

Program Handbook

2016-2017



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Letter from Childcare Coordinator

Welcome to the City of Palm Beach Gardens Riverside Youth Enrichment Center. Riverside Youth Enrichment Center is a licensed child care facility that was established to enhance physical and intellectual development in preschool age children. Riverside Youth Enrichment Center is also an Apple Accredited child care center. Teachers use a combination of structured and free time to promote curiosity and learning through fun-filled activities. Our state-of-the-art facility and playgrounds, as well as our low child-to-teacher ratio, provide the background for an entertaining opportunity for preschool children. We encourage you to visit our school at any time during normal operating hours. I also encourage you to advise us of any situations that may affect your child's care and nurturing.

To ensure you and your child have a great preschool experience at Riverside Youth Enrichment Center, the communication with your child's teacher is essential. Each month you will receive a newsletter to let you know about our weekly themes, class activities, and important events in the classroom. We believe the best way for you to learn and know about Riverside Youth Enrichment Center is by talking with us. Someone is always available to respond to your questions, concerns and comments.

We hope this Program Handbook will help you understand the policies and procedures of our school. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully and sign the last page and return it to the front desk.

We look forward to watching your child learn, grow, and flourish throughout the year.

Sincerely,
Christy Murphy
Early Childhood Coordinator

Our Mission

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

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



Philosophy

All Riverside Youth Enrichment Center programs are guided by the principle of developmentally appropriate practice. We believe that children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with caregivers, peers, classroom materials and events. Our staff embraces the view that each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development. Our goal is to give each child a warm environment that encourages the development of socialization skills, independence, and a positive self-image. Age appropriate activities and a creative curriculum are followed to assure quality learning experiences. Staff professionalism is a priority. Loyalty to the children, families and our City shall be conveyed at all times.

Program Description

The Riverside Youth Enrichment Center is a fun-filled Pre-School program and a place where kids can be kids and still learn important skills in a safe and loving environment. The Riverside Youth Enrichment Center curriculum includes: music, dancing, gross and fine motor activities, math, science, creative arts, sensory exploration, and social-emotional experiences with other children. The Riverside Youth Enrichment Center staff strives to create a nurturing and fun-filled environment by engaging students in age appropriate activities. Creativity flows at the center by offering a variety of drawing, coloring, painting, and building activities. We encourage healthy eating habits at snack time, develop cognitive, social, and emotional skills along with encourage physical fitness through games and outside playground time.

There are five childcare programs at our center. In addition, Riverside Youth Enrichment Center provides some two or three day options and a morning VPK program. Please note September 1st is used as the age determination for the three and four year old programs (VPK).

Program	Age
1 year Old Room	12 months to 24 months
2 year Old Room	24 months to 3 years
3 year Old Room	3 years to 4 years
Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)	4 years to 5 years
After-School Program	Kindergarten to 5 th grade

After School Program

We will pick up children from select local Palm Beach Gardens elementary schools. We make every effort to provide a secure, comfortable, and enjoyable place for your child to spend his or her time after finishing the day at school. There will be assistance with homework, computers, arts and crafts, games, and various other activities offered daily. As always, we will keep our low staff to child ratios, even in the elementary school age groups. After School children are offered a snack and juice in the afternoon. There is a menu of the snacks we offer on the parent board. Please advise the staff if your child has any allergies. Gum is not allowed in the program.

Registration Process

A registration packet must be completed and accompanied by the yearly registration fee prior to your child's first day. Each child will receive a t-shirt at the beginning of the new school year.

The registration packet includes the following:

- Enrollment form, signed and completed
- Health & Safety Medical Forms Required by the Health Department
 - Chapter 77-620, Special Acts, Laws of Florida, requires all children to have the following on file:
 - Florida Certificate of Immunization DH 680, (the blue form), signed and dated by a licensed Florida physician
 - Student Health Examination Form, DH 3040, (the yellow form) signed and dated by a licensed Florida physician
 - *These forms need to be replaced on or before their expiration dates.*
- Registration fee may be paid by cash, Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, debit card, or by personal check made out to *City of Palm Beach Gardens*.
- Signed Program Handbook Parent/Guardian Agreement page
- Signed Flu Brochure
- Completed Credit Card Authorization Form
- Proof of Residency (prior to enrollment)
 - Current Florida driver's license
 - Property tax document in addition to a photo ID



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

Non-Discrimination Statement

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center is an equal opportunity center where it is the policy to eliminate, prevent, and prohibit discrimination, bias, and stereotyping on the basis of mental/physical disability, race, national origin, color, creed, religion, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status or marital status in employment practices, and the center's educational and activities participants.

