

# Wee Wuns

PRESCHOOL



## PARENT HANDBOOK



CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
GREENDALE FAMILY BRANCH  
YMCA OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

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# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

Welcome to Wee Wuns, the YMCA Center for Child Development Nursery School of the YMCA of Central Massachusetts. We are pleased that you have become a member of our YMCA family and look forward to many years of growing and learning.

This handbook is designed to help you become familiar with our program and to explain our policies and procedures.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY & PURPOSE**

Wee Wuns Preschool, part of the YMCA of Central Massachusetts, is an educational, play-based preschool program serving children ages **2 years and 9 months to 5 years**.

We offer both **full-day and half-day programming**, operating **five days per week** and following the **Worcester Public Schools calendar** for most holidays and closures.

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### **OUR PURPOSE**

The YMCA is committed to strengthening families and supporting the healthy development of children. Wee Wuns Preschool plays an important role in this mission by providing a nurturing, engaging, and developmentally appropriate learning environment.

We believe that families are partners in their child's education. Together, parents, caregivers, and educators work collaboratively to support each child's growth and development.

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### **OUR COMMITMENT TO FAMILIES**

Wee Wuns Preschool welcomes and supports families of all backgrounds. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment that respects and values diversity, including differences in:

- **Race**
- **Culture and language**
- **Religion**
- **Family structure**
- **Abilities**
- **Socioeconomic background**

All children are provided with opportunities to learn and grow in a setting that promotes **respect, belonging, and inclusion**.

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### **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

Our philosophy is rooted in a **developmental, whole-child approach**. We recognize that children grow and learn at different rates, and we design our program to support each child as an individual.

We focus on supporting development in the following areas:

- **Cognitive (thinking and learning)**

- **Social (relationships and interactions)**
- **Emotional (self-awareness and regulation)**
- **Physical (gross and fine motor skills)**
- **Early foundational skills for school readiness**

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## HOW CHILDREN LEARN

We believe children learn best through:

- Play-based, hands-on experiences
- **Exploration and discovery**
- **Trial and error**
- **Meaningful interactions with peers and adults**

Our classrooms are designed to provide access to materials and experiences that encourage:

- **Curiosity and creativity**
- **Decision-making and independence**
- **Problem-solving and critical thinking**

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## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Daily opportunities for **gross motor play and movement** are an essential part of our program. Outdoor play and physical activity support both physical health and brain development.

Movement activities, including **bilateral and cross-lateral movements**, help build important foundations for early literacy skills such as reading and writing.

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## SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We place a strong emphasis on helping children develop:

- **Positive peer relationships**
- **Cooperation and teamwork**
- **Self-confidence and independence**
- **Self-regulation and emotional awareness**

Our classrooms foster an environment of **respect, kindness, and belonging**, where children feel safe to express themselves and build meaningful friendships.

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## THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Our educators serve as:

- **Guides and facilitators of learning**
- **Role models for positive behavior**
- **Supporters of each child's individual needs**

Teachers provide structure, set clear expectations, and create a safe environment while encouraging children to explore, take risks, and grow.

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## **OUR GOAL**

Our goal is to provide a strong foundation that supports each child in becoming:

- **Confident**
- **Curious**
- **Capable**
- **Ready for future learning experiences**

## **BUILDING CHARACTER...ONE CHILD AT A TIME**

At the YMCA, character development is at the heart of everything we do. At Wee Wuns Preschool, we intentionally incorporate the YMCA's core values into our daily interactions and curriculum.

We focus on helping children develop an understanding of:

- Caring – **showing kindness and empathy toward others**
- Honesty – **telling the truth and building trust**
- Respect – **valuing themselves, others, and their environment**
- Responsibility – **making positive choices and taking ownership of actions**

By nurturing these values early on, we help children build the confidence, self-esteem, and decision-making skills needed for lifelong success.

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## **YMCA ACCESS (Y-ACCESS) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

The YMCA of Central Massachusetts offers **confidential financial assistance** to families based on need.

Y-Access scholarships may be applied toward:

- **YMCA memberships, Paid Programs, & Camp**
- **Preschool programming**

Families interested in applying can:

- **Pick up an application at the** Member Service Desk
- **Submit completed applications to the** Business Office **for review**

We are committed to ensuring that all families have access to high-quality early education and YMCA programs.

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## OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

Wee Wuns Preschool accepts **EEC Child Care Vouchers** (through Child Care Resources) for families who qualify.

- **Voucher availability may be limited**
- Both full-day and half-day programs may be eligible, depending on availability and funding

Families interested in learning more about voucher options are encouraged to contact: **Courtney Ordway, Preschool Coordinator**

## YMCA CENTERS FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM LOCATIONS & HOURS OF OPERATION

The YMCA of Central Massachusetts operates childcare and preschool programs across multiple locations. Each program follows the YMCA's mission and philosophy while offering its own unique environment and services for families.

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### 📍 GREENDALE FAMILY YMCA – WEE WUNS PRESCHOOL

**Location:**

75 Shore Drive  
Worcester, MA 01605

**Phone:** (508) 852-6694 ext. 2236

**Email:** cordway@ymcaofcm.org

**Program Coordinator:** Courtney Ordway

Located within the main building of the Greendale Family YMCA

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## HALF-DAY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

- Hours: **8:30 AM – 1:00 PM**
- Schedule: **Monday–Friday (5 days per week)**
- Ages Served: **2 years 9 months – 5 years**
- Calendar: **Follows Worcester Public Schools (WPS) for vacations and closures**
- Additional Care: **Includes access to vacation care and summer programming (separate rates apply)**

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## FULL-DAY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

- Hours: **7:30 AM – 5:30 PM**
- Schedule: **Monday–Friday (5 days per week)**
- Ages Served: **2 years 9 months – 5 years**
- Calendar: **Follows Worcester Public Schools (WPS) for vacations and closures**
- Additional Care: **Includes access to vacation care and summer programming (separate rates apply)**

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## YMCA CHILD CARE & PRESCHOOL LOCATIONS

### Boroughs Branch

- **Infant Program: 6 weeks – 15 months**
- **Toddler Program: 15 months – 2.9 years**
- **Preschool Program: 2.9 – 5 years**

**Contact:** Erin Demand

✉ edemand@ymcaofcm.org

☎ 508-870-1320 ext. 8243

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### Central Branch

- **Preschool Program: 2.9 – 5 years**

**Contact:** Emely Ojeda

☎ 508-755-6101 ext. 1263

✉ eoqueda@ymcaofcm.org

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### Montachusett Branch

- **Preschool Program: 2.9 – 5 years**

**Contact:** Pamela Christian-Ridings, Director of Child Care Services

✉ pridings@ymcaofcm.org

☎ 978-343-4847 ext. 4232

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### Tri-Community Branch

- **Infant Program: 0 – 15 months**
- **Toddler Program: 15 months – 2 years, 9 months**
- **Preschool / Pre-K Program: 2.9 – 5 years**

**Contact:** Jenna Beaton, Early Learning Executive Director  
☎ 508-765-0222 ext. 203  
✉ jbeaton@ymcaofcm.org

## REGISTRATION AND ADMISSION

Wee Wuns Preschool requires children to be **2 years and 9 months (2.9 years)** of age by the start of the school year in August/September.

Registration for new students typically begins in the **early Spring**. To secure your child's spot in the program, a completed enrollment form must be submitted along with the required enrollment deposit:

- \$100 non-refundable deposit for new families
- \$75 non-refundable deposit for returning families

Registration happens at the same time as the deposit is taken. This allows families to gather the rest of the required documentation needed for their child's file.

To ensure a smooth and successful start to the school year, all families are required to attend our **Annual Parent Orientation**, held in late August/early September. During this time, families will:

- Tour the facility
- Meet the teaching staff
- Review the Parent Handbook, policies, and procedures

All required enrollment paperwork must be completed prior to your child's first day.

The Enrollment Packet includes important forms that provide valuable information about your child. These forms must be completed thoroughly and updated **annually or whenever changes occur**. It is essential that families notify us of any updates to contact information, medical needs, or authorized pick-up individuals.

An **Open House** will also be scheduled prior to the start of the school year. This provides an opportunity for you and your child to visit the classroom, meet their teacher, and become familiar with the environment to help ease the transition into the program.

### COVER SHEET

Contains basic information about name, address, and phone numbers, parent employment, etc.

### **PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION**

Please list on this form the people allowed to pick your child up from school. The staff will ask for photo identification of anyone coming to pick up your child until they are familiar with their identity. Please be sure to keep these names current.

