



Community Educational Centers

# *Community Educational Centers*

[www.cecschool.com](http://www.cecschool.com)

*Celebrating our 14<sup>th</sup> year!!!!*

## PARENT HANDBOOK

## Contents

Welcome.....	4
Our Background: .....	4
Our Philosophy:.....	4
Our Promise:.....	5
Our Program: .....	5
Objective: .....	5
Curriculum And Related Services: .....	5
Learning Environments: .....	5
Physical Facilities:.....	6
The Staff: .....	6
Your Responsibilities: .....	7
Keeping Channels Of Communication Open: .....	7
Important Procedures: .....	9
Policy on Medical/Medicine:.....	9
Allergies .....	10
Policy on Discipline: .....	10
Policy on Suspension/ Expulsion: .....	11
Policy on Admission and Payment:.....	11
Application: .....	11
Deposite:.....	11
Procedure: Admission less than 15 days after date of Application: .....	11
Lunch / Diapers: .....	11
Payment Coupons:.....	12
Tuition Payments:.....	12
Extended Hours: .....	12
Late Pick-Up: .....	12
Sibling Discount: .....	13
Child Illness:.....	13
Family Vacation: .....	13
Information to Parents: .....	13
Entrance Requirements (JJ):.....	13
Policy on Parent Involvement (JJ):.....	14



## Community Educational Centers

---

**Innovative child care, pre-school and kindergarten programs**

**Curriculum** provides cognitive challenges

**Developmental** program facilitates and stimulates children's thinking.

---

*For registration and information contact:*

Community Educational Centers  
5151 Cold Spring Creamery Road  
Doylestown, PA 18902  
(215) 230-4100  
[www.cecschool.com](http://www.cecschool.com)

## **Welcome:**

*Welcome to Community Educational Center.*

*We are coming together in a partnership of nurturing our children. We have put together the following material in order to begin our working relationship.*

We have an educated and loving staff of teachers and caregivers dedicated to excellence. Community Educational Center offers a developmental program for children 3 months through 10 years.

There are opportunities for each child to experience success-oriented developmentally appropriate activities. Our school provides mutual respect between children, staff and parents.

We have highly trained and experienced staff who are early childhood professionals. All our head teachers have their college degree, if not they have a Child Development Associates (CDA).

## **Our Background:**

Community Educational Centers (CEC) was established by Family Resource Centers, an organization which has been providing child care and parenting services since 1977. Community Educational Centers had been in existence since 1997.

We believe that parents are the most influential teachers of their young children, and it is a community responsibility to strengthen and support the family in its role as the child's primary educator.

## **Our Philosophy:**

We believe that children are our most valuable resource. We are therefore committed to supporting families with young children so as to ensure the best possible care for our youth.

We believe that the early years are important educationally and that the family is the most important educational unit which the child will experience. We believe that anyone nurturing a young child is entitled to educational information and in-service training to stimulate their creative skills while caring for young children. Care giving is a professional responsibility. It is for this reason we believe that families, the medical community, the educational community and the business community must work together in a cooperative relationship to ensure the very best living and learning environments for our young children.

In our Child Care Center, caregivers who have been delegated to care for children outside the family provide nurturing and quality educational programming for children age three months through kindergarten.

Our Center is identified as a warm welcome place for our families and their children. CEC provides safe and creative activities for young children. Caregivers and children participate in programs devoted to art, music, drama and developmental activities. Caregivers and children can play and be entertained in meaningful ways. Our Centers provide a place within the community where families can enjoy quality time together and apart.

## **Our Promise:**

- To provide quality staff as caregivers supplementing children's home care by relating to them with warmth and intimacy.
- To facilitate development of day to day staff relationships with children which combines the best aspects of home life with opportunities for creative and stimulating small group interaction.
- To provide physical environments that are designed according to the emotional and physical developmental stages of the children to allow for supportive growth.

## **Our Program:**

### ***Objective:***

To provide high quality educational child care for children ages three months to school age.