Inclusion Policy

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center includes children with special needs and makes accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Potty Training

Children will need to be potty trained to be enrolled in the 3 year old or VPK program. Every child in the 3 year old class and VPK class must be fully potty-trained and out of diapers and pull-ups. Your child must be able to communicate with an adult that he or she has to go to the restroom.

An occasional “accident” is understandable. If within the first three weeks of school, your child does not seem to be potty trained, we will ask that you have your child placed in the two year old class until your child is fully trained and feels comfortable with telling a teacher or staff member that he or she has to go potty. If your child is not fully potty trained within **45 schools days** of being placed in the two year old room, your child will be withdrawn from Riverside Youth Enrichment Center.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Policy

Parents are to sign their child in and out in the Sign In/Out Books in the lobby. Parents are responsible for bringing their child to their classrooms. We will not release students to minors that are less than 16 years of age. Children will only be released to persons authorized in writing by a custodial parent. Please submit written authorization if your child is being picked up by someone other than persons listed on your child’s enrollment form. In this case a permission slip form will be issued for the current day. The permission slip will list the eligible person’s name and the date they are able to pick up. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter to ensure the safety of your children. *Everyone will also need to show photo identification.*

In the case of emergency only, we will take a phone request. At the time of the phone call we will give you specific instructions to be followed. This is only to be used in the case of a true emergency.

Multimedia

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center’s curriculum does NOT include the regular use of television or videos in the classroom. Educational computer games and videos may be used as an extension of the daily lesson plan based on the weekly theme. Children are not required to view all or part of a video or play a computer game. Instead, the activity is offered as one of several centers. All multimedia must be rated “PG” or “E” and must possess an educational theme.

Appropriate Dress for Child Care

We suggest comfortable, easy (for them) to unbutton or unbuckle clothing. Children should have the freedom to explore with paint, glue, sand, and/or play dough without having to worry about getting their clothes messy or dirty. For safety reasons, **sneakers** and **socks** are required. We request that you do not send your children in sandals, open-toed shoes or Crocs due to safety reasons. Children need to be comfortable running and climbing. Parents should also clearly label all sweaters and jackets with their child’s name. We are not responsible for lost articles of clothing. All children should have at least one extra set of clothes, clearly labeled with their name. Please place clothes in a Ziploc bag marked with your child’s name on the outside of the bag. When children are in the process of potty training, we recommend sending more sets of clothes.

Remember to think about changes of weather. During winter months send long pants, and shorts in the summer.

Healthy Child Policy: *Communicable Diseases in Children*

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

- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or make whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Stiff neck
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a period)
- Temperature of one hundred (100) degrees Fahrenheit or the arm when in combination with any other sign of illness
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Untreated infectious skin patch(es)
- Vomiting
- Pediculosis (head lice)
- Any other unusual sign or symptom of illness



twenty-four hour
higher taken under

If you need to be notified because of your child's illness, it is imperative that we be able to reach someone. If you or your spouse/significant other are listed as emergency contacts, please make sure one of you can be reached at all times. If there is ever a situation where you know you cannot be reached, for whatever the reason, please make sure the staff has the name and phone number of another individual that can always be reached. We also request that if you are notified of your child's illness, you arrive at the center to pick them up **within one hour** of being contacted. Please understand that a sick child requires one-on-one care. This is an extremely difficult situation at our center due to the amount of children that we care for each day.

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

Medication Policy

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center prefers not to administer medicine of any kind to any child. When necessary, only prescription medication will be dispensed. The name of the doctor, child, and medication directions for administration must be written on the label. All medication must be in the original prescription container. A written request signed by the parents shall accompany the medication stating the time and amount of dosage and the name of the medication to be given to the child. The staff at Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will record the name of the child, medication, date, time, amount and method of dosage administered.