### **FACE SHEET/DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY**

Questions that help us gain a greater understanding of your child's development and his/her daily needs. Please answer them thoroughly. It is very helpful to teachers to have input on children's likes and dislikes, fears, and on your family's method of handling difficult behavior. We strive to meet your goals and expectations for your child. We can only do that if you make those goals known to us on this developmental history form.

### **PARENT AGREEMENT FORM**

The Parent Agreement Form serves as an authorization and consent form for enrollment in the Wee Wuns Preschool program. Families are asked to carefully review each section and indicate consent by selecting "yes" or "no," then signing and dating the form.

This form is completed both in paper format and electronically.

By completing this form, you are:

- Providing consent for your child to participate in the program
- Agreeing to follow all Wee Wuns Preschool policies and procedures
- Granting permission for photographs and/or videos of your child for program use
- Acknowledging participation in program activities and fundraisers
- Confirming receipt of the Parent Handbook and Health Care Policies
- Acknowledging that occasional observers (such as licensing or program visitors) may be present
- Billing Policies

It is important that this form is completed in full prior to your child's start date.

### **FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE CONSENT FORM**

This form provides emergency contacts, doctor, and Health Insurance information and pick-up authorizations.

\*Please note that at least two Emergency Contacts other than the parents must be named in case parents cannot be reached. It also gives the program authorization to administer first aid/CPR, and to secure emergency transportation and the necessary treatment for your child if you cannot be contacted.

### **TRANSPORTATION FORM**

Wee Wuns Preschool offers **parent/guardian drop-off and pick-up only**.

Families are responsible for transporting their child to and from the program each day. At this time, the program does not provide bus transportation or any alternate transportation options.

All children must be **escorted into the building by an adult** and signed in at arrival, and signed out at dismissal.

### **MEDICAL FORM AND IMMUNIZATION RECORD**

All children are required to have a **current physical examination** on file in order to attend Wee Wuns Preschool. The physical must have been completed **within 12 months of enrollment**, be signed by a physician, and submitted within **30 days of your child's start date**.

**Up-to-date immunization records** must also be provided at the time of enrollment. Please ensure that all dates are complete and clearly documented. Children will not be able to attend the program until all required medical documentation is received.

In accordance with Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations:

- All children must have documentation of **lead screening**
- Lead screenings must be updated **annually until age 3**
- For children residing in Worcester, lead screenings must be updated **annually until age 5**

Families will receive a **reminder notice when documentation is within 30 days of expiring**. If updated documentation is not provided by the expiration date, a **doctor's note confirming an upcoming appointment must be submitted**.

If neither updated documentation nor a doctor's note is provided, your child **will not be able to return to the program** until all required and updated medical paperwork has been submitted to the Preschool Coordinator.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure all medical records remain current throughout the school year.

## **Tuition, Billing and Additional Care POLICY**

Wee Wuns Preschool offers the option for **summer camp, vacation care, and snow day care (for full-day enrolled families)** at a separate rate.

### **Snow Day Care (Full-Day Program Only):**

On days when Worcester Public Schools are closed due to weather, full-day enrolled students may have the option to attend snow day care, depending on staffing and building operations. Communication will be sent to families with details and availability.

## TUITION RATES (2026–2027)

### Full-Day Preschool Program

- Hours: 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM
- \$300 per week/\$11,700 a year (YMCA Members)
- \$335 per week/\$13,065 a year (Non-Members)

### Half-Day Preschool Program

- Hours: 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM
- \$175 per week /\$6,825 a year (YMCA Members)
- \$200 per week /\$7,800 a year(Non-Members)

### Important Tuition Notes:

- Tuition is based on weekly enrollment, not attendance
- Full weekly tuition is required regardless of the number of days your child attends
- This ensures proper staffing and maintains EEC ratios

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## BILLING POLICIES

- Tuition may be paid on a weekly or monthly basis
- All tuition payments are made one week in advance

### Payment Details:

- Payments should be made through the Child Care Account Manager or approved billing system
- Please do not make payments at the Member Service Desk
- Checks should be made payable to the YMCA of Central Massachusetts
- For credit card payments, please contact the business office
- Cash

### Monthly Billing Note:

- Monthly tuition is based on the number of weeks in the month
  - If a month includes 5 weeks, the monthly total will be higher to reflect the additional week of care

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## IMPORTANT POLICIES

- Proof of YMCA membership (if applicable) is required at the time of enrollment and must remain active to receive member pricing
- There is no reduction in tuition for:
  - **Sick days**
  - **Absences**
  - **Single-day holiday closures**

- A **two-week notice** is required for vacations to avoid being charged
- If your child is absent due to illness, tuition is **still required**

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## TUITION REFUNDS

Tuition refunds are made at the Preschool Coordinator 's discretion for **special circumstances** (such as prolonged illness or unexpected moves) and only if the child's spot can be filled.

If the spot is filled part-way through the billing period, a **partial reimbursement may be issued**.

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## LATE PAYMENTS & RETURNED CHECKS

- If payments are not received on or before the designated due date, a \$5.00 late fee per week (or portion of a week) will be assessed
- **Accounts that are more than two weeks past due will result in:**
  - The child being unable to attend the program until the account is brought current
- A **\$25.00 fee** will be charged for any returned check, or credit card
- After **three (3)** returned checks, payment by check will no longer be accepted
  - Future payments must be made by cash or money order
- Payment plans may be arranged at the discretion of the Child Care Director
- The Y-Access Scholarship Program is available for eligible families and may be discussed if needed

### Income Tax Credit

If you use childcare in order to work, you may qualify for a federal income tax credit of up to 20% of your childcare expenses. Check with the IRS office for current information. Be sure to save your tuition receipts to verify these expenses. The YMCA does not issue yearly tuition payment totals.

**The YMCA's tax number is #04-2105885**

# YOUR CHILD'S DAY

Your child's day at Wee Wuns will include a variety of activities based on the abilities of the children in the group, their interests and developmentally appropriate guidelines. The following sample daily schedule is an example of a typical day at Wee Wuns.

## Greendale YMCA Half Day Wee Wuns Daily Schedule 9:00-1:00

**8:30 – 9:45** Free Play time

- **Children are encouraged to choose from a variety of stimulating age – appropriate activities which challenge and nurture each child’s creativity & developing skills while fostering self-image, individuality, and problem-solving abilities.**

**9:45-10:15** Morning Meeting

- **Morning Meeting – Calendar, weather, letter person activities, songs, sharing, book bag buddy and mystery bag. Children are introduced to larger group learning (taking turns, listening to others, sharing their own ideas, etc.).**

**10:15 - 10:30** Clean Up and Wash hands

**10:30 - 10:45** Snack

**10:45 – 11:30** Teacher Lead Activities and Small Groups

- **2 different teacher directed activities are planned daily to introduce children to small group learning experiences. Emphasis is put on literacy, cooperation, skill building and problem solving.**

**11:30 – 12:00** Recess-Playground (Depending on the Weather)

**12:00 – 12:30** Lunch Time & Teacher Directed Transitional Activities (**table toys, stories, songs, finger plays, etc.**)

**12:30 - 12:45** Free Play

- **Various choice based activities outdoors on the playground (weather permitting), in the classroom, at the gym or in the studio.**

**12:45 – 12:55** Pack Up

**12:55-1:00** Dismissal

## Greendale YMCA Full Day Wee Wuns Daily Schedule 7:30-5:30pm

**7:30-9:15** Free Play time

- **Children are encouraged to choose from a variety of stimulating age – appropriate activities which challenge and nurture each child’s creativity & developing skills while fostering self-image, individuality, and problem-solving abilities.**

**9:15-9:45** Morning Meeting

- **Morning Meeting – Calendar, weather, letter person activities, songs, sharing, book bag buddy and mystery bag. Children are introduced to larger group learning (taking turns, listening to others, sharing their own ideas, etc.).**

**9:45-10:00** Clean Up and Wash hands

**10:00 - 10:30** Snack

**10:30 – 11:30** Teacher Lead Activities and Small Groups

- **2 different teacher directed activities are planned daily to introduce children to small group learning experiences. Emphasis is put on literacy, cooperation, skill building and problem solving.**

**11:30 – 12:15** Recess-Playground (Depending on the Weather)

**12:00 – 12:45** Lunch Time & Teacher Directed Transitional Activities (**table toys, stories, songs, finger plays, etc.**)

- **Various choice-based activities outdoors on the playground (weather permitting), in the classroom, at the gym or in the studio.**

**12:45-1:00pm** Bathroom and Rest/Quiet Time Set Up

**1:00pm-2:45pm** Rest/Quiet Time

**2:45pm-3:00pm** Wake Up and Bathrooms

**3:00-3:30pm** Snack

**3:30-5:15pm** Free Play

**5:15pm-5:30pm** Pack Up and Dismissal

Schedule is subject to changes once routines have been established. We are also part of the Department of Education Health Initiative Ma. Children at Play. This program initiates healthy eating and lifestyle. The YMCA of the USA has embraced this and other programs to foster Healthy Lifestyles. Wee Wuns is an active participant in the Quality rating system initiated by Mass. Dep. of Early Education and Care (EEC).

