



**Montgomery
CHILD CARE
ASSOCIATION**

Providing high quality care and play-based education since 1968



FAMILY HANDBOOK



August 2023



MISSION STATEMENT

Montgomery Child Care Association, Inc. (MCCA) strives to provide the highest quality child care and play-based education for children in Montgomery County; professional training for child care providers; and advocacy for affordable quality child care for families of all income levels; and better training, pay and benefits for child care professionals.

ABOUT MCCA

MCCA provides daily child care and early education to infant through school aged children at its centers located throughout Montgomery County, Maryland. MCCA is the oldest non-profit child care provider in Montgomery County and started its work in 1966 as a Community Action Project of the War on Poverty. Recognizing the need for child care in their neighborhoods, a group of local activists formed an association to establish centers in Montgomery County that would serve a diverse population and establish high standards for child care.

MCCA is committed to its mission and provides developmentally appropriate, play-based child care for Montgomery County's culturally and economically diverse communities. MCCA helps low-income families access high quality child care by welcoming families that use government child care subsidies.

MCCA uses the Creative Curriculum®, a research-validated curriculum that is aligned with its play-based philosophy and approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), in its preschool programs. Our classroom activities provide active, hands-on play and learning experiences in language and literacy, math, science, social studies, art, music and dramatic play. In addition, MCCA programs offer opportunities for children to develop their large-motor skills and physical fitness through vigorous indoor and outdoor play. All MCCA programs provide daily snacks and follow high nutritional standards to promote healthy eating habits.

MCCA child care programs strive to exceed Maryland State child care licensing requirements and achieve accreditation by MSDE. Program evaluation and accreditation self-appraisal results are shared with staff, parents and MCCA's governing body. MCCA also is enrolled in MSDE's quality rating system known as Maryland EXCELS.

MCCA child care teachers and aides are encouraged to seek professional development beyond state minimum licensing requirements and participate in the Maryland Child Care Credential, a MSDE career ladder that encourages higher levels of education. Staff receive regular training and skills development as part of MCCA's ongoing commitment to professional development.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

MCCA admits children of any race, color, national and ethnic origin and affords all children the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to children in MCCA programs. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, disability,



genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, financial aid or any other MCCA sponsored activity.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

HOURS OF OPERATION

MCCA programs are open for child care services Monday through Friday throughout the year except as noted in our MCCA Opening and Closing Schedule, included as Appendix I. Daily hours of operation vary. Please check with your Center or Program Director for operating hours at your location.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND/OR TELEPHONE

It is essential that MCCA be notified of any changes in your family's contact information including email, street address or telephone numbers. Immediate notification should be made to both the Center or Program Director and updates should be made in the parent portal portion of your MCCA Enrollsy billing account.

HEALTH AND EMERGENCY FORMS

A complete enrollment packet, including health and emergency forms, must be received, reviewed and approved by MCCA **before** a child can begin in one of our programs. The forms must be completed in full and uploaded to your Enrollsy account before your child can attend. Many registration forms can be completed by families but some forms require a physician's signature. State licensing regulations require parents/guardians to fully complete all required forms and update forms annually. Your child will not be permitted to attend a MCCA program without all fully completed and required documents. The forms can be downloaded from [Enrollsy](#) or from the MCCA [website](#).

CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Your child will be engaged in activities throughout the day including hands-on projects, playing on the floor and playing outdoors. Children should wear comfortable, washable clothes that are appropriate for active play in every season (e.g., warm jacket, mittens and hat in the winter). Open-toed shoes and flip flops are not appropriate daily footwear and may only be worn during designated water play periods. All clothing should be marked with your child's name.

Each infant, toddler and preschool child should have an emergency full change of clothing at the center, marked with his/her name. It is important to wash and return these emergency clothes promptly when they are sent home.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Your child must be escorted by a responsible adult to the program, be presented to a staff member upon arrival and signed into the program. At school age programs when children are physically present



in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) buildings, children may enter the program directly from their classrooms.

If you want your child released to someone other than those people listed on your child's emergency card, MCCA must have the request in writing or via email. In an unexpected emergency you can call your program and give your child's teacher or Director permission to release the child to a different adult. You may be asked to provide proof of identity related to this phone request and MCCA will require photo identification before a child will be released to a different adult.

Please call or email program staff if your child will be absent from the child care center.

LATE PICK UP FEES

Children must be picked up by the established closing time at the center. A late fee of \$2.00 per minute will be assessed if a child is picked up after the program's established closing time. After the first 30 minutes, the late fee rate increases to \$5.00 per minute. The program clock will be the official time for calculating the late pick-up fee. You will be asked to sign a Late Pick-Up Fee Acknowledgment Form and the amount of the late fee will be added to your billing account in Enrollsy and charged to the payment method on file.

Families who are habitually late will be warned and may have their contract for child care terminated. Unpaid late fee balances that are more than 30 days old may result in the immediate suspension of your child's attendance from a MCCA program until the balance is paid in full.

CHILD GUIDANCE

MCCA staff is trained to use a positive approach to guidance in the classroom. Providing children of all ages with guidance is an important part of our curriculum and a great opportunity for children to learn appropriate behavior skills.