Medications shall be plainly labeled and stored in a locked medicine box or, if necessary, in the refrigerator in the front office area.

Administering of EpiPens: Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will retain staff persons who have been trained by our EMS department for the administering of EpiPens for those participants who are in the care, custody and control of childcare programs offered by the City and make known the need for such assistance. This training and supervision will be in accordance with "administration of epinephrine", Florida Statutes 381.88.

Administering Topical Non-Medicated Physical Barriers

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

Boo Boos, Accidents, and Other Minor Incidents

Please understand that children do fall down and will obtain bumps and bruises at school. In most cases, parents will be notified of boo boos and accidents by a Boo Boo or Incident Report. Please sign and return immediately. County regulations limit first aid provided at the school to cleansing properly and applying band-aids or ice packs.



Child Care Food Program/Nutritional Information

Children at the Riverside Youth Enrichment Center receive one morning snack that is given generally between 9am and 10am. We prefer children eat breakfast at home. However, children who come *before 8:00a.m.* may bring easily managed breakfast items in with them.

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

Lunches should be sent in a well, insulated lunch box labeled with your child's name on the outside. All plastic containers and eating utensils should be labeled, such as lunch boxes, plastic containers and cups, which are sometimes identical. Please do not send sodas, chocolate, or any glass containers. Due to health department regulations, we do not microwave food. You may send food in a thermos to keep it warm or cold. We provide a morning snack with juice and parents will need to provide an afternoon snack with a drink. There is a menu posted on the parent board of the snacks we provide. *Please advise the staff if your child has any allergies!* Gum is not allowed in our program.

We encourage parents to pack a healthy lunch making sure that you have foods from at least 4 food groups. Riverside Youth Enrichment Center serves milk during lunch (1 serving size (4oz.) of 1% low fat milk). Families who do not want milk served to their child for dietary reasons will need to sign a waiver.

Healthy Eating Tips for Kids will be included in our monthly newsletter and from time to time, the teachers will be putting up fruit sign-up lists for parents to voluntarily bring in a healthy fruit snack to share with the class. Nutrition information and a list of healthy snack options are available on the USDA website (www.usda.gov).

If your child is staying until 6pm, then it is recommended that parents provide an afternoon snack that is generally given at 4:15pm-4:30pm. This snack is put in a Ziploc baggie labeled with the child's name and placed in the snack basket outside the classroom door. This is done in the 3 year and VPK classrooms. The 1 year olds and 2 year olds shall eat a snack that is packed directly from the child's lunch box. Healthy foods are encouraged since the foods children eat affect their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

Hours of Operation, Holidays and School Closings

We are open Monday through Friday from 7:00am to 6:00pm.

We are closed on the following holidays:

Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Friday, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Spring Holiday, Memorial Day, and Independence Day.



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

Palm Beach Gardens Recreation Division does offer other programs for certain ages on some of these holidays. Participants will be required to pay the full tuition amount for school closures. No credit on tuition is given for holidays.

The City of Palm Beach Gardens Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will close for one teacher planning and preparation day. The exact date for the planning day will be announced when the Palm Beach County School District confirms their calendar.

Hurricanes, Extreme Weather Conditions, and other Emergency Procedures

With regard to severe weather alerts, please listen to news reports for notices of closings. Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will make every effort to notify participants and media if the facility will be closed due to weather conditions. Concerning hurricanes, generally the recreation facilities will close when the public schools close. However, Riverside Youth Enrichment Center reserves the right to either be open or closed when the Palm Beach County School District is closed. Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will remain closed pending damage assessments and availability of water, electricity and/or staff. We will keep you informed through our city website, email blasts and updated voicemail recordings.

If a tornado/severe weather warning is in effect, teachers will assist in the evacuation of children from the classroom and proceed to Room 10, collect all attendance records and ensure every classroom stay together as a group. Once assembled in the designated area, the Lead Teacher is responsible for the classroom attendance count. **All children and staff must remain on the floor**

in the designated shelter area and wait to receive an “all clear” from the Early Childhood Coordinator.