### ***Curriculum And Related Services:***

- Community Educational Center offers a developmental program for children 3 months through 10 years. The program is designed to help develop the individual child; physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually.
- It is geared toward the individual child, taking into consideration each child's family life and developmental level. Children are introduced into an educationally prepared environment which offers practical and cognitive challenges to their mental and physical development.
- Teachers and caregivers provide warmth and personal guidance. Each child is allowed to progress at his/her own level and rate.
- All children in addition to the basic program are provided with a full academic program. Our program provides for periods of activity, rest, individual and group work. Outdoor play takes place daily, weather permitting. During the unfavorable weather conditions, children go in to our indoor gymroom. Field trips to educational and cultural areas are also included in our program.
- Our Kindergarten and after school program are state certified and meet all educational requirements.

## **Learning Environments:**

We believe that infants and young children must experience their environment through their senses and perceptions and learn best from discovery and manipulating materials. We also believe that each child organizes and develops his / her experiences individually and will, therefore, explore task and materials at his / her own level through natural curiosity. Our learning environments reflect these beliefs.

Children are grouped into small units according to their age ranges. Each group has a permanent team of caregivers and is assigned to "classrooms" arranged according to the specific developmental stages of children. Other spaces called "common rooms" are areas where children experience art, gym, and cooking activities.

Children at the “kindergarten” level are provided with an academic program encompassing a curriculum equivalent to or above state guidelines. They are prepared for first grade or beyond depending on readiness.

The environment of each group poses cognitive challenges through a variety of materials specially organized and changed through out the year. The program follows a developmental sequence to facilitate and stimulate our children’s thinking. The materials and centers are setup to allow children to practice and engage in skills already mastered; they also facilitate and encourage the development of new skills.

The human environment is most important. Our caregivers emphasize warmth, personal attention, consistency in their behavior in limit setting and awareness of the best ways to relate to children.

### ***Physical Facilities:***

Community Educational Center is conveniently located at 5151 Cold Spring Creamery Road Doylestown, PA 18902. The building is a one level structure lined by trees and separate outdoor play areas for each age group. Classrooms are arranged to provide warm nurturing care for children of all ages. A gym, art room, and café are available for indoor activities related to each age level.

### ***The Staff:***

The Community Educational Center has a staff/child ratio of

- 1:3 for children under 12 months,
- 1:4 for children 12 months to 18 months,
- 1:5 for children 18 months to 2 years
- 1:6 for children 2 years to 3 years
- 1:10 for children 3 years to 10 years,

meeting and exceeding State regulations. It employs an integrated staff; experienced Director trained in Early Childhood Development, as well as other professionals and paraprofessional and aides.

### **Your Responsibilities:**

The growth of your child and development will be enhanced with your cooperation and assistance. By following these simple guidelines you can help us help your child. We recommend you:

1. Read and become familiar with our policies and procedures.
2. Watch regularly for policies, up-coming events, and other information.
3. Pick your child up before closing time (see policy and fees concerning late pick-up).
4. Provide emergency phone numbers and contacts
5. Pay fees on time.
6. Remove a sick child from the center as soon as possible after being notified
7. Accompany your child to the classroom, remove any outer clothing (coats, boots, etc.) and notify the teacher in person that your child has arrived.
8. Dress your child appropriately. Provide comfortable foot wear. Flip-flops, or sandals are not appropriate as they can cause accidents or injuries.
9. Notify the school if someone other than yourself is picking up your child.
10. Attend parent/teacher conferences during the school year.
11. Sign your child in and out each day.

12. Inform us of any concerns that you may have.
13. Parents of children in the Infant and Toddler classes (3 months to 3 years) are responsible for:
  - i) Providing all food with the exception of morning and afternoon snacks.
  - ii) Providing bottles, and pacifiers.
  - iii) Providing a complete change of clothing (labeled).
  - iv) Providing diapers, wipes, powder, ointment, etc.
  - v) Providing a crib sheet and a small blanket
  - vi) Washing the sheet and blanket and returning them to school each week.
  - vii) Providing a smock or an old shirt for art projects.

Due to the possibility of allergies the school asks that new foods for children be introduced at home over the weekends.