## **ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE & TRANSPORTATION**

Wee Wuns Preschool offers **parent/guardian drop-off and pick-up only.**

Families are responsible for transporting their child to and from the program each day. At this time, the program **does not provide bus transportation or public transportation options.**

An individual **Transportation Plan Form** is completed at enrollment to document each child's arrival and dismissal arrangements, including authorized pick-up individuals.

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### **Arrival Procedures**

Upon arrival, all children must be **signed in by an adult.**

- Families must scan in or show their Wee Wuns tag at the front desk and walk around to the classroom
- The front desk will only buzz families in for stroller or handicap accessibility needs
- Children must be escorted into the classroom and handed off directly to a teacher
- Full name and time must be recorded at sign-in (no initials)
- **Children may not be dropped off outside or sent in alone**

You are responsible for your child until they are signed in and safely transitioned to a staff member.

Please arrive on time to support your child's transition into the day. If your child will be late or absent, please notify the program.

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### **Parking Reminder**

Please do **NOT park in handicapped spaces or along the service entrance driveway** during drop-off and pick-up times. Vehicles may be ticketed.

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### **During the Day**

If your child needs to leave during the program (for example, for a doctor or dentist appointment), they must be **signed out and signed back in** upon return.

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### **Dismissal Procedures**

**Half-Day Dismissal:** 1:00 PM

**Full-Day Dismissal:** 5:30 PM

- Children must be signed out daily with time recorded
- Please allow extra time for packing up, especially during winter months
- Once signed out, the parent/guardian becomes responsible for the child

If dismissal plans change, a **written note/email is required.**

A photo ID may be requested if staff are unfamiliar with the person picking up.

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### **Late Pick-Up Policy**

- A 5-minute grace period is allowed
  - After that, a \$2 per minute late fee will be charged

If a child is not picked up:

1. Staff will attempt to contact parents/guardians
2. Emergency contacts will be called
3. Continued delay may result in contacting appropriate authorities in accordance with policy

Late fees will be billed the following Monday.

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### **Additional Notes**

- Staff are not permitted to transport children to or from the program
- Carpool arrangements must be documented on the authorized pick-up form
- Consistent arrival and dismissal routines help support your child's success and comfort in the program

## **SPECIAL DAYS & CELEBRATIONS**

We love celebrating special moments at Wee Wuns! If you would like your child to celebrate their birthday at school, please notify your child's teacher **at least one week in advance** so we can plan accordingly.

We encourage families to work with their child to choose a **fun and appropriate treat** to share with the class.

#### **Please note:**

- Due to health and safety regulations, all other items must be commercially packaged or whole fruits

Some great options include:

- **Mini cupcakes**
- **Pre-packaged muffins**
- **Yogurts or drinkable yogurts**
- **Fruit cups or fresh fruit**
- **Pretzels or crackers**
- **Individual snacks**

Please keep in mind the number of children in the class when planning (approximately 20 children).

To help keep all children safe and ensure consistency, please follow these guidelines when bringing in food:

- Wee Wuns is a **peanut and tree nut free** program
- Please check labels carefully for allergens

If you are unsure about an item, please check with your child's teacher before bringing it in.

Thank you for helping us keep our classroom safe, fun, and inclusive for all children!

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### **Monthly Celebrations & Classroom Parties**

Throughout the school year, Wee Wuns hosts **monthly celebrations and special themed events** (such as holidays, seasonal activities, and classroom celebrations).

For these events:

- Families will have the opportunity to sign up to contribute items (snacks, supplies, or materials)
- Sign-ups will be shared in advance through communication platforms (email, Tadpoles, or sign-up links)
- Participation is always optional but greatly appreciated

These celebrations help build community, create memorable experiences, and support hands-on learning for the children.

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### **Family Participation**

Families are always welcome to join us for special celebrations and events when appropriate. We love having you be part of your child's preschool experience!

### **SNACKS**

A morning snack is provided daily and typically includes a beverage along with nutritious options such as crackers, fruit, cheese, vegetables, or similar items.

If your child has any food allergies, it is important to notify staff so appropriate accommodations can be made. Families may also send in alternative snacks if needed.

Weekly snack menus are posted. If you would like to provide a snack or contribute for a special event, please speak with your child's teacher in advance.

We encourage children to drink plenty of water throughout the day to support healthy growing bodies and minds.

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## LUNCH

Lunch is brought from home and is an important part of your child's day. Please pack a well-balanced meal that meets your child's individual needs based on activity level and appetite.

### Full-Day Program:

Children enrolled in the full-day program should also bring a **second snack** for the afternoon.

### Lunch Guidelines:

- Please do not send soda, candy, or gum
- Wee Wuns is a **peanut and tree nut free** program
- **Do not send foods containing peanuts or tree nuts or their by-products**
- Sunflower butter or soy butter is allowed, but must be clearly labeled with a note each day
- **Grapes and hot dogs must be cut prior to arrival**

### Independence Reminder:

Please pack your child's lunch in a way that allows them to be as **independent as possible**. Containers should be easy for children to open on their own to help build confidence and self-help skills.

Staff are always available to support, but we encourage children to practice independence during mealtime.

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## LUNCH BOX SUGGESTIONS

Please pack portions appropriate for your child. Some ideas include:

- Sandwiches (turkey, ham, cheese, egg salad, tuna)
- Crackers with cheese or spreads
- Yogurt or Gogurt
- Fresh fruits (apples, strawberries, oranges, pears, bananas)
  - Need to be cut and ready for the,
- Vegetables (cucumbers, celery, carrots with dip)
- Cottage cheese or fruit cups
- Muffins or breads
- Pretzels or simple snacks
- Water or milk

*Please include utensils if needed.*



## What to Bring to School

Please send the following with your child daily:

- A complete labeled change of clothes (2 sets) **including socks, underwear, shirt, and pants**
- Lunch in a labeled lunch box or bag
  - Please include a cold pack for items that need to stay cold (**lunches are not refrigerated**)
- Water bottle

## CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

Children should come to school dressed for **active play, learning, and outdoor time** each day.

### Footwear Requirements:

- **Sneakers must be worn daily**
- No black-soled shoes, sandals, or flip flops (these may cause injuries)
- Children not wearing appropriate footwear may be unable to participate in certain activities

### Clothing Guidelines:

- Please dress your child in comfortable, active play clothes
- Clothing should be appropriate for messy play, movement, and outdoor activities

- Please make sure all clothing fits properly so children can move safely and independently

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## DAILY & SEASONAL REMINDERS

- Label all clothing (coats, sweaters, hats, boots, etc.)
- On swim days, please label undergarments as well

We go outside daily whenever possible, so please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather:

- Rainy days: **raincoat**
- Winter: **coat, snow pants, boots, hat, and two pairs of mittens**

## BRINGING THINGS FROM HOME

We kindly ask that children **do not bring toys or personal items from home** to the program. These items can easily become lost, broken, or create distractions during the day.

Your child's teacher will communicate in advance if there are any **special sharing days or themed events** where items from home may be brought in.

### Please note:

- Toy weapons of any kind are not permitted **at any time**
- **Wee Wuns is not responsible for lost or damaged items brought from home**

Our classroom materials and equipment are thoughtfully selected to be **safe, educational, and engaging** for all children. Keeping outside items at home helps us maintain a focused and inclusive learning environment.

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## COMFORT ITEM TRANSITION PLAN

We understand that some children may need a comfort item (such as a stuffed animal or small object) to help with the transition into the school day.

To support children while also maintaining classroom expectations:

- Comfort items may be brought in as needed for drop-off
- Items will be kept in the child's cubby or backpack during the day
- Teachers will support children in transitioning away from the item after arrival
- If needed, children may briefly access their item for reassurance

Our goal is to help children feel safe and supported while also encouraging independence and confidence within the classroom environment.

