety, children are NOT permitted to sign themselves in and out of the program for any reason.
- Children will be released only to the individuals (13 years and older) authorized to pick up the child.
    - No child will be released to a person other than the authorized individual without prior written permission from the child's parent or guardian. This policy must be strictly adhered to for the protection and safety of your child.
    - Please be advised that any person unknown to the staff will be asked to provide a photo ID before your child is released to their care.

    - Notify the SACC/MSTG staff of any changes in pick up schedules by completing the *Change in Child's PM Attendance* form.
- SACC staff will not accept children into the morning program if the building is inaccessible, utilities not available, etc. Parents may be requested to stay with their child until building access status is determined.
- **Please make sure that the information on your *Emergency Form* is kept current.**

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL AT THE SOUTH COUNTY REC CENTER

- Only one of our two parking lot gates is open during arrivals and departures. Please use caution when entering, leaving, and while in the parking lot as we share parking spaces with participants of programs in the other building.
- For your child's safety, keep control of your child by securely holding his or her hand on your walk from the car to our center door. Please do not allow your child to travel through the parking lot unescorted at any time!
- A "safety zone" bordered with orange cones will be in effect in the parking lot adjacent to our building during center hours. Do not drive or park in this area.
- We cannot allow children to enter the building prior to their registered time in our programs as the center staff are busy preparing for the day.
- Make every effort to arrive for your child's registered program (9:00 AM) on time. Late arrivals miss important information and can disrupt the class.
- Please encourage your child to walk with his/her own backpack or tote bag. This helps him/her feel like a preschool "big kid". If your child uses an umbrella, we ask that you take it back to your vehicle with you when your child enters the school.
- A quick and confident "kiss-and-go" method of leaving your child is the best transition between parent time and center time. Lengthy goodbyes only serve to heighten your child's anxiety about separating with you and make it more difficult for them to start their day with us.
- Pick-up time for our non-extended care students is from 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM. The children will be participating in some social skill building in activity stations during this time, so it will not disrupt class time to pick them up starting at 2:00 PM.
- The garden area in front of our child care center building is known as "Brad's Garden" in honor of one of our past participants. Please encourage your child to treat it with respect.

ATTENDANCE

- The Center Director at each child care location is responsible for maintaining an accurate attendance record for the children.
- MSDE-OCC regulations mandate that children who are absent from the program due to illness for three (3) days or more must have a written statement from a parent or physician that the child may return to a regular schedule.

LATE PICK-UP OF CHILDREN

- **<u>The Pre-K program at South County Recreation Center closes promptly at 3:00pm.</u>**
- **The center clock is the official time**.
    - A late pick up fee will be assessed at the rate of $3.00 **for every minute after 3:00 PM.**
    - The staff person on duty will have the individual picking up the child sign a *Late Pick Up* form.
    - That form will be submitted to the Child Care Administrative Office and you will be billed from the office on the following monthly billing statement.
    - Center staff is not permitted to accept late pick up fees.
- **Recurring lateness offenses in one school year will result in suspension/dismissal from the program. You will be notified by the center staff/supervisor if your next late pick up will**

result in the suspension of your child. If your child is suspended, the suspension will take place the next day that school is in session for students. Therefore, please make other emergency arrangements in the event you will be delayed.

- You are still responsible for the late pick up charges if you arrive after 3:00 PM (even if you called the center to inform them that you would be late).
- If your child is not picked up by 3:30 PM the staff will contact the appropriate agency that will then take the required action.
- See **Inclement Weather and Emergency Closings** section for further information regarding Late Pick-Up fees/consequences in those situations.