During the tornado/hurricane warning, the Early Childhood Coordinator or Manager on Duty will be responsible for monitoring weather information and will keep staff members informed of emergency weather changes. The Early Childhood Coordinator or Manager on Duty will monitor the weather and the local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. The front desk staff is responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the situation. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive.

Emergency Drills

Practice drills will be conducted for fire safety, evacuation, tornado and lock-down scenarios throughout the year. If you find yourself in the facility during one of our emergency drills, we encourage you to participate with your child.



Vacation Policy

Tuitions are based on a yearly basis, broken down into weekly payments. No credit on tuition is given for scheduled school holidays and closings, emergency school closings, or random sick days.

In order to take a vacation week, you are asked to notify the program coordinator in advance and pay one-half of the weekly tuition for each program week of absence. *If your child attends any portion of a week, a full week's tuition will be charged.* **Children may take up to 2 vacation weeks per school year (our school year runs from August to August).** Each additional vacation week will be billed as a full week's tuition.

Guidance/Discipline Policy

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center strives to create a stimulating and creative environment where children learn and play while participating in age appropriate activities. We believe children need limits in order to feel secure about themselves and their environment. The purpose of discipline is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self control. The basis for our Discipline Policy is an organized classroom and prepared staff members. At Riverside Youth Enrichment Center, we strive to develop a positive relationship between the teacher and child. We also believe that if an interesting and challenging program is offered to the child, then discipline problems are at a minimum. We prefer positive reinforcement, redirection, and preventive discipline.



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

According to licensing rules for child care centers in the state of FLORIDA:

Rule 1240-4-6-.09, (2) Behavior Management and Guidance. (Florida Statute 63E-7.009)

- a) Attention spans and skills of children shall be considered so that caregivers do not require behavior of children which is developmentally inappropriate.
- b) Discipline shall be reasonable, appropriate, and in terms the children can understand.
- c) Praise and encouragement of good behavior shall be used instead of focusing upon unacceptable behavior only.
- d) Punishment that is shaming, humiliating, frightening, verbally abusive, or injurious to children shall not be used.
- e) Punishment shall not be related to food, rest or toileting.
- f) Spanking or any other type of corporal punishment is prohibited. (“Corporal punishment” is the infliction of bodily pain as a penalty for behavior of which the punisher disapproves.)

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center expects parental involvement and cooperation in all aspects of discipline. Failure to comply can warrant termination. We reserve the right to discontinue work with any child/parent whose needs cannot be met. The Guidance/Discipline Policy’s purpose is to establish procedures for the parents, lead teacher, and a member of the Management team to utilize when planning to meet the needs of the child(ren) with unacceptable or inappropriate behavior.

The following is considered unacceptable behavior:

Running in the classroom	Leaving the area or group without permission
Becoming disruptive	Removing shoes or other articles of clothing
Throwing toys, rocks, sand	Using toys and materials inappropriately
Aggressive behavior	Arguing with staff members or other children
Abusive, or inappropriate language	Hurting themselves or others, such as hitting, biting, spitting, kicking, and pulling hair
Behavior determined by the director to be unacceptable	

If inappropriate behavior does occur, the teacher has the prime responsibility and will follow the strategies listed below. The center will use three methods to communicate with parents and to track behavior:

Daily Reports - a parent/center communication format that does not count as a written behavior report. If the teacher deems necessary, a copy will be kept on file.

Observation Form - documentation of observed inappropriate or challenging behavior. These may be filled out at any time by any center team member and are used solely to track behavior patterns. These are to be turned in daily to the lead teacher over the student and then to the Management team for filing.

Behavior Report - These are the “Incident Forms” and are in duplicate. The original is filed in the child’s file and the copy is given to the parent. These are pre-approved by a Management team member. Each “Behavior” Report counts as one of the three that would result in suspension.