14. Parents of all other children (3 -5 years) are responsible for:
  - i) Providing all food with the exception of morning and afternoon snacks.
  - ii) Providing a complete change of clothing (labeled).
  - iii) Providing a smock or an old shirt for art projects.

## **Keeping Channels Of Communication Open:**

The best time to set the tone of the day for your child is at drop off. A warm confident "Hello" to the staff and other children combined with a have a good day hug to your child, will set both the caregiver and your child on a positive constructive day.

Your child's caregivers and teachers are very committed. They work hard in preparation and expend a lot of personal energy in working with your child. It is important that they know you care. Don't hesitate to share kind words on a day to day basis with them. This informal communication is a strong motivator for quality care. You can look forward to the following:

**Back to School Night-** Back to School Night is held in October. It's an evening with your child's teachers and staff to introduce you to the classroom and learning activities. Individual concerns and question regarding your child should be saved and discussed at your conference.

**Parent Conferences -** Parent conferences are scheduled for each child in the spring. This is an opportunity to come together and share your child's day. Individual conferences can be scheduled with your child's teacher throughout the year.

**Fund Raisers-** In order to involve our families in a working relationship with the school we will occasionally run fund raisers. The revenue will be used to provide special events and materials for the children.

### **Parent Concerns-**

We believe that individual, personal communication between families and their school is most important in order to provide quality educational child care. The channels of communication we prefer you use when concerns arise are:

**First:** Let your child's teacher or caregiver know of your concern.

**Second:** Make sure that the Director knows of your concern. Teachers and caregivers can meet at lunch time or by special appointment. Please don't

hesitate to bring up your concerns, **they can not be addressed if they are not known**. You can write an e-mail to the director at:  
sbalderston@comcast.net.

**Third:** If things are not worked out to your satisfaction write to the Executive Board:

Community Educational Center  
5151 Cold Spring Creamer Road  
Doylestown, PA 18902

## **Policy on Parent Involvement:**

Parents are welcome at any time to visit the school. We encourage you to be an active member in school activities. Join us on field trips, or share your professional life with us or even read a book to the class. If you have any questions please consult your child's teacher or contact any administrator.

In addition to daily sheets, we hold parent teacher conferences once a year or when needed. When questions and concerns can be addressed. Open communication is an important key to the success of your child and school relationship.

## **Important Procedures:**

**Hours of Operation**– CEC is open 7:00 am to 6:00 pm  
Extended hours are available 7:00 am to 8:00 am and 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm for extra charge. Full day and Half day and flexible scheduling is available.

**Drop-Off**– When arriving please walk your child to his/her classroom. Please let your child's teacher know that your child has arrived and sign the "sign in" sheet.

**Pick-Up**– School ends at 6:00 pm Our staff is schedule to leave at 6:00 pm Late pick-ups become a hardship on them and their families.  
When picking up your child please meet him/her at their classroom. Please let your child's teacher know that you are taking your child and sign the "sign-out" sheet.

**Other Person Pick-up**– When you are unable to pick up your child from school please sign the **alternate pick up form** located in the office. When the designee arrives they must stop at the office to present current identification.

In case of sudden emergency you may telephone / fax the Director to give permission for someone else to pick up, they will need current identification as well.

**NO CHILD WILL BE RELAESED WITHOUT THIS PROCEDURE.** It is important that all adults involved with your child's drop off or pick up be introduced to the staff.

## **Policy on Medical/Medicine:**

We know that it is difficult when you have a sick child that must stay home. However, it is important for all our children that any one child that is sick be cared for at home. Upon

recommendation of our doctor and that of the Department of Public Welfare, children must stay home under these conditions:

1. Any child with a temperature of 101 degree Fahrenheit or over.
2. Any child with diarrhea or vomiting.
3. Any child with an unrecognizable rash.
4. Any known communicable disease.

If your child is on medicine, be sure to mention it to his/her teacher. All medicine must be stored in the office and signed for on the medicine chart each day.

We want to remind you of our policy on the administration of medicine:

- Parents must sign for medicines to be given in the medicine log book located in the office.
- All medicine must be placed in the medicine cabinet in the office.
- Medicines must be provided in the original containers.
- Child's name and dosage should be clearly labeled.
- If any questions arise parents will be called.