TRANSPORTATION

- ***Under no circumstances is staff permitted to provide transportation to or from a program for unrelated participants.***
- Parents need to make alternative arrangements in the event they will not be able to pick up their child.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

- All Child Care Division programs follow the school calendar for openings and closures. Visit the Anne Arundel County Board of Education's website for the most up-to-date school calendar: www.aacps.org > School Calendar.
- ***SCHEDULED EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS***: The Anne Arundel County Public Schools schedule several days each year for early dismissal for students into the school calendar. On these days the Pre-K program will remain open at its normal times.
- ***SCHEDULED SCHOOL HOLIDAYS***: There will be **NO** MSDE-OCC licensed Department of Recreation & Parks Child Care programs available on school holidays.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

- Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks Pre-K programs follow the policies and schedule of the Anne Arundel County Public School System.
    - Please tune to local radio stations if you have a question about the closing or opening of schools.
    - Parents may also call the Board of Education's Cancellation Hotline at 1-800-893-7080, check their website at aacps.org or check our website at aacounty.org/recparks.
    - Parents are encouraged to subscribe for our Text Message Alert System in order to be notified of Emergency Closings. The link to register is available on our website in the quick link box.
        - On **August 10th** each year, the Text Message Alert System is **purged** of names and phone numbers from the previous year.
        - **After August 10th** each year, you will need to **re-register** your information in order to continue receiving text message alerts. You will receive a reminder via text message that the system is about to be purged.
        - Parents will be responsible for all text charges from their mobile phone carrier.
- ***EMERGENCY CLOSINGS FOR THE ENTIRE DAY:*** There will be **NO** Pre-K program in the event schools are closed for the day. Emergency closings are typically determined by the Board of Education and may be related to inclement weather, or other emergency situation. The Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks will make facility-related emergency closings decisions on behalf of the South County Recreation Center (in the case of mechanical malfunction, power failure, etc.).
- ***LATE OPENINGS:*** If schools open late, the Pre-K program will open an equivalent number of hours late. *(For example, if schools open 2 hours late, the program will begin at 11:00 AM)* The

rest of the day's program will operate as usual unless weather conditions deteriorate and the snow emergency plan goes into effect necessitating early dismissal.

- ***EARLY DISMISSALS DUE TO EMERGENCY CLOSINGS:*** In the event of an early emergency school closing (due to weather, mechanical malfunction or other emergency situation) the Pre-K program will close at 2:00 PM.
    - **Parents need to make alternative child care arrangements in advance to cover emergencies. Late pick-up fees will apply after 2:00pm.**
- ***REGULAR DISMISSAL TIME DURING EMERGENCY:*** If schools dismiss at their regular time during an emergency (due to weather, mechanical malfunction, or other emergency situation) the Pre-K program will remain open. Depending on the situation parents may be notified requesting an earlier pick up of your child. Please ensure that the center has a phone number where you can be reached in an emergency.
- ***AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELLED:*** Please be aware that if Anne Arundel County Public Schools announce that "Afterschool Activities are Cancelled", the Pre-K program is unaffected.
- ***UNUSUAL EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES:*** The Child Care Division reserves the right to close child care programs independently of an AACPS decision in the event of an unusual emergency or large-scale weather event for the safety of staff, participants, and families.
- Please listen to the radio, television, or check the following: www.aacounty.org/recparks or www.aacps.org to get updated information of closings.
- Please be aware that the Child Care Administrative Office follows the holidays, service reduction days, and emergency closings schedule of Anne Arundel County Government.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- It is essential that all emergency telephone numbers and change of address be **kept current**.
    - **Parents are responsible for this information, which is pertinent to the protection of their child.**
    - You must inform the Child Care Administrative Office and the Center Director of any changes. *Change of Information* forms are available at the center for your convenience. Your on-line registration account information also needs to be updated at our website. Go to www.aacounty.org/recparks >Child Care > Manage Your Account.
- Please also make sure the emergency numbers of your other authorized individuals are accurate in case they need to be contacted.
    - If your child is not picked up by **3:00 PM** the Center Director will begin calling the persons listed as emergency contacts. **Individuals listed as emergency contacts must be willing to pick up the child and be within 15 minutes of the center.**
    - If the staff has been unsuccessful in personally speaking with an emergency contact and your child has not been picked up by 3:30 PM, the staff will then contact the appropriate agency. That agency will then take the required action.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