Behavior Guidance Strategies

1. Redirection - Encourage child's good behavior and/or redirect his or her activity.
2. "Time out" or "think time" within their area - If a problem still exists, the child is removed from the situation to an area away from the group or activity, yet within their classroom or class gathering place.
 - One minute per year of age, no more than three minutes after the child has regained control or composure.
 - The child will be allowed to return to the group as soon as possible.
 - If redirection and "time out"/"think time" periods are not sufficient, staff members intervene as soon as possible to prevent physical or emotional injury.
 - The teacher will try to help the child identify his/her unacceptable behavior and possible alternatives.
3. "Time out" or "think time" away from the group - If the child continues in the inappropriate behavior or the strategy is ineffective, it becomes necessary to continue the "time out" or "think time" in an area outside the classroom or gathering place, with appropriate supervision.
4. Behavior Report - a Behavior Report will be sent home:
 - If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate
 - The severity denotes an unresolved problem.
 - Three written Behavior Reports can constitute a child being suspended from the child care program for one week.
5. Sending a child home - a parent will be called to pick up the child:
 - If the child becomes out of control and/or fails to respond to the measures taken by the Riverside Youth Enrichment Center Team
 - This is at the discretion of the most senior Management Team member present.
 - A Behavior Report will be written and a Behavior Intervention Meeting may be scheduled.
6. Behavior Intervention Meeting - a behavior intervention meeting must take place:
 - If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate.
 - Those in attendance will be the parents, the child's lead teacher, and a member of the Management team.
 - This may be called by any of the individuals listed above.
 - During this time, the parent or guardian, the lead teacher and a member of the Management team will meet in an attempt to determine if the child is capable of drastically changing his/her behavior to allow reentry into the program.
7. Suspension - a child being suspended from the child care program for one week.
 - Three written behavioral reports can constitute a child being suspended from the child care program.
 - During this time a Behavior Intervention Meeting will be scheduled (see above).
 - Fees will still be paid for the suspended week to retain the child's space in the Riverside Youth Enrichment Center program.

- If the child does continue in the program and receives a fourth behavioral report within 30 days of being suspended, termination of services may occur.

8. Termination of services – a child will be disenrolled from the program:

- When the severity of a problem is great enough that it could endanger the safety of the child(ren)'s welfare.
- Termination may be effective immediately after consulting the most senior Management Team member present.
- The Center considers this to be a drastic measure and would not resort to such unless the child's behavior significantly and directly threatens the physical or mental health, safety or well-being of one or more of the other children or team members and, that threat cannot be eliminated.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Law Requirements

As a child care provider we are mandated reporters, which require us to report all cases of suspected neglect or child abuse to Child Protective Services. If you have any questions about mandated reporters, please feel free to ask any staff member.

Financial Agreement

Tuition may be paid by the weekly, biweekly or by the month. However, all tuition is due on the Friday prior to the week of attendance. Everyone is required to have a credit card on file. If payment has not been received by Monday of the current week, your credit card on file will be charged on Tuesday morning in order to continue in our program. ***We will not allow balances on accounts.*** Riverside Youth Enrichment Center accepts exact cash, MasterCard, Visa, American Express, debit cards and personal checks made out to the *City of Palm Beach Gardens*. You also have the option to sign up for auto debit or you can pay online from the convenience of your home. See the front desk for more information on these options.



Returned Checks/NSF

Collections for fees due, cancelled checks or declined credit cards will be made by personal contact by the Resource staff. Persons with outstanding balances will not be allowed to register themselves or guardian children for other programs until all past due fees are paid, including any costs associated with the collection of payment. In addition, it is expected that any outstanding account balance with other City departments is also paid in full; for example: code violations or off duty police detail.

Participants or guardians that provide payment with an NSF check will be placed on a cash or credit card only payment option. PLEASE NOTE: We will not accept personal checks for past due balances or for returned checks. The City of Palm Beach Gardens charges a \$25 fee for all returned checks.

Program Late Pick-Up Fee

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

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

Withdrawal - Two weeks written notice is **required** when it is time to withdraw your child from our program. Parents are responsible for tuition payment during this two-week period.

Refunds for Medical or Other Emergencies

- Refunds will be given in circumstances of medical emergencies and other life altering changes on a case by case basis.
- A Request for Refund form must be filled out in order for a refund to be considered. Request for Refund forms are available at the front desk or simply send your request to recinfo@pbgfl.com.
- All refund requests are subject to a \$20.00 processing fee.
- Medical refunds will be pro-rated if a child can only attend a portion of a session. We reserve the right to ask for a doctor's note if a medical refund is requested.