**\*\*Other than Tylenol, over the counter medication may be administered for one day only.**

After the first day, for the protection of the children, medicine will only be given with a doctors note. The note must state the child's name, the dosage, the name of the medication and the dates it is to be administered. For your convenience our fax is (215) 230-3309.

## **Allergies:**

All allergies must be listed on your child's medical report and signed by your doctor. Epi-pens and all special needs should be listed on the Medication Log located in the office. Allergy notices are displayed in the classroom and snacks are labeled.

**Clothing**– For your child's freedom at school we suggest that you bring them in comfortable, seasonally appropriate, easily laundered play clothes. Please label all extra items entering the school and understand that we do our best to send items home with the proper families. While in transition from diapers to toileting child must wear easily removable pants.

**Food**- Please provide your child with a nutritious lunch each full day. Snack will be served mid-morning and again mid-afternoon. Parents provide snacks for the class on a rotating basis. Infant room parents will provide formula/breast milk and food for their infant.

**Field Trips**– Kindergarten, Pre Kindergarten, and Pre School classes take field trips during the course of the year. Field trips are an important learning experience for the children and a fun excursion from the regular routine. The success of our trips depends upon our parent volunteers as drivers and chaperones.

**Holidays**– Community Educational Center will provide you with a calendar listing school holidays and important events.

Holidays are celebrated through out the year. We invite and look forward to families sharing their holidays with us. If you would like to share your families heritage with the class just make arrangements with your child's teacher.

**Sleeping Bags**- A labeled child's sleeping bag or blanket is required for those children who stay into nap time. (Except those children still in the infant room). Please remember to bring it home on Friday to be washed.

## **Policy on Discipline:**

Child is spoken to in a confident, clear, low voice and asked to refrain from action causing problem. Respect will be given to child at all times.

Discipline situations will be treated as opportunities for learning self-regulation, not punishment.

Child should never be told that he/she is bad or naughty, nor should they be threatened with punishment. Shouting is neither professional nor effective.

A child will not be disciplined for failing to eat or sleep or for soiling themselves.

A teacher may not withhold food, emotional response, stimulation or the opportunity for rest/sleep.

### Under No Circumstance May A Teacher Hit or Verbally Abuse A Child

Appropriate ways of disciplining negative behavior are:

Determining that the action will not be better addressed by ignoring it. Remember “what you pay attention to grows.”

Redirect the child to a more positive way of interacting (i.e. “use your words”- model words for them, “be friendly,” “that’s \_\_\_\_ work,” “let’s use this \_\_\_\_,” etc.)

Physically remove the child to another play area where an adult can encourage more appropriate play.

When negative behavior persists, a firm “no” with eye contact and hands gently on child will convey you are serious.

Careful supervision can allow you to redirect negative behavior before it begins. If the child does not respond, continues to repeat action or physically harms another, he/she is removed from the situation and is placed in a chair in the same room. The child will not remain in the chair any longer than their age in minutes (i.e. 1 yr. = 1 min., 2yrs. = 2 min.)

Persistent negative behavior requires Staff-Director consultation.

## **Policy on Suspension/ Expulsion:**

Community Educational Center reserves the right to terminate the attendance of the child for failure to meet the payments specified or where it can be substantiated that the child is not being benefited by attendance in the Center or where it can be shown that the child or family is an impediment to the well being of the class as a whole.

## **Policy on Admission and Payment:**

### ***Application:***

Parents seeking to admit their children for the first time will be required to fill out an application form and pay a non-refundable application fee of \$75.00.

### ***Deposit:***

Parents seeking to reserve a space for their child will be required to submit a deposit (which is based on the weekly schedule) with the application form. This deposit is not refundable and will be applied to the first payment of the contracted schedule.

### ***Procedure: Admission less than 15 days after date of Application:***

Parents seeking admission of their children with little or no advance application, that is, less than 15 days after the date of application, will be permitted to do so if there are

places available and will be required to submit the \$75 application fee, and two months tuition. The remaining number of tuition payments to be made will be determined as specified above.