- Center staff receives Emergency Preparedness training along with a manual that outlines the steps to be followed in various emergency situations.
- Each center also has a designated nearby location in the event a center is required to be evacuated. The location is posted at the Parent Information Center.
- The centers will practice monthly fire drills. To maintain consistency with the children for the future, the Pre-K program will follow the same emergency code terminology as the Board of Education.
- Please be aware that the MSDE Office of Child Care also requires full-fledged emergency code drills of all Maryland child care centers twice per year (as of 07/01/10).

- Each individual child care center will notify parents in advance of the date and time of the drill. Parents that do not wish their child(ren) to participate in the following drills must provide alternative child care arrangements for the day.
    - Emergency Evacuation Drill – Staff will practice evacuating the children to their meeting location outside the building on school grounds.
    - Shelter-in-Place Drill – Staff will evacuate children to their designated shelter-in-place location within the school building.

- If you should arrive to pick-up your child in the midst of a drill, please allow the staff time to account for all of the children prior to signing your child out for the day.
- If there is an actual emergency occurring in the area, the school and/or center may be required to go into "Shelter in Place" or "Lockdown" mode. If this is the case, staff will attempt to communicate this to parents by placing a sign on the parent door (if the emergency situation allows staff the ability to do so). Please be aware that you may not be able to gain entry to the building during these types of situations as staff may be unable to answer the door. For your own safety, please seek shelter. Staff will communicate the "All Clear" and release your child to you as soon as it is safe to do so.

ILLNESS

- Children who are ill are not permitted to attend the program.
- In the event your child becomes ill during our program, every attempt will be made to contact you or the person listed as the emergency contact. Until picked up, your child will be kept away from the other children.
- Children with special medical needs must have a plan (i.e. *Asthma Action Plan*, *Allergy Action Plan*) on file with the Center Director.
- The Health Department requires that you notify the child care staff in the event your child contracts a communicable disease. Please refer to www.aahealth.org/physicianslink/communicablereportable.asp for details. Some examples for notification are conjunctivitis, impetigo, or ringworm. The child care staff is likewise responsible to report certain outbreaks to the Health Department. Some examples of reportable outbreaks include encephalitis, rabies, or West Nile virus.
- MSDE-OCC regulations mandate that children who are absent from the program due to illness for three (3) days or more must have a written statement from a parent or physician that the child may return to a regular schedule.
- If your child repeatedly displays symptoms that prevent him/her from participating in program activities or if, in the opinion of the Center Director, your child may be contagious to others, your child may be excluded from the program and a doctor's note may be requested before he/she may return to the program.
- If a staff member contacts you to inform you that your child is ill and that your child must be picked up, you must make arrangements for your child to be picked up from the Center in a timely manner.

INJURY

- The staff is required to complete a *First Aid and Accident Report* in the event a child is injured. Parents will receive a copy of this report.
- You will be contacted by phone if your child sustains any type of injury requiring possible additional **medical** attention during our program.
- A parent must be available in case of emergency.
- In the event of a serious injury, 911 will be called and then parents or other authorized individuals will be contacted.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

The Department of Recreation & Parks is committed to your child's safety. Since your child will be involved in active play & health, fitness, sports & game activities as a part of any of our Child Care programs, we want you to be informed of the signs & symptoms of a concussion. It is a Departmental requirement that this be provided to all parents participating in Recreation & Parks programming.

- **What is a concussion?** A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even what seems to be a mild blow to the head can be serious.
- **What are some warning signs of a concussion?** – For Immediate Action, call 911.