If your child is having difficulty separating from an item, please speak with your child's teacher so we can work together on a supportive plan

## BEHAVIOR ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

At Wee Wuns Preschool, we believe that behavior is a form of communication. Our goal is to support children in developing **self-regulation, problem-solving skills, and positive social interactions** in a safe and nurturing environment.

We use a **teaching-based approach** to behavior, focusing on guiding children rather than punishing them.

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### OUR APPROACH

Behavior guidance is:

- Consistent, reasonable, and developmentally appropriate
- **Based on each child's** individual needs and stage of development
- **Focused on helping children build** independence, self-control, and confidence

Children are supported in understanding classroom expectations through:

- **Clear and consistent rules**
- **Ongoing modeling by teachers**
- **Opportunities to practice social skills**
- **Positive reinforcement and encouragement**

---

### HOW WE SUPPORT CHILDREN

Teachers use a variety of strategies to guide behavior, including:

- Positive reinforcement **of appropriate behaviors**
- Redirection **to appropriate activities**
- Offering choices **to build independence**
- Clear expectations and consistent limits
- Modeling appropriate language and behavior
- Teaching problem-solving and conflict resolution skills
- Supporting emotional regulation

We also use:

- Environmental adjustments
- Activity modifications
- Additional adult or peer support

These strategies help prevent challenging behaviors and support all learners.

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## **RESET / CALM-DOWN TIME**

When needed, children may be supported with a **reset or calm-down time**.

This is:

- A brief break from the situation
- A time to regain control and process emotions
- Supported by a teacher

Children are offered quiet choices and are welcomed back into the group once they are ready.

Reset time may be used when a child:

- Is having difficulty regulating emotions
- Is engaging in unsafe behavior
- Needs support returning to a calm state

---

## **SAFETY & CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS**

If a child demonstrates behaviors that impact the safety of themselves or others (such as hitting, biting, kicking, or throwing objects), staff will:

- 1. Intervene immediately to ensure safety**
- 2. Support the child in calming down**
- 3. Teach appropriate replacement behaviors**
- 4. Communicate with families as needed**
- 5. Develop an individual support plan if behaviors persist**

---

## **FAMILY COMMUNICATION & SUPPORT**

We believe in strong partnerships with families.

If ongoing behavioral support is needed:

- **Teachers will communicate openly with families**
- **Strategies will be shared and discussed**
- **A consistent plan will be created together**

---

## WHAT WE DO NOT DO

In accordance with EEC regulations, the following are strictly prohibited:

- Corporal punishment (including spanking)
- Verbal, physical, or emotional abuse
- Humiliation, threats, or derogatory language
- Withholding food, snacks, or outdoor time
- Using food as a reward or consequence
- Punishing toileting accidents
- Forcing a child to eat or remain seated for long periods
- Labeling children (e.g., "bad," "naughty")

At Wee Wuns, we focus on the behavior—not the child.

---

## OUR GOAL

Our goal is to help children develop the skills they need to:

- **Express emotions appropriately**
- **Build positive relationships**
- **Solve problems independently**
- **Feel confident and successful in the classroom**

## SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

The safety of all children is our top priority. Wee Wuns Preschool follows all Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations regarding supervision.

- Children are supervised at all times by qualified staff
- Teachers supervise children primarily by sight and sound, depending on the activity and developmental level

### Supervision by Sight:

- Children are directly visible to staff during classroom activities, transitions, and outdoor play

### Supervision by Sound (when appropriate):

- **May be used for short periods of time in specific situations, such as:**
  - **Independent bathroom use**
  - **Rest time**
  - **Quiet areas within the classroom**
- Staff will check frequently on any child who is momentarily out of sight

## **Classroom Ratios & Group Size**

At Wee Wuns Preschool, the safety and supervision of children are always a top priority. We follow all **Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)** regulations regarding staff-to-child ratios and maximum group sizes.

### **Preschool Ratios**

- Ratio: **1 educator to 10 children**
- Maximum Group Size: **20 children**

### **What This Means for Families**

Our classroom ratios help ensure that children receive:

- Safe supervision
- Individual attention
- Support with learning and behavior needs
- Positive teacher-child interactions
- Smooth transitions throughout the day

Additional staff may be scheduled when needed based on enrollment, student needs, activities, or classroom support.

We are committed to maintaining all ratios at all times, including during transitions, playground time, swimming, and special activities.

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## **TRANSITIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Staff conduct regular head counts during all transitions (classroom to playground, hallway, etc.)
- Attendance is actively monitored to ensure all children are accounted for at all times

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## **OUTDOOR PLAY & GROUP SUPERVISION**

- While on the playground or in shared spaces, staff conduct frequent name-to-face checks and roll calls
- Children are positioned within staff sightlines at all times
- Staff are strategically placed to ensure full coverage of all areas

---

## **ADDITIONAL SAFETY PRACTICES**

- Children are never left unattended
- Staff maintain awareness of the entire group using active supervision techniques (positioning, scanning, and listening)
- Ratios are maintained at all times in accordance with EEC regulations

## Family INVOLVEMENT & Communication

Families are always welcome at Wee Wuns Preschool! You may visit the program at any time while your child is in attendance. We strongly encourage family involvement as an important part of your child's preschool experience.

Our program offers many opportunities for participation, including:

- Swimming days (**parent volunteers help make swim possible**)
- Special events and classroom celebrations
- Field trips and fitness days
- Monthly activities and themed experiences

---

### CLASSROOM INVOLVEMENT

We encourage families to be involved in the classroom in a variety of ways. Some examples include:

- **Reading a story to the class**
- **Leading a simple activity or craft**
- **Sharing a special talent, hobby, or family tradition**
- **Talking about your job as part of our Community Helpers learning**

Please connect with your child's teacher to schedule a time to participate.

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### PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

Each YMCA Child Development Center offers a **Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)**. This group of interested families meets throughout the year to:

- **Discuss program updates and ideas**
- **Participate in parent education opportunities**
- **Support the program through fundraising efforts**

Funds raised help enhance the program by supporting:

- **Classroom materials and equipment**
- **Special events and experiences for the children**

All families are welcome to participate—your involvement and input are greatly valued.

---

## **FAMILY FEEDBACK & COMMUNICATION**

We value open communication and strong partnerships with our families.

- Families are encouraged to share feedback, ideas, and questions at any time
- Please feel comfortable speaking with your child's teacher or the Preschool Coordinator
- Program updates and communication are shared through email, Tadpoles, and in-person conversations

Formal evaluations are provided annually and may be completed anonymously. We truly appreciate your feedback as it helps us continue to grow and improve our program.

**All YMCA Centers for Child Development are licensed through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) 10 Austin Street, Worcester, MA 01600. Phone # 508-798-5180. Fax # 508-798-5181.**

## **KEEPING COMMUNICATION OPEN**

Wee Wuns Preschool is committed to building strong, positive relationships with families. We believe that **open and ongoing communication** between home and school is essential to supporting each child's growth and development.

We make every effort to keep families informed about their child's experiences, and we value hearing about your child's life outside of school as well. The stronger the partnership between home and school, the more successful your child's experience will be.

---

## **DAILY COMMUNICATION**

Educators are available to connect with families each day through:

- Arrival and dismissal conversations
- The Tadpoles app (updates, photos, and reminders)
- Email communication
- Phone calls when needed

We encourage families to share updates, concerns, milestones, or questions at any time.

Additional communication may include:

- **Newsletters**

- **Monthly calendars**
- **Program emails and reminders**
- **Notices shared through Tadpoles**

Families are always welcome to reach out or speak with a teacher or the Preschool Coordinator.

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## **FAMILY CONFERENCES & ASSESSMENTS**

Wee Wuns uses a combination of informal and formal assessments to support each child's development.

### **Family Conferences are held throughout the year:**

- Fall Conference (November/December):  
**A check-in to review your child's transition, early progress, and goals**
- Spring Conference (March/April):  
**A more detailed review of your child's growth, development, and readiness skills**

Families will receive a summary of their child's progress, and teachers will share insights, strengths, and areas of continued growth.

Families are encouraged to provide input prior to conferences and are always welcome to request additional meetings if needed.

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## **ASSESSMENT APPROACH**

We use a variety of developmentally appropriate tools to assess children's learning, including:

- Observations and anecdotal notes
- Checklists aligned with developmental standards
- Children's work samples and portfolios
- Photos and documentation of learning
- Family input

Assessments are aligned with:

- **Massachusetts Preschool Learning Standards (EEC)**
- **YMCA program standards**
- **QRIS guidelines**

Assessment takes place naturally throughout the day during:

- **Play**
- **Learning centers**

- **Group activities**
- **Outdoor play and special programming**

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## **CURRICULUM PLANNING**

Our teaching team meets regularly to:

- Review observations and assessments
- Plan engaging, developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Create learning experiences based on children’s interests and needs

This ensures that all children are supported, challenged, and engaged in meaningful learning.