The goal of discipline in our programs is to teach children self-control. Our intent is to provide a secure, comfortable environment where children are guided by clear and consistent limits. An essential component of our approach involves teaching children to express their feelings.

We do not use punishment in our centers. Corporal punishment, verbal abuse such as threats or sarcasm, requiring a child to be silent or still for long periods of time, isolation, causing a child any kind of physical discomfort, or using food as reward or punishment, are not condoned.

Teaching staff work with Center and Program Directors to periodically conduct child assessments and develop individualized plans, as needed, to help guide classroom behavior. Conferences may be scheduled with families to address more challenging behaviors or other issues.

MCCA reserves the right to immediately suspend or dismiss a child from its programs at any time and for any reason.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

MCCA programs comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and make every reasonable accommodation to include all children in our programs and enable them to be safe and successful. Our



staff works closely with families, specialists and agencies that are involved with the child with the goal of supporting each child's success in a group care setting. Families are encouraged to share their child's Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Staff will monitor progress through ongoing observations, and schedule follow-up conferences with families and specialists as needed. MCCA's staff are knowledgeable about available county services, such as Child Find or Early Childhood Mental Health. These resources will be shared with families as needed.

MCCA programs also support children with medical special needs, including conditions such as asthma, allergies, diabetes or other conditions that require medication or support. The Director will work with families to develop a written Emergency Health Plan. Designated MCCA staff receive training in First Aid, CPR and medication administration training. Additional training needed to support the implementation of Emergency Health Plans may result in an additional charge to the family for the cost of the training.

Families should notify their director regarding their child's individual needs so that specific accommodation requests may be considered and implemented if appropriate within the context of a group child care setting.

FOOD

All MCCA programs provide daily snacks and follow high nutritional standards to promote healthy eating habits. Any MCCA provided meals and snacks are served without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, disability, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

Children will bring a daily **NUT FREE** bag lunch from home. Lunches should be packed and labeled with your child's name. An individual water bottle labeled with the child's name may also be sent in with the bag lunch. Meals need to be ready to eat and no more than one item should require heating. It is preferred that lunches not need refrigeration, but it is available if needed. Water, milk and utensils will be provided by MCCA. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying centers of any dietary restrictions or foods to avoid for their children and may need to provide alternative foods if necessary.

OUTSIDE PLAY

Daily outdoor time is scheduled each morning and afternoon. Times and duration of outdoor time are adjusted throughout the year according to weather conditions. When the Wind Chill Factor falls below 15 degrees or when the Air Quality/Heat Index is Code Purple, outdoor time will be replaced with appropriate indoor active play activities. Children attending the program are expected to be able to participate fully in activities including being well enough to play outdoors and having the appropriate clothing for the weather.

Exploring the world beyond our programs can enhance learning and life skills development. A separate Field Trip Permission form (walking) must be signed by parents for each child before each trip off program premises. Parents are welcome to join scheduled excursions.

REST TIME

Rest time is required by Maryland State Licensing Regulations and is a part of each daily routine for all children that have been in child care for more than six hours. This is not a time that children must sleep, but many young children do benefit from a nap. MCCA staff are not able to keep children awake during



nap time. Individual cribs are used for infants and cots are available for preschool children. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing sheets, blankets and/or pillows for your child's use during rest time. These rest time items will be sent home once a week for laundering. For school aged children and children who are not in need of sleep appropriate quiet choices are available during rest time.

ITEMS FROM HOME

MCCA recognizes how important materials from home can be to support successful transitions into classrooms for some children. However, children should only bring items into the program that are required as part of their daily routine. Guidelines for school age materials from home including electronics, cell phones and smart devices are detailed in Appendix III. Information regarding MCCA's Media Policy is included as Appendix IV. Please review and follow the corresponding guidelines, including ensuring that no dangerous items are brought to the program. MCCA is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items and each family assumes all risks of bringing items into the program.

ILLNESS

Great care is taken to make sure MCCA programs provide a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff. Each child should be well enough to participate fully in all of the daily activities of the program. Our programs are not equipped or licensed to care for sick children. If your child becomes ill during the day, we will make the child as comfortable as possible and notify you to immediately pick up your child.

MCCA programs follow MSDE Office of Child Care guidance and any applicable State and Local Department of Health guidance regarding exclusion and return to care timeframes for illnesses, including COVID-19. Please do not bring your child to the center with symptoms of illness. If your child is sent home from the center, s/he should remain at home and be symptom-free for at least 24 hours or for as long as indicated due to the nature of the illness. A written statement from your health care professional may be required for a return to the program in some circumstances. Children who have been ill for three or more days must have a note from a health care provider in order to return to child care. Please notify your Center or Program Director within 24 hours if your child has developed or been diagnosed with a communicable disease.

Please see Appendix II for additional information regarding general signs of illness and guidelines for Sickness and Medication Management.

LICE POLICY

If a child has head lice with live bugs, the parent/guardian will be called to pick up him/her within the hour. Head lice are very contagious and require immediate treatment. Nits (lice eggs) must be removed from the hair shaft and children cannot return to the program until they are free of live lice as confirmed by program staff in their sole discretion through inspection.