Signs Observed by a Parent/Guardian	Signs Reported by the Participant/Child
• Appears dazed or stunned • Is confused about assignment or position • Forgets sports plays/activities • Moves clumsily • Answers questions slowly • Loses consciousness (even briefly) • Shows behavior or personality changes • Can't recall events prior to hit or fall • Can't recall events after hit or fall	• Headache or "pressure" in the head • Nausea or vomiting • Balance problems or dizziness • Double or blurry vision • Sensitivity to light • Sensitivity to noise • Feeling sluggish, hazy, or groggy • Concentration or memory problems • Confusion • Does not "feel right"

- **What should you do if you think a concussion has occurred?**
  1. **Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe to return to play.
  2. **Keep your child out of play/activity until medically cleared.** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play/activity until a health care professional says it's okay. Children, who return to play/activity too soon, while the brain is still healing, risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
  3. **Inform all coaches/instructors/staff members about any recent concussions.** Coaches/Instructors/Staff should know if your child has a recent concussion. Your child's coach/instructor/staff member may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell them.
  4. **Helping your child return to sports/activities safely after a concussion.** As your child's symptoms decrease, the extra help or support can be removed gradually. Children and teens who return to activities after a concussion may need to: 1) Take rest breaks as needed, 2) Spend fewer hours at activities, and 3) If in doubt, sit it out!

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- The Pre-K program strives to meet the needs of every child enrolled in our program.
- In order to assist us in meeting your child's needs, it is vitally important that you complete the registration form in as much detail as possible. The responses that you provide will assist us in meeting your child's needs.
  - An American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation request requires a two-week prior notification.
  - The parent/guardian must participate in a conference with the Child Care Administrative Office before your child can attend the program. Please utilize this conference as an opportunity to share with us your child's IEP, 504 Plan, or any other specialized education plan you may have on file for them. With your written permission, we are also able to

speak with early intervention, special education, or other outside agencies in order to meet your child's needs in our program.

- Please be aware that if the Child Care Administrative Office is not notified in advance, your child's start date may be delayed until a conference can be held.

MEDICATION

- A *Medication Authorization Form (OCC 1216) and Medication Authorization Addendum* with a current photograph must be completed and submitted to the Center Director prior to any medication being administered at SACC/MSTG programs. The first dose must be administered at home prior to SACC/MSTG administering the medication.
- Please be aware that the County assumes no liability and the parent(s), on behalf of themselves and their minor child, hereby holds the County harmless and waives any and all claims for personal injury to the minor child as the result of the application/administration or failure to apply/administer any ointment/medication for the minor child by any County employee or volunteer.
    - *Medication Authorization Form* (*MSDE OCC Form 1216*) – Prescription or Non-Prescription Medication:
        - Both prescription & non-prescription medications require parent/guardian signature and a health practitioner's signature
        - A pharmacy label must accompany any prescription medication and match the form exactly.
        - **All prescription medications must be in the original pharmacy labeled container**. Medication shall be administered according to this label or a licensed health care practitioner's written instructions, whichever are more recently dated.
        - Medication must be received from a parent or adult (18 years or older). Children may not carry medication to SACC/MSTG.
        - Please check the expiration date of medications prior to giving to the staff.
    - Staff will not accept forms that have been obviously altered (i.e. White Out used) or are incomplete.
    - If the center staff has any doubts or the forms are incomplete the medication will not be given**.**
- There are several additional as needed medical forms available at our website (see "Required Forms for Admission" section for a full listing):
    - *Permission to Apply Over-the-Counter Creams and Ointments*
        - If child will be applying over-the-counter creams and ointments, i.e. sunscreen, lip balm and other external preventive applications.
        - Siblings may not share sunscreen, chapstick, and other external applications.
        - Requires parent/guardian signature.
    - *Allergy Action Plan* provided by Health Practitioner
        - If child is to receive an Epi-pen or antihistamine.
        - Requires parent/guardian **AND** Health Practitioner's signature.
    - *Asthma Action Plan (DHMH Form 4643)* provided
        - Completed by the parent /guardian if child requires an as needed inhaler or nebulizer.
    - *Acknowledgment of Allergies/Medications* form
        - If your child has a life threatening medical condition, and the necessary intervention and/or medication is not provided to the SACC/MSTG program, your child may be removed from the program until the requirements are met. If you do not intend to supply an epi-pen or inhaler for the SACC/MSTG program, **you must sign** the *Acknowledgment of Allergies/Medications* form. We cannot share medications with the school or accept expired medication.