Cell Phone Use

One of the most important aspects of what we do at the Riverside Youth Enrichment Center is to build relationships with the families registered with our facility. For this reason, we ask that cell phones remain off or on silent when entering our facility. We hope that you understand that both drop off and pick up times are very important times for your children and they need your full attention during this transition.



Photographs and Videos

While the Parent/Guardian Agreement allows Riverside Youth Enrichment Center to use photographs without restriction, it does not permit other parents or outside agencies to photograph children, staff or Center activities. Please respect this agreement by refraining from videotaping or photographing your child or staff while on Riverside Youth Enrichment Center property or attending Riverside Youth Enrichment Center functions. Photographs taken by Riverside Youth Enrichment Center are used for our monthly newsletter, public relations and staff training. Your signed parent agreement and acknowledgement of receiving this handbook gives Riverside Youth Enrichment Center permission to use such materials without compensation.

Birthdays

We do celebrate birthdays! If you wish to bring a snack in, we recommend healthy snack items for celebrations in our program. Please check with your child's teacher for suggestions as to what the children would enjoy. All food and refreshments must be store bought. Gifts for your child's classmates are not encouraged; we recommend that you save this type of celebration for your homes.



Parent Involvement/Visitors

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

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

Open-Door Policy

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center's open-school policy is based upon the belief that a child's development is best promoted through a partnership between home and school. Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to visit our school throughout the day without prior appointment and observe their child in class, except during the first and last weeks of school or on days prior to or just after school holidays. If you would like to visit a class, please arrange a time with your child's teacher. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the front desk. All visitors are asked to please use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school, as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any unknown visitor to the classroom.

Parent Partner Program

We give all parents the opportunity to help support our school by participating in our Parent Partner Program. For \$25.00 per year, you can significantly offset the cost of supplies, materials and snacks that are essential in each of our classrooms. In return, you will receive recognition in the Riverside Youth Enrichment Center newsletter and a certificate of appreciation. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to become involved with their child's school in a positive and supportive way. If you are interested in participating in the Parent Partner Program, please stop by the front desk and let us know.

Personal Belongings/Toys from Home

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

Riverside Youth Enrichment Center does require that each child have a specific cot sheet. We will issue a complimentary cot sheet for each **new** child who registers for any program for the first time

at our facility. Additional cot sheets or larger size cot sheets may be *purchased* at Riverside Youth Enrichment Center for **\$10.00**. You may also choose to research them through an outside vendor to *purchase* childcare cot sheets. Feel free to customize and decorate your child's cot sheet and include their name!

The cot sheet size is: One year old classroom cot sheet sizes: 21" W x 39" L.

The cot sheet size is: Two year old & up classroom cot sheet sizes: 21" W x 51" L.

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

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

Field Trips

Various field trips will be arranged throughout the school year (4 year olds and our After School Program). A permission slip will be sent home indicating the time and place of the field trip and any fee involved. For safety reasons, children are *required* to wear a program t-shirt. It is easier to keep children together when they are all wearing the same t-shirt. Riverside Youth Enrichment Center will be providing field trip t-shirts to each child on the day of the field trip; you will not have to purchase additional shirts. Remember, children must have a signed permission slip to participate.



Gift Policy

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



Conflict of Interest/Babysitting

In an effort to maintain the professional status of our center and prevent any potential conflicts of interest, babysitting by center staff is strongly discouraged. However, if you choose to have one of our staff members babysit your child, services must be outside the center premises and with the understanding that such arrangements are solely between you and the person who is caring for your child.

**RIVERSIDE YOUTH ENRICHMENT CENTER
PROGRAM HANDBOOK
PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT**

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

I hereby agree to comply with the 2016-2017 rules and regulations regarding health, absences, scheduled times, fees, etc. as stated in the Program Handbook.

I agree that the Riverside Youth Enrichment Center has the right to withdraw my child if I do not follow these rules.

Signature: _____

Please complete this page and return to the front desk at the time of registration.

Mandatory
Please sign and return to
Front Desk
2016-17 Handbook