### **Screen Time & Media Use in the Curriculum**

At Wee Wuns Preschool, we believe in using technology intentionally and in moderation as a tool to enhance learning experiences.

Screen time may be incorporated into the curriculum for educational purposes, including activities that support:

- Literacy and storytelling
- Letters and phonics
- Numbers and counting
- Music and movement
- Science and themed learning topics
- Interactive learning games or visuals

Technology is always used in a **developmentally appropriate, teacher-guided manner** and is balanced with hands-on learning, play, movement, and social interaction throughout the day.

In addition, during **special events, celebrations, or themed units**, occasional movies or short videos may be shown that connect to what children are learning in the classroom.

Our goal is to ensure that any media use is meaningful, age-appropriate, and supports children’s learning experience.

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## **FAMILY INPUT**

We value family feedback and encourage participation in many ways:

- Informal conversations with staff
- Emails or phone communication
- Scheduled meetings

- Annual family surveys

Families are always welcome to share ideas, ask questions, or discuss any concerns. Your input helps us continue to grow and improve our program.

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## CONFIDENTIALITY

All information contained in your child's records is **confidential** and maintained in accordance with EEC regulations. Information will only be shared with authorized individuals directly involved in your child's care, unless written consent is provided.

## REFERRALS

At Wee Wuns Preschool, we understand that there are times when families may need additional support. Our staff and Preschool Coordinator are available to help connect families with information, resources, and community services whenever needed.

If we feel that a child may benefit from additional support or services, we will:

- Communicate openly with families
- Share observations and concerns in a supportive and respectful manner
- Work collaboratively with families to determine next steps

Referrals may include support in areas such as:

- Developmental screenings
- Speech and language
- Social-emotional development
- Vision, hearing, or dental screenings
- Medical or mental health services

When appropriate, we may recommend that your child be screened or evaluated by outside professionals. Wee Wuns may also connect families with **local agencies, early intervention services, or school-based supports.**

All referrals:

- Are discussed with families prior to any action being taken
- Require family consent before moving forward
- Are documented and maintained in your child's confidential file

Our goal is to work in partnership with families to ensure every child receives the support they need to be successful.

If you are seeking resources or have concerns at any time, please feel free to reach out to your child's teacher or the Preschool Coordinator.

Even after your child leaves the program, we are happy to continue supporting families by providing referrals or information when requested.

## **SUSPENSION & TERMINATION POLICY**

At Wee Wuns Preschool, our goal is to support every child through guidance, consistency, and strong partnerships with families. Suspension or termination is **not our first approach** and is only considered after all reasonable supports and interventions have been implemented.

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### **GROUNDINGS FOR SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION**

The program reserves the right to suspend and/or terminate enrollment with written notice. This may occur for the following reasons:

- **Ongoing concerns regarding a child's behavior that impact the safety of themselves or others**
- **Repeated late pick-ups or failure to follow program hours**
- **Overdue tuition or unresolved billing concerns**
- **Failure to provide required documentation (medical forms, authorizations, etc.)**
- **Failure to follow program policies and procedures**
- **Other circumstances as determined by the Child Care Director**

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### **BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PROCESS**

In alignment with our **Behavior Accountability Plan**, Wee Wuns Preschool is committed to working with families to support children before considering suspension or termination.

The following steps will be taken:

1. Observation & Documentation  
**Staff will document behaviors and identify patterns, triggers, and needs**
2. Family Communication  
**Teachers will meet with families to share observations and discuss strategies**
3. Support Strategies Implemented
  - **Redirection and teaching replacement behaviors**
  - **Classroom and environmental adjustments**
  - **Increased adult support and guidance**
4. Individual Support Plan  
**A consistent plan will be created between school and home to support the child**
5. Referrals & Additional Supports  
**Families may be offered referrals for additional services (developmental, behavioral, or other supports)**

## 6. Follow-Up & Ongoing Review

**Progress will be monitored and adjustments will be made as needed**

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### SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION

If, after implementing the above supports, concerns persist and continue to impact the safety or well-being of the child, other children, or staff, the YMCA reserves the right to suspend or terminate enrollment.

- **A one-week written notice will typically be provided**
- **In situations where safety is an immediate concern**, immediate suspension may occur

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### OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to:

- **Supporting children in developing** self-regulation and social skills
- **Partnering with families every step of the way**
- **Exploring all reasonable options before considering removal from the program**

Our goal is always to help each child be successful within our program whenever possible.

### PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL

If you decide to withdraw your child from Wee Wuns Preschool for any reason, we require a **minimum of two weeks written notice**.

Providing notice allows us to:

- **Support your child through a** smooth and positive transition
- **Prepare them for saying goodbye to teachers and peers**
- **Help maintain consistency and routine during their final days**

Children form meaningful relationships within the classroom, and a thoughtful transition helps ensure they feel supported and comfortable during this change.

Please note that tuition is still required during the two-week notice period.

If you have any questions or need support during this process, please reach out to your child's teacher or the Preschool Coordinator.

# PLAN FOR TRANSITIONS

Wee Wuns Preschool educators thoughtfully support children as they transition both within our program and into new learning environments.

Because Wee Wuns is a small, close-knit program, children become familiar with all staff. This helps create a sense of comfort and continuity, especially when transitioning from one classroom or school year to the next. Children often already know their teachers and classroom spaces, which supports a smooth and confident transition.

---

## TRANSITIONS WITHIN THE PROGRAM

When children move into a new classroom or school year:

- **They are supported through familiar routines and environments**
- **Relationships with staff help ease the transition**
- **Teachers prepare children through conversation, encouragement, and consistency**

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## TRANSITIONS TO NEW PROGRAMS / KINDERGARTEN

Wee Wuns also supports children and families as they transition to new programs, including kindergarten.

With parent/guardian permission, we may:

- **Complete recommendations or transition forms**
- **Share progress reports and developmental information**
- **Communicate with receiving schools when appropriate**

Evaluations and progress reports may be shared with your child's next program or public school **upon request and with written authorization** from the child's legal guardian.

Our goal is to ensure each child transitions with **confidence, readiness, and continued support**.

## Weather, Delays and Closures

Wee Wuns Preschool follows **Worcester Public Schools (WPS)** for weather-related delays and closures.

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### HALF-DAY PROGRAM

- **If Worcester Public Schools announces a delay of more than one hour, the half-day program will be canceled for that day**
- **If WPS is closed, Wee Wuns is also closed**

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### FULL-DAY PROGRAM (DELAYS)

The full-day program may operate on a delayed schedule depending on weather conditions:

- 1-Hour Delay → Open at 8:30 AM
- 2-Hour Delay → **The program will either:**
  - **Open on a delayed schedule** or
  - **Be closed for the day (snow day)**

Final decisions will be communicated to families based on **weather conditions and safety**.

#### **Snow Day Care (Full-Day Program Only):**

On days when Worcester Public Schools are closed due to weather, full-day enrolled students may have the option to attend snow day care, depending on staffing and building operations. Communication will be sent to families with details and availability.

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### IMPORTANT NOTES

- **If weather conditions worsen during the day, families may be contacted for early pick-up**
- **Please ensure you have a plan in place in case early dismissal is required**
- **The YMCA Child Care programs and facilities will close during a State of Emergency**

---

### COMMUNICATION

Families will be notified of delays, cancellations, or changes through:

- **Email**
- **Tadpoles**
- **YMCA communication channels**

(Please note: We no longer rely on radio stations for updates—communication will come directly from the program.)

## STAFF

### STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & TRAINING

The staff at Wee Wuns Preschool is made up of dedicated and caring educators who are committed to supporting the growth and development of young children.

All staffing meets Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) licensing requirements, including regulations related to:

- **Age and qualifications**
- **Caregiver-to-child ratios**
- **Ongoing professional development**

Educators are selected based on their:

- **Experience and skills**
- **Knowledge of child development**
- **Commitment to the health, safety, and well-being of children**

All Wee Wuns educators are required to have completed coursework in **Child Growth and Development** and are continuously working toward furthering their education in the early childhood field.

Staff participate in **ongoing training and professional development** in areas such as:

- **Child development and behavior guidance**
- **Health and safety practices**
- **Curriculum and classroom strategies**
- **YMCA and EEC required trainings**

Our team is committed to creating a nurturing, engaging, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for every child.