- Pre-K staff may not be involved in the use of g-tubes, catherizations, or the administration of medications that require mixing/measuring/drawing up by center staff in any way. This may not be delegated by the Child Care Health Consultant and cannot be administered by the Pre-K staff. If a child cannot administer this type of medication for themselves, then a parent or their designee must administer similar-type medication in Pre-K as required on a daily or as needed basis.
- **The parent must pick up medications that have been discontinued immediately. When your child has been withdrawn from the program all medications must be picked up**. Following their MSDE-OCC Medication Administration training, the staff is required to properly dispose of any medications not picked up.
- Likewise, all medications must be picked up on the last day of preschool.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

- The program staff utilizes positive behavior techniques to eliminate or prevent inappropriate behavior. Anne Arundel County Government has also adopted the *Kids At Hope* program for all county-run agencies.
- The goal of the Child Care Division's Behavior Management Program has always been to help each child grow in the direction of self-reliance, self-control and self-worth, so that each child is confident that he/she is in control of their own behavior and feels that they are an important member of his/her community. Likewise, Kids at Hope is a "strategic, cultural framework designed to engage entire communities to support success for all children, no exceptions". Center Directors will include the following pledges as part of their daily schedule. As with many of our program components, children will have the choice to participate in the following sayings daily:
    - **Children's Pledge**
      "I am a Kid at Hope. I am talented, smart and capable of success. I have dreams for the future, and I will climb to reach those goals and dreams every day."
    - **Treasure Hunter's Pledge** (the staff respond to the children)
      "As an adult and a Treasure Hunter I am committed to search for all the talents, skills and intelligence that exist in all children and youth. I believe that all children are capable of success… no exceptions!"
- Children are taught to use reflection and problem solving. Staff reminds children to make good choices and discusses these choices with the child. Each center also incorporates a positive behavior management program into their daily routine.
- Under no circumstances should a parent attempt to discipline a child other than their own during the SACC/MSTG program. <u>The center staff will carry out all discipline and all concerns should be brought to the attention of the Center Director</u>.
- Parents are not permitted to have physical contact with children other than their own.
- While we do allow parents to come into the center to pick up or drop off their children, and to on occasion observe the activities in the center, it is the role of our staff (rather than parents) to direct the activities of the center and to address the needs of children attending the program.

STUDENT ATTIRE

- To prepare your child for school, the Pre-K program also observes and heed the Student Attire policy listed within the Student Code of Conduct for Anne Arundel County Public Schools:
    - "Students are to dress in clothes that promote a safe and respectful learning environment. Clothes that create a disruptive environment or cause a health or safety hazard are not appropriate and not acceptable at school."
    - "Headwear: Only for health, safety or religious reasons"
    - "Shoes: No bare feet"
    - "Clothing:
        - Cannot show profanity, obscenity, violence or symbols of hate

        - Cannot promote alcohol, tobacco or drugs
        - Cannot promote gang colors or gang-related signs
        - Cannot show underwear
        - Cannot show bare skin between upper chest and mid-thigh"
- Further, the SACC/SACC Pre-K/MSTG programs are recreationally-oriented and require shoes secured at the heel in order to participate in organized gym/outdoor games, and on the playground equipment. (Preferred Attire = Pants/Shorts & Sneakers)
- Children must also be appropriately dressed for the weather. Maryland child care regulations require child care facilities to utilize outdoor play areas even during colder weather. Your child must be sent with a coat, hat and gloves as necessary.
- For the South County Rec Center Pre-K program, we also suggest packing a sweater or sweatshirt in your child's backpack/tote bag in case he/she gets chilly in our classroom. Furthermore, if your child wears boots to school because of inclement weather, please pack a pair of tennis/athletic shoes in his/her backpack to change into during center hours.
- If, in the opinion of the Center Director or designee, the child is not appropriately attired, the parent/guardian will be notified. ***Please be aware that your child's attire may limit their participation in certain activities (i.e. gym/outdoor time).***