***Lunch / Diapers:***

A bag lunch is provided by parents. All lunches must be in sealed, labeled and dated containers that do not require refrigeration. Diapers are provided by the parents.

***Payment Coupons:***

To facilitate the bookkeeping necessary to record tuition payments, each parent will receive with the Child Care Contract a number of payment coupons equal to the number of tuition payments (including the deposit). The use of these coupons will reduce the time and expense involved in processing tuition payments, and insure the proper crediting of payments. When making payments, each parent should enclose the appropriate coupon with the amount of the payment due and then either mail the coupon and payment to the address indicated on the coupon or deliver both items to a Director at the school. Contract changes and revisions will be accessed a \$35 revision fee.

***Tuition Payments:***

The first tuition payment must always be made approx. 30 days before the first day the child attends school without exception. Refunds may be granted under extenuating circumstances stipulated on your contract. Monthly tuition payments are made regardless of Holidays and "Closures". Any schedule greater than 6.5 hours will be considered a "FULL" day. Written notification of early withdrawal (permanent or temporary) must be made at least 30 business days prior to new end date.

Community Educational Center, does not receive any funding from outside sources. Thus, it is essential that all scheduled and nonscheduled payments be made in full on the date which they are due in order for us to meet our wages. The dates and amount of the payments are indicated on the payment coupons which all parents receive with their Child Care Contract.

We seek to provide a stable environment for your child. To achieve this we must also provide our staff with a secure and stable employment. This can only be maintained by you obligating yourself to making timely tuition payments on a monthly basis. When your child is away from school, for any reason, you will still be responsible for that period of absence and required to pay your tuition in full as per our contractual agreement.

As the Child Care Contract specifies, unpaid balances overdue 5 calendar days will incur a 5% interest charge. If the balance due with interest is not paid within the next 5 days (10<sup>th</sup>), the child will not be permitted to continue in attendance. If verbal arrangements have been made to allow the return of your child you will still be obligated for the outstanding balance. (Any check returned will incur a "Returned Item" charge without exception.)

***Extended Hours:***

Community Educational Center offers extended hours to those families who may require them. This could be an extra few hours or an extra day or two on your contracted time. Extra hours or extra days should be arranged with the director. A fee of approx. \$9.00 per hour will be charged for the temporary hourly rate and for extra days the fee is prorated based upon the fee scale. Extra hours can be arranged for before 8am after 5:30pm.

**Late Pick-Up:**

It is important for parents, grandparents, nannies, friends, etc., who pick up your children, to be here on time. It is hard for young children to wait too long and staff have families at home to care for. If you are going to be late you must call! This helps us plan for the overtime staff. After 6:01 pm there will be a charge of \$1.00 per minute/per child/per staff member, **(i.e. \$1 per min)** due the next school day.

**Sibling Discount:**

Families with two or more children will receive a 10% discount on older child(ren).

**Child Illness:**

If a child is absent because of illness for up to one month the tuition fee is required. If a child is absent because of illness for more than one month any payments received by that month may be credited upon return. Required payments and adjustments will resume as scheduled.

**Family Vacation:**

Tuition fee for contracted hours is required if child is removed by parent to go on a vacation that does not coincide with school closing.

**Information to Parents:**

Our center is required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – Department of Public Welfare to be licensed yearly, A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent place at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the manual of Standards for Child Care Centers ( the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life safety; staff qualifications, supervision, staff child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/ community participation; admin. and record keeping requirements and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Standards and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask the Director. Parents may contact the Department of Public Welfare at:

Office of Child Development  
1400 Spring Garden Street  
Room 502  
Philadelphia, PA 19130-4088  
1-800-346-2929

## **Entrance Requirements:**

A child should be at least 3 months of age. Children are accepted on a full time or part time basis. Full time students may attend 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM and part time students may attend 7:00 AM to 12:30 PM. **Flexible** schedules are available.

Children may only exit building while accompanied by a parent or guardian. Children's hands must be held at all times in the parking areas.

For security our front door is always locked. Please ring the door bell if no one is at the front desk.

## **Policy on Parent Involvement:**

Parents are welcome at any time to visit the center. We encourage you to participate actively in classroom and center activities. Join us on field trips, parties, or share your talents with us.