### BABYSITTING POLICY

In accordance with YMCA policy, staff members are **not permitted to provide babysitting services** for families or program participants outside of the YMCA.

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### HELPFUL HINTS & REMINDERS

Starting preschool is a big transition—for both children and families! The following tips can help support a positive and successful experience:

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### **1. Be Patient with the Transition**

School is a new experience, and every child adjusts at their own pace. Be patient and allow your child time to build confidence and independence. Avoid comparisons—each child develops on their own timeline.

---

### **2. Celebrate Your Child’s Work**

Your child’s artwork is about the **process, not the product**. Ask open-ended questions like:

- **“Tell me about your picture”**
- **“How did you make this?”**

Art at this age is about exploring materials, creativity, and expression.

**Please remember to take your child’s work home each day**—it is very important to them and helps build pride in their accomplishments.

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### **3. Label Everything**

Please label all clothing and belongings before coming to school.

If you prefer not to permanently label items, masking tape and a permanent marker work well.

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### **4. Leave Toys at Home**

We ask that children **do not bring toys or personal items to school** unless it is a designated sharing day. These items can easily become lost or cause distractions.

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### **5. Dress for Play**

Children should come dressed in **comfortable, active play clothes** that can get messy.

We engage in activities such as:

- **Art and sensory play**
- **Outdoor play**
- **Gross motor/gym activities**

Please keep in mind that certain clothing (such as dresses or special outfits) may make it difficult for children to fully participate.

---

## 6. Encourage Independence

Encourage your child to practice dressing themselves. Choose clothing that is easy for them to manage (simple zippers, elastic waistbands, etc.).

When children are able to do things on their own, it builds **confidence and self-esteem**. Even if it's not perfect, the learning process is what matters most.

---

## 7. Parking Reminder

Parking in the following areas is **not permitted**:

- **Circle driveway**
- **Handicapped spaces (unless authorized)**
- **Service entrance driveway**

Vehicles may be ticketed. Please be respectful of these areas to ensure safety and accessibility for all.

## PARENTAL RIGHTS

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is responsible for regulating child care programs under **Chapter 28A, Section 10 of the Massachusetts General Laws**. These regulations ensure that all licensed programs, including Wee Wuns Preschool, meet required standards for the health, safety, and well-being of children.

As a licensed program, Wee Wuns Preschool is required to inform families of their rights. Full details of parental rights are available upon request and are provided at the time of enrollment.

Wee Wuns Preschool values strong partnerships with families and recognizes the important role parents and guardians play in their child's education and care.

Families have the right to:

### Access to Records

Parents/guardians may review their child's records at any time upon request, in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations. Records are kept confidential and shared only with authorized individuals.

### Visitation Rights

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit the program **at any time while their child is in attendance**. We encourage family involvement and open communication as part of a positive preschool experience.

## Communication

Families have the right to discuss concerns, ask questions, and receive information regarding their child's progress, behavior, and daily experiences.

## Partnership

We believe children are most successful when families and educators work together in a respectful and collaborative partnership.

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## PARENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

We value open communication and encourage families to share any questions, concerns, or feedback.

If a concern arises, we ask that families follow the steps below:

1. Speak with your child's teacher  
**Many concerns can be resolved through direct communication at the classroom level**

2. Contact the Preschool Coordinator  
**If the concern is not resolved, please reach out to:**  
Courtney Ordway, Preschool Coordinator

[cordway@ymcaofcm.org](mailto:cordway@ymcaofcm.org); 508-852-6694 ex 2236

3. Contact Branch Leadership  
**If further support is needed, families may contact:**  
Christina Puleo, Branch Executive Director

[cpuleo@ymcaofcm.org](mailto:cpuleo@ymcaofcm.org)

If necessary, a meeting will be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe to discuss the concern and work toward a resolution.

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## LICENSING INFORMATION

Wee Wuns Preschool is licensed by the:

**Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)**

10 Austin Street

Worcester, MA 01609

Phone: 508-798-5180

Families have the right to contact EEC at any time regarding concerns, questions, or to review program licensing information.

## HEALTH CARE POLICIES & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

To ensure the safety of all children, Wee Wuns Preschool follows strict guidelines for the administration of medication in accordance with EEC regulations. Please also refer to the Health Care Policy Document that is separate from this short section.

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### PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

In order for staff to administer prescription medication:

- Medication must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container
- The label must include:
  - **Child's name**
  - **Medication name**
  - **Dosage**
  - **Physician's name**
- A completed and signed Medication Authorization Form is required and must include:
  - **Dosage**
  - **Time of administration**
  - **Duration of use**

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### NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

Non-prescription medications (such as Tylenol, Benadryl) require:

- A completed and signed Medication Authorization Form from the parent/guardian
- The form must include:
  - **Brand name**
  - **Dosage**
  - **Frequency**
  - **Specific criteria for when the medication should be given**

Staff will make every effort to **contact families prior to administering medication**, when appropriate.

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### LONG-TERM OR EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS

For ongoing or emergency medications (such as EpiPens, Benadryl, inhalers, or nebulizers):

- An Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) and Medication Consent is required
- The plan must be completed and signed by a licensed physician
- Staff will be trained on proper administration procedures

---

## TOPICAL PRODUCTS

To apply topical items such as:

- **Sunscreen**
- **Diaper cream (Desitin, etc.)**
- **Vaseline or similar products**

The following is required:

- A signed Topical Authorization Form from the parent/guardian
- Must include:
  - **Brand name**
  - **Instructions for use**
- Authorization must be renewed annually
- All products must be labeled with your child's name

---

## MEDICATION HANDLING

- All medications must be given directly to a teacher
- Medications should never be placed in backpacks, lunch boxes, or cubbies
- All medications must remain in their original packaging

---

## HEALTH PLAN FOR MEETING INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Wee Wuns Preschool is committed to meeting the individual health needs of every child in our care. Health information is carefully collected, shared appropriately with staff, and implemented to ensure a safe and supportive environment.

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## HEALTH INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION

Each child's specific health care needs are communicated through:

- A Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) needs to be completed and signed by the child's health care practitioner
- A Face Sheet/Enrollment Form completed by the parent/guardian

These forms provide important information regarding:

- **Allergies**
- **Medical conditions**
- **Medications**
- **Individual health care needs**

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## STAFF COMMUNICATION

- The Preschool Coordinator/Director compiles a confidential list of allergies and health needs
- This information is shared with all educators working directly with the children
- Allergy and health alerts are posted in classrooms as required, while maintaining confidentiality

Educators review this information regularly to ensure children's needs are consistently met.

---

## ALLERGIES & FOOD SAFETY

- Educators check allergy information before serving any food or planning activities involving food
- Families of children with food allergies may be asked to:
  - **Review snack plans**
  - **Approve safe alternatives when needed**
- Wee Wuns maintains a nut-aware environment and follows all safety precautions related to allergies

---

## INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLANS (IHCPs)

For children with ongoing medical needs (such as asthma, severe allergies, or other conditions):

- An Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) is required
  - **IHCPs must be:**
    - Signed by a licensed health care practitioner
    - Reviewed with staff
- Parents/guardians may be invited to:
  - Share additional information including potential side effects
    - Must NOT say "as needed", please write for allergic reaction symptoms etc.
  - Assist in training staff on specific procedures, when appropriate

---

## IMPLEMENTATION

All health care needs, including:

- **Food allergies**
- **Skin sensitivities**
- **Respiratory conditions (e.g., asthma)**
- **Other medical considerations**

are addressed consistently throughout the day to ensure each child's safety and well-being.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The safety of all children is our top priority. Wee Wuns Preschool has established procedures for a variety of emergency situations. Staff are trained regularly to respond quickly and appropriately.

---

### **LOST OR MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE**

In the event that a child is missing:

- 1.** Staff will immediately notify the Preschool Coordinator/Director
- 2.** All children will be gathered and attendance will be taken
- 3.** Teachers will remain with the group to ensure supervision
- 4.** Available staff will begin a systematic search of the building and surrounding grounds
- 5.** The YMCA AMBER ALERT Procedure will be followed

If the child is not located promptly, emergency services will be contacted and families will be notified.

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### **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

All staff are certified in **First Aid and CPR**.