EXPECTATIONS OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN CHILD CARE

- Every child has the opportunity to be successful in the Pre-K program with the safety of all of the children and staff being our primary concern. However, we also recognize that the Pre-K program may not always be the appropriate environment for your child. It is important for parents to recognize that the size or type of the individual Pre-K program may not always be the appropriate environment for your child's needs.
- The following list of expectations is not an all-inclusive listing. There may be some additional site-specific expectations:
    - **Engage in appropriate group interaction**
        Respect self, others, body, space and personal belongings
        No biting, hitting, pushing, kicking, or other rough contact
        No bullying (including cyber bullying)
        No spitting
        Share
        Be cooperative
        Take turns
        Use language that is appropriate for a child care center
    - **Stay within the designated area or where directed by staff. For example in the multi-purpose room, outdoor play area, etc.**
    - **Follow the schedule and participate in daily activities**
    - **Function without disruptive behavior in a supervised environment of 1 staff to 10 children**
    - **Comply with staff requests and instructions**

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CHILDREN

- Accommodations can be made to meet the needs of an individual child in many cases, however, all children will be required to meet these standards and refrain from behaviors that threaten the safety of themselves, other children or staff members.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

- It is hoped that the positive behavior program will eliminate or prevent inappropriate behavior, but some inappropriate behavior may still be displayed. As stated before, staff remind children to make good choices, and may use one or more of the following consequences for

inappropriate behavior: Take 5 (time-out), loss of activity, redirection, Take 5 plus (longer time-out), peace table, problem solving session, etc.

- **The steps in the procedures below may not occur in the sequence listed depending on the nature of the behavior.**
- When inappropriate behavior occurs, the following procedures will be implemented:
    1. The staff will attempt to redirect the child. Additionally, the behavior will be documented and the parents or legal guardian will be notified of the issue. If the behavior involves intentionally harming another child, staff member, or threatens the safety of the child/staff, the parent/guardian will be verbally notified on the day of the issue. The written documentation will follow no later than 3 school days after the verbal notification. **If in the opinion of the Center Director, a child's behavior compromises the safety/well-being of themselves or others, immediate suspension or dismissal from the program may result.**
    2. If the behavior occurs again, it will be documented and the parents or legal guardian will be notified of the issue. If the behavior involves intentionally harming another child, staff member, or threatens the safety of the child/staff, the parent/guardian will be verbally notified on the day of the issue. The written documentation will follow no later than 3 school days after the verbal notification. **If in the opinion of the Center Director, a child's behavior compromises the safety/well-being of themselves or others, immediate suspension or dismissal from the program may result.**
    3. If the problem persists a parent conference will be scheduled between the parents/guardian and Center Director. Depending on the circumstances the child may be suspended until the conference is held and a plan is in place.
    4. If the problem has not been resolved following the conference, and the child is suspended, the following must take place before the child can return to the center: 1) a plan must be developed and in place and 2) a re-entry conference must take place with the child, parents, Center Director and/or Child Care Program Specialist.
    5. If the problem persists following a suspension, dismissal from the program may result.
    6. If in the opinion of the Center Director, a child's behavior (this may include failure to comply with staff requests and instructions) presents a physical danger to themselves or others, immediate suspension or dismissal from the program may result.
    7. If the child is dismissed for the balance of the school year the parent must schedule a re-entry conference with the Child Care Program Specialist (the Center Director's supervisor) before the child can return to the program in the future.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