In addition to daily reports, your child's progress will be documented through out the year. All parents are invited to review and discuss their child's progress with their child's teacher. All questions and concerns will be addressed. Please feel free to talk to the staff as well as the Director. Open communication is an important aspect of successful teacher, child and parent relations.



## WHAT DOES KEYSTONE STARS MEAN?

Keystone STARS (Standards, Training/Professional Development, Assistance, Resources) provides families with a tool to gauge the quality of child care programs. The STARS program supports child care programs in the commitment to continuous quality improvement. Programs may enter Keystone STARS at the "Start with STARS" level and earn a STAR 1 through STAR 4 rating using research-based standards that measure four areas that make a difference in the quality of care your child receives:

1. The educated and well-trained staff.
2. The environment your child is in everyday.
3. Leadership and management.
4. Family and community partnerships.

As a program moves from STAR 1 to STAR 4, the requirements in these areas increase.

## AT A KEYSTONE STARS PROGRAM YOU SHOULD FIND:

- Department of Public Welfare Certificate of Compliance for Centers or registration for Family Homes.
- A comfortable place where your child can explore and learn.
- Laughing, reading and talking which builds language skills.
- Teachers learning new ways to help your child succeed.
- A safe, healthy and exciting place.
- Music, art, science and play activities that increase school readiness.
- Your child feeling good about his/her self.
- Family involvement.
- Teachers that listen to children and parents.
- Children having fun together and being respectful of each other.

## KEYSTONE STARS: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **Q: Why should parents care about Keystone STARS?**

A: Your child's Early Education is critical to his/her development and future success in school and life. Keystone STARS sets requirements for early childhood educators to promote the best learning environment and safest setting possible for your child.

**Q: What are the requirements set by Keystone STARS?**

A: Quality ratings are based on four areas.

1. Staff education –early childhood educators have the training and knowledge to interact properly with children.
2. Learning environment – program has developmentally appropriate materials for a variety of ages and provides opportunities for children to learn on a daily basis.
3. Leadership and management – a well-run business has policies and plans in place that enhance safety and manage risk, but also establish regular communication with parents and manage the needs of their staff..
4. Family and community partnerships - programs reach out to families and community groups to take advantage of all resources that my help their young children and families.

**Q: How does Keystone STARS rate a program?**

A: Programs complete a self-study evaluation based on STARS standards to apply for a STAR level. Keystone STARS evaluators will then confirm their STAR level. Programs that are earning a STAR 3 or STAR 4 also receive an independent Environmental Ratings Scale.

**Q: What is the difference between a STAR 1 and higher STAR ratings?**

A: Programs are rated using the four quality areas, but the requirements increase in each area for each STAR level. Please speak with your local Child Care Information Services (CCIS) for details of STAR level requirements.

**Q: The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (DPW) certifies programs. Isn't that good enough?**

A: A certified center does meet Pennsylvania's minimum requirements for safety. However, certification does not address Early Education. A child's first years are crucial to their lifelong learning, and the quality of their learning experiences will affect their readiness for school. Keystone STARS programs combine these safety requirements with Early Education standards to give children a safe and an educational environment.

**Q: Does it cost more to enroll my child in a Keystone STARS program?**

A: Providers enroll voluntarily in the Keystone STARS program and there are no charges for the provider to enroll. Costs to parents are set only by the provider themselves. Keystone STARS provides many child care providers with targeted financial assistance to help them continue to improve quality so they do not have to pass the cost on to families.

**Q: What will my child get out of being enrolled in a Keystone STARS program?**

A: Many things! Individual attention, daily learning activities, a safe, friendly, and respectful environment, feeling good about themselves, a well educated staff, parent involvement, and more.

**Q: What do parents get out of enrolling their children in a Keystone STARS program?**

A: Knowing that your child is safe and respected, that your child is learning something new every day, and the security of knowing what to expect from your provider in certain situations. Most of all, giving your child the best opportunity to succeed today and in the future.



***Community Educational Centers, Inc.***

[www.cecschool.com](http://www.cecschool.com)

Phone 215-230-4100

Fax 215-230-3309