In the event of a medical emergency:

- Immediate care will be provided
- Families will be contacted right away
- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be notified
- If necessary, the child's physician will be contacted

In a **life-threatening situation**:

- 911 will be called immediately
- A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital
- The child's emergency information and medical records will be taken
- Staff will remain with the child until a parent/guardian arrives

---

### **SITE-SPECIFIC EMERGENCIES**

Emergency plans are in place for situations such as:

- **Fire**

- **Loss of power, heat, or water**
- **Natural disasters or building-related concerns**

In the event of an emergency at the Greendale Family YMCA:

- The program may remain open temporarily while conditions are assessed
- If conditions are unsafe, the program will close and families will be contacted

If evacuation is necessary, children and staff will relocate to:

**Bancroft School**  
110 Shore Drive

Families will be notified for immediate pick-up. Emergency contacts will be called if families cannot be reached.

---

## **SECURITY THREATS**

In the event of a security concern:

- Staff will remain calm and ensure children are kept safe
- Children will be moved to a secure location (locked classroom or designated safe area)
- The Preschool Coordinator/Director will be notified immediately
- YMCA leadership will be contacted and appropriate action will be taken

At the YMCA we follow ALICE.

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## **COMMUNITY-WIDE EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a large-scale emergency affecting the surrounding area (such as severe weather or other emergencies), evacuation procedures will follow guidance from local authorities.

If relocation is required, children may be transported to a designated emergency site such as:

**Burncoat High School**

Staff will:

- Accompany all children
- Bring attendance records, emergency contacts, and medications
- Maintain supervision at all times

Families will be notified of the relocation site and pick-up procedures as soon as possible.

---

## COMMUNICATION DURING EMERGENCIES

In the event of any emergency:

- Families will be contacted via phone, email, or Tadpoles
- Updates will be shared as information becomes available

If communication systems are limited, updates will be provided as soon as safely possible.

## YMCA CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

The YMCA of Central Massachusetts is committed to providing a **safe, secure, and nurturing environment** for all children. A comprehensive Child Abuse Prevention Policy is in place and available to families upon request.

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## STAFF SCREENING & REQUIREMENTS

To ensure the highest level of safety:

- All staff are required to sign a Code of Conduct outlining expectations for appropriate behavior
- Staff must acknowledge that they have read and will follow all child abuse prevention policies
- A minimum of three written references checks are completed prior to hire
- **All staff working with children undergo:**
  - Criminal background checks (CORI/SORI)
  - Department of Children and Families (DCF) checks
  - Fingerprinting

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## TRAINING & EDUCATION

All childcare staff participate in annual required trainings, including:

- **Child abuse prevention**
- **Child safety and supervision**
- **Appropriate behavior guidance and discipline**

Families may also be offered resources, information, or training opportunities related to child safety as they become available.

Children participate in age-appropriate safety education, which may include:

- **Personal safety awareness**
- **Understanding safe boundaries**

Families will be notified in advance of any related:

- **Classroom activities**
- **Guest speakers**
- **Videos or presentations**

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## **MANDATED REPORTING**

All Wee Wuns staff are **mandated reporters** under Massachusetts law.

This means:

- **Staff are legally required to file a 51A report with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect**
- **Reports are filed immediately and in accordance with state guidelines**

The Preschool Coordinator/Director will:

- **Notify the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) when required**
- **Ensure all procedures are followed appropriately**

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## **STAFF OR VOLUNTEER ALLEGATIONS**

If a report or concern involves a YMCA staff member or volunteer:

- The individual will be immediately removed from direct contact with children
- Appropriate authorities will be notified
- The individual will not return to duties involving children until the matter has been fully reviewed and resolved

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## **OUR COMMITMENT**

We are dedicated to maintaining a safe environment where:

- **Children feel secure and supported**
- **Families feel confident in our care**
- **Staff are held to the highest standards of safety and professionalism**

## **SICK CHILD POLICY & INFECTIOUS DISEASE GUIDELINES**

Wee Wuns Preschool does not provide care for children who are ill. Children must be able to participate comfortably in all daily activities, including outdoor play.

If a child becomes unwell during the day, they will be:

- **Given a quiet space to rest**
- **Closely monitored by staff**
- **Provided water and comfort**

If symptoms persist, families will be contacted and expected to arrange pick-up within one hour.

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### **WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME**

Children should remain home if they:

- **Pose a health risk to others**
- **Are unable to participate in normal activities**
- **Require more care than staff can provide in a group setting**

If a child is well enough to attend school, they are expected to be well enough to **participate in outdoor play.**

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### **GENERAL HEALTH GUIDELINES**

**Fever (100°F or higher):**

- **Must stay home**
- **May return after being** fever-free for 24 hours without medication

**Diarrhea:**

- Must stay home until symptoms have resolved and the child is feeling well

**Vomiting:**

- Must stay home if vomiting occurred within the last 24 hours
- May return once symptoms have stopped and the child is acting well

**Rashes:**

- Children with unexplained rashes must be evaluated by a physician
- May return with a doctor's note stating they are not contagious

**Eye Infections (Pink Eye):**

- May return after treatment has started 24 hrs.

**Impetigo:**

- May return after 24 hours of treatment

**Head Lice:**

- Child must be picked up if live lice are found
- May return after treatment and removal of nits

**Strep Throat:**

- May return after 24 hours of antibiotics

**Chicken Pox:**

- May return once all blisters are dry and crusted over

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**OTHER ILLNESSES**

For the following, families must notify the Preschool Coordinator:

- Meningitis
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- H. Flu (HIB)

These are serious conditions and require communication with the program immediately.

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**COUGHS, COLDS & MINOR ILLNESS**

Children with mild symptoms may attend if they are comfortable and able to participate.

However, if a child is:

- **Extremely uncomfortable**
- **Frequently coughing**
- **Unable to engage in activities**

Families will be contacted for pick-up.

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**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE NOTIFICATION**

If a communicable illness is identified in the classroom:

- Families will be notified via email, Tadpoles, or written notice

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## RETURN TO SCHOOL

Children must be:

- Symptom-free for 24 hours (**unless otherwise noted**)
- Able to fully participate in daily activities

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## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Please notify the school if your child will be absent due to illness
- Staffing does not allow for one-on-one care of sick children
- Good health practices help keep our entire community safe

## ROUTINE HEALTH PRACTICES

Wee Wuns Preschool follows consistent health and safety practices to help maintain a **clean, safe, and healthy environment** for all children and staff.

In addition to our illness policies, the following daily practices are implemented:

- **Proper** toileting procedures **in accordance with program and EEC guidelines**
- **Use of** gloves when handling any bodily fluids, **including:**
  - **Soiled clothing**
  - **Blood**
  - **Mucus or other fluids**
- **Safe and appropriate handling of all bodily fluids in compliance with** OSHA standards and universal precautions
- **Regular** cleaning and disinfecting of toys and materials, **especially those that have been mouthed by children**
- **Daily cleaning and sanitizing of** bathrooms, including toilets and sinks
- **Strong emphasis on** handwashing routines **for both children and staff throughout the day**

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## HEALTH & WELLNESS EDUCATION

We also support children's understanding of healthy habits through age-appropriate learning, including:

- **Handwashing and hygiene**
- **Nutrition and healthy eating**
- **Physical activity and movement**
- **Personal safety and wellness**

## HAND WASHING POLICY

Hand washing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of illness. Wee Wuns Preschool follows strict handwashing practices for both children and staff throughout the day.

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### WHEN HANDWASHING OCCURS

- Upon arrival at the program
- Before eating or handling food
- After using the bathroom
- After assisting a child with toileting
- After contact with any bodily fluids (blood, mucus, vomit, etc.)
- After cleaning contaminated surfaces or materials
- After outdoor play
- After handling pets or pet equipment
- Before and after water play

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### HANDWASHING PROCEDURE

All handwashing must follow proper procedures:

- **Hands are washed using** running water and liquid soap
- **Hands are scrubbed with friction for** at least 15–30 seconds
- **Hands are thoroughly rinsed**
- **Hands are dried using** disposable paper towels
- **A paper towel is used to** turn off the faucet **to avoid recontamination**

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### TEACHING HEALTHY HABITS

Handwashing is also taught as part of our daily routine. Educators guide children in developing proper hygiene habits and understanding the importance of keeping themselves and others healthy.

## DIAPERING & TOILETING POLICY

Wee Wuns Preschool supports children’s development of toileting skills in a **respectful, supportive, and developmentally appropriate manner**. Our goal is to promote independence while ensuring health, safety, and dignity for every child.