- Communication between parents and the center staff is a key ingredient to the success of our programs. This is accomplished through regular communication with the parents and parental participation in scheduled events. See the *Family Communication & Participation* section of this manual for a full listing of the many wonderful opportunities available to families to participate in our programs throughout the year.
- Parents can always contact the Child Care Administrative Office by emailing us at sacc@aacounty.org with concerns and suggestions. Suggestion forms are also available at each center for parents to utilize in expressing their concerns.
- Please feel free to contact the Child Care Administrative Office or the Center Director on site if you need to share additional information concerning your child. Parents are requested <u>not to contact their child by telephone at the center unless it is an emergency situation</u>.

PARENTS' EXPECTATIONS

- Parental involvement is an integral component of your child having a successful experience in the Child Care program.

- We plan to meet these goals in the Pre-K program through:
    - *Quality, safe care of the children*
    - *Service of value and consistency*
    - *Courteous and professional treatment at all times*
    - *Honest information for parents pertaining to their child*
    - *Fostering positive peer and child/staff relationships to create an atmosphere that children enjoy*
- *PARENTS MAY*:
    - Visit the center at any time, and receive a copy of all documents signed
    - Request accommodations on behalf of their child and work with staff to obtain the best results in meeting their child's needs
- *PARENTS MUST*:
    - Be courteous and respectful to center & administrative office staff, and children
        - Parent's unreasonable treatment of the staff/children, including inappropriate airing of complaints, use of language that is inappropriate for Pre-K, and/or intimidation (physical or verbal) of the staff may result in their child being dismissed from the program
    - Make their own arrangements for the pick-up and drop-off of their children. Under no circumstances is staff permitted to provide transportation to or from a program for unrelated participants.
    - Keep current all phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and health information
- *PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO:*
    - Reinforce the rules of Pre-K at home
    - Communicate concerns or problems to staff as early as possible
    - Inform staff of any changes that might affect their child's participation in the Pre-K program

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The following is a list of resources that we are aware of that parents have available to them in the community. *The Child Care Division is not responsible for the recommendations or information given by any of the below agencies.* We are providing the below as a resource for our families:

• Anne Arundel County Board of Education	410-222-5000
• Anne Arundel County Child Care Center Association	410-760-2024
• Anne Arundel County Child Find (ages 3-5)	410-766-6662
• Anne Arundel County Child Protective Services	410-421-8400
• Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation & Parks Recreation Division – School Break Fun Days, Summer Fun/Camps	410-222-7313
• Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation & Parks School Age Child Care Division (SACC, MSTG & Summer SACC)	410-222-7856
• Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services	410-269-4500
• Anne Arundel County Infants and Toddlers Program (birth-age 3)	410-222-6911
• Anne Arundel County Network of Care for Children & Families	1-800-485-0041
• Anne Arundel County Public Library (www.aacpl.net)	410-222-7371
• Anne Arundel County TOT's Line (Advice Line)	1-877-817-8687
• Arundel Child Care Connections Office	410-222-1712
• The Caring Connection	1-888-817-8687
• CHAMPS Program (Early Child Behavior Specialist)	410-222-1715
• Child Care Referral Service	1-877-261-0060
• LOCATE: Child Care (Child Care Referral Service for parents)	410-222-1728
• Maryland Children Health Program	1-800-456-8900
• MSDE-Office of Child Care (Region I – Annapolis)	410-573-9522
• The Abilities Network: Project ACT	410-828-7700
• The Planning Council (USDA Child Food Program)	1-800-477-3993

For questions, concerns or to file a complaint contact your regional office

Anne Arundel	410-573-9522
Baltimore City	410-554-8315
Baltimore County	410-583-6200
Prince George's	301-333-6940
Montgomery	240-314-1400
Howard	410-750-8770
Western Maryland, Allegany, Garrett & Washington	301-791-4585
Upper Shore, Kent, Dorchester, Talbot, Queen Anne's & Caroline	410-819-5801
Lower Shore, Wicomico, Somerset & Worchester	410-713-3430
Southern Maryland, Calvert, Charles & St. Mary's	301-475-3770
Harford & Cecil	410-569-2879
Frederick	301-696-9766
Carroll	410-549-6489

The OCC Regional Office will investigate your complaint to determine if child care licensing regulations have been violated. All confirmed complaints against child care providers may be viewed at CheckCCMD.org.

For additional help, you may contact the Program Manager of the Licensing Branch at 410-569-8071.

Resources

Child Care Subsidy - Assists parents with cost of childcare

1-866-243-8796

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) - regulates certain products used in childcare

cpsc.org

Maryland EXCELS - Maryland's Quality Rating System for Childcare Facilities

marylandexcels.org

Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council - May assist with ADA issues

md-council.org

Maryland Family Network - Assists parents in locating childcare

Marylandfamilynetwork.org

PARTNERS Newsletter - What's happening in the Division of Early Childhood Development

Earlychildhood.Marylandpublicschools.org

To this site to check provider inspection violations

checkccmd.org

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PREPARING WORLD CLASS STUDENTS

Larry Hogan, Governor

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

OCC 1524 (8/2016)

Guide to Regulated Child Care

Important Information About Child Care Facilities

Who Regulates Child Care?

All child care in Maryland is regulated by the Maryland State Department of Education, Office of Child Care's (OCC), Licensing Branch.

The Licensing Branch's thirteen Regional Offices are responsible for all regulatory activities, including:

- Issuing child care licenses and registrations to child care facilities that meet state standards;
- Inspecting child care facilities annually;
- Providing technical assistance to child care providers;
- Investigating complaints against regulated child care facilities;
- Investigating reports of unlicensed (illegal) child care; and
- Taking enforcement action when necessary.

COMAR Regulations and other information about the Office of Child Care may be found at:

earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/office-child-care

What are the types of Child Care Facilities?

Family Child Care – care in a provider's home for up to eight (8) children

Large Family Child Care– care in a provider's home for 9-12 children

Child Care Center – non-residential care

Letter of Compliance (LOC) – care in a child care center operated by a religious organization for children who attend their school

All facilities must meet the following requirements:

- Must obtain the approval of OCC, fire department and local agencies;
- Must have qualified staff who have received criminal background checks, child abuse and neglect clearances, and are not on the sex offender registry;
- Family child care providers must maintain certification in First Aid and CPR;
- Child Care Centers must maintain a ratio of one staff certified in first aid and CPR per every twenty (20) children at all times;
- Must offer a daily program of indoor and outdoor activities;
- Must maintain a file with all required documentation for each enrolled child;
- Must post approved evacuation plans, conduct fire drills and emergency preparedness drills; and
- Must report suspected abuse and neglect, and may not subject children to abuse, neglect, mental injury or injurious treatment.

Did You Know?

- Regulations that govern child care facilities may be found at: earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/regulations
- The provider's license or registration must be posted in a conspicuous place in the facility;
- A child care provider must enter into a written agreement, with a parent, that specifies fees, discipline policy, presence of animals, the use of volunteers, and sleeping arrangements for overnight care;
- Parents/guardians may visit the facility without prior notification any time their children are present;
- Written permission from parents/guardians is required for children to participate in any and all off property activities;
- All child care facilities must make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs;
- A "Teacher" qualified person must be assigned to each group of children in a child care center;
- Staff:child ratios must be maintained at all times in child care centers;
- Parents/guardian must be immediately notified if children are injured or have an accident in care;
- Child care facilities may have policies beyond regulatory requirements;
- OCC should be notified if a provider has violated child care regulations;
- Parents/guardians may review the public portion of a licensing file; and
- The provider's compliance history may be reviewed on CheckCCMD.org.