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### GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- **Children will** never be punished, shamed, or humiliated **for toileting accidents**

- **Toilet training is** not forced or rushed
- **Staff work in partnership with families to support each child’s individual readiness**
- **Written toileting and diapering procedures are** posted in all applicable areas
- **All procedures are followed consistently and reviewed regularly**

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## **DIAPERING PROCEDURES**

*(For children who are not yet fully toilet trained)*

- Families must provide an adequate supply of clean disposable diapers
- Diapers are changed promptly when wet or soiled
- Children are changed in a standing position in the bathroom **(no diapering table)**
- Staff use disposable gloves during all diapering procedures

### **During each diaper change:**

- The child is cleaned using individual materials
- The child’s hands are washed with soap and running water
- Staff wash their hands immediately after diapering

### **Soiled Items:**

- Soiled clothing is double-bagged, labeled, and sent home daily
- Soiled diapers are double-bagged and disposed of properly
- Diapers are removed from the classroom daily or as needed

### **Additional Requirements:**

- Running water is available for proper handwashing
- Diapering areas are kept separate from food preparation areas
- Extra clothing (from home and center-supplied) is available
- Center clothing is laundered after each use

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## **TOILETING PROCEDURES**

- Children are supported and monitored during toileting to ensure safety
- Children wash hands using soap and running water for 15–30 seconds after toileting
- Hands are dried with individual or disposable towels
- Children also wash hands before eating or handling food

### **Accidents:**

- Children are changed promptly and respectfully

- Soiled clothing is double-bagged, labeled, and sent home
- Extra clothing should be provided daily

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## **SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE**

We encourage children to build independence by:

- Practicing handwashing routines
- Managing clothing with support as needed
- Following consistent toileting routines

Staff provide guidance and encouragement while allowing children to develop skills at their own pace.

## **CHILDREN, FAMILIES & THE YMCA**

Thank you for taking the time to review the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. We hope this information is helpful and provides clarity about our program. If you have any questions or feel there is something that could be added, please don't hesitate to reach out.

At Wee Wuns Preschool, we believe that strong partnerships between families and educators are the foundation of a successful experience for every child.

We are honored to work with your child during such an important stage of development and to support your family along the way. Together, we can create a positive, nurturing environment that supports learning, growth, and well-being.

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## **VOLUNTEERS**

Wee Wuns Preschool welcomes family involvement and offers opportunities for volunteering during special events such as:

- **Swimming days**
- **Fitness activities**
- **Classroom celebrations**
- **Field trips**

All family volunteers:

- Must complete required CORI and DCF background checks
- Are never left alone with children
- Are not counted in staff-to-child ratios

Additional volunteers or student teachers:

- Complete all required background and reference checks

- Participate in YMCA onboarding/orientation as required
- Work under the supervision of a qualified educator
- Are never left alone with children

## **YMCA OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS MISSION STATEMENT**

The YMCA of Central Massachusetts is an association united in a common goal to strengthen our communities and to develop the spirit, mind and body of all persons, regardless of means, through activities guided by and based upon our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

### **Vision Statement**

The YMCA builds strong kids, strong families, and strong communities with a diverse group of thousands of volunteers, staff and members who champion values-based programs and services that support and enrich healthy lifestyles for all people in our community

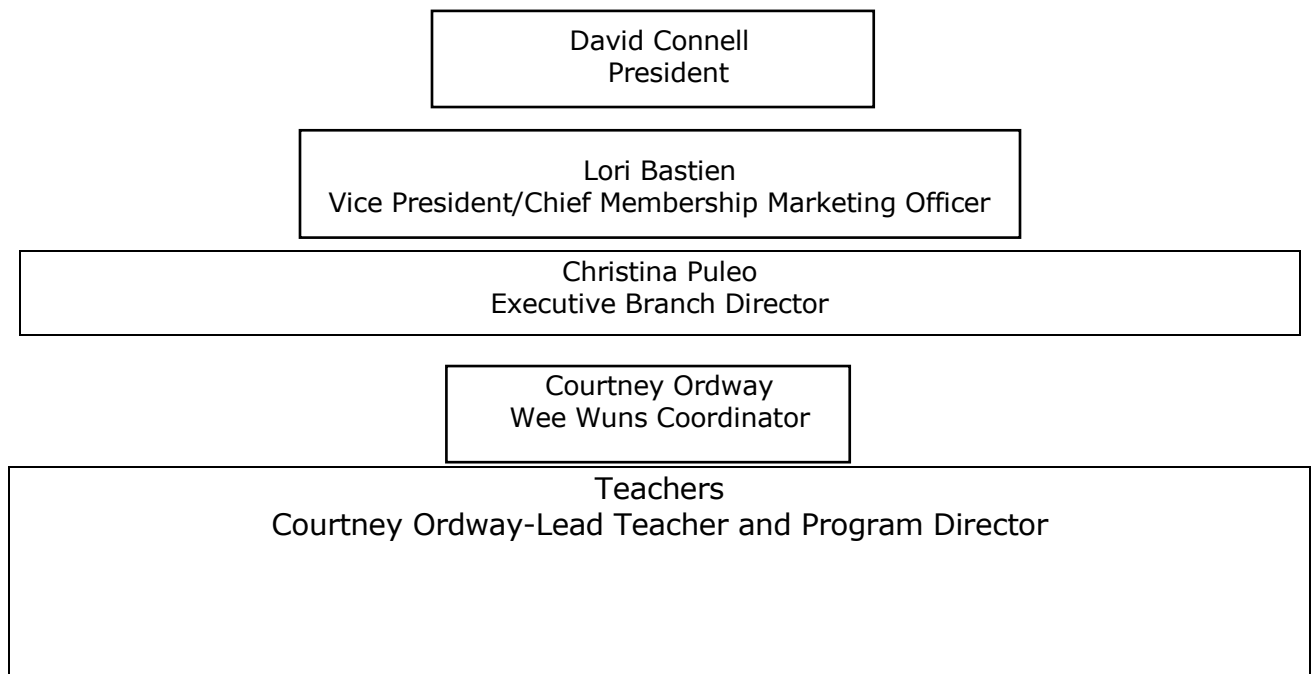
### **Diversity and Inclusion Statement**

The YMCA of Central Massachusetts appreciates and supports the dignity and worth of all members of our community. We will nurture an environment that reflects, respects and celebrates our differences and embraces the richness of our diversity.

## **SITE SPECIFIC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

### **YMCA OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT GREENDALE - WEE WUNS PRE K**

*75 Shore Drive, Worcester, MA 01605  
508-852-6694 (ext. 2236)*



Subs:  
Sam Clyman- Assistant Teacher  
Nicki Farraj-Teacher

***YMCA of Central Massachusetts' Centers for Child Development are licensed by  
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care  
10 Austin Street, Worcester, MA 01609 508-798-5180***

## **YMCA of Central Massachusetts CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. In order to protect YMCA staff, volunteers and program participants, the YMCA recommends at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.
2. Staff shall never leave a child unsupervised.
3. Restroom supervision: Staff will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff (not being alone with a child). If staff are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children in pairs, and whenever possible, with staff.
4. Staff should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs--diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. When this is not feasible, staff should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
5. Staff shall not abuse children including:
  - physical abuse--strike, spank, shake, slap;
  - verbal abuse--humiliate, degrade, threaten;
  - sexual abuse--inappropriate touch or verbal exchange;
  - mental abuse--shaming, withholding love, cruelty;
  - neglect--withholding food, water, basic care, etc.
  - any type of abuse will not be tolerated and is cause for immediate dismissal.
6. Staff must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism.
7. Staff will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), is only administered in a prescribed manner and must be documented in writing.
8. Staff will conduct a health check to monitor the health of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented and reported to the appropriate authority.
9. Staff are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting and reporting child abuse and attend trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.

10. Staff respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion or culture.
11. Staff will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
12. Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, staff, members and participants.
13. Staff must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
14. Staff will serve as positive role models for youth by performing duties with respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact and maturity.
15. Staff may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside of the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepover and inviting children to your home. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to administrator approval.
16. Educators are not to transport anyone under the age of 18 in their own vehicles. (Any exceptions require supervisor approval.)
17. Staff may not date program participants under the age of 18 or staff who report directly to them.
18. Under no circumstances should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA).
19. Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, tact and maturity.
20. The YMCA is a smoke-free environment. Smoking or use of tobacco in the presence of children, parents, staff or members during working hours is prohibited.
21. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
22. Staff who observe or have knowledge of any violation against this Policy should immediately report it to his/her supervisor.
23. All staff will be aware of the YMCA character development values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. All staff will work toward demonstrating and implementing the values in their program or area of work.
24. All staff will take care to maintain the highest level of confidentiality in regard to the children and families.