INJURY

Some bumps and bruises are a part of childhood, but as with illness, MCCA takes care to keep its programs safe. Designated staff are first aid and child CPR trained. If your child sustains an injury at the center the staff will calm the child, perform the necessary first aid procedures, notify you and fill out any



required documentation, which may include an accident report. The staff will ask you to read and sign the accident report when you pick up your child. Please inform the center if you seek medical attention for your child after an injury as there is a reporting requirement to MSDE Office of Child Care.

If the injury is more serious and requires immediate medical attention staff will call 911 and the child will be accompanied to the hospital, if needed, by a staff member who will stay with the child until a family member can arrive. It is extremely important that MCCA has current phone numbers to reach you in cases of illness, injury or other emergencies. Please inform program management whenever your phone numbers or the phone numbers of others that are listed on your child's emergency card change.

COMMUNICATION AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

MCCA values open, respectful and constructive communication. You should contact staff members to discuss situations in the home, life events and other issues which you feel MCCA should be aware of in order to support your child. Suggestions or complaints should be made to the Center Director or Program Director at your location. MCCA discourages gossip and other damaging comments. We protect the confidentiality of each staff member, child and family to the extent possible. Suggestions and concerns may also be brought to the attention of the Director of Operations by calling MCCA's main office at (301) 984-7680.

CHILD ASSESSMENTS AND FAMILY CONFERENCES

Teaching staff will conduct periodic observations and assessments of preschool children engaged in hands-on play activities and document each child's growth in a confidential individual portfolio. Child observations are used by teaching staff to discuss classroom dynamics and identify activities that will support quality programming.

Preschool family conferences are scheduled in the Fall and in the Spring to discuss individual child growth and development. Conferences may be held in person, over the phone or on a distance platform (e.g., ZOOM).

CORRESPONDENCE THROUGH CENTER MAILBOXES

All group correspondence by an individual, a family or group of families using MCCA mailboxes must first be approved by the Center or Program Director.

If you are planning a gathering for children outside of MCCA operating hours and do not plan to invite the entire class, please mail the invitations directly to each invited child's home. If the entire class is invited, you may use MCCA mailboxes after obtaining approval from the Center or Program Director.

Please note: Family emails, bulletin boards and MCCA facilities are not available for business or charitable solicitations.

CONFIDENTIALITY

FAMILIES: MCCA respects a family's right to privacy and confidentiality regarding all health, behavioral and developmental records and information concerning their child to the extent possible. These rights to privacy and confidentiality are protected by various federal and state statutes, local ordinances, accreditation standards, and regulatory rules. For example, if your child is involved in an altercation or a



biting incident with another child, MCCA cannot reveal the biter's identity to you without prior written consent from the biter's parents/guardians, except as required by law.

STAFF: MCCA respects a staff member's right to privacy by keeping all health, private and professional records and information confidential to the extent possible. If you have a question or concern about a staff member, we encourage you to speak directly to the Center or Program Director or to MCCA's Director of Human Resources.

CODE OF CONDUCT

MCCA is committed to facilitating teamwork through collaboration and cooperation among its centers and the community of families it serves. We recognize the importance of families in our programs and strive to maintain an environment that is safe and respectful for all: families, children and staff alike. Expectations are that MCCA staff, family members, and children will speak to and interact with each other in a respectful, appropriate, and acceptable manner. Physical or verbal abuse will not be tolerated. MCCA reserves the right to suspend or terminate child care if MCCA reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian are inconsistent with a positive and constructive relationship or interfere with MCCA's accomplishment of its mission.

DISMISSAL POLICY

MCCA's goal is to provide a quality early childhood program for children and families in Montgomery County. MCCA will use its best efforts to serve the children in its care and work with parents/guardians to meet the individual needs of each child. Families may be asked to withdraw from an MCCA program at any time for any reason including, but not limited to:

- A parent/guardian fails to uphold the terms and conditions of MCCA's Enrollment and Financial agreement.
- Inability of the child or parent(s)/guardian(s) to adjust to MCCA's program and adhere to established MCCA policies and procedures.
- Inappropriate or unacceptable behavior toward MCCA staff, other enrolled children or families including any behavior that may endanger the safety or physical or mental health of others.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Inclement weather and emergencies may periodically require changes to regularly scheduled operating hours. MCCA must also adhere to the terms of its leases and may be subject to operating restrictions as dictated by Montgomery County government or Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

By enrolling in a MCCA program through Enrollsy families are opting-in to receive text messages about closings from MCCA. Changing weather and road conditions will be monitored and MCCA reserves the right to close completely or change opening and closing times as necessary. If programs close early, families will be contacted by the Center or Program Director through text, phone calls or emails. The announcement will also be posted on any MCCA social media accounts.

STATE OF EMERGENCY CENTER CLOSINGS

Unforeseen and unexpected situations may result and create unsafe circumstances (e.g., lack of heat or water, emergency maintenance, public alerts, etc.) In these types of circumstances MCCA may not open



or may open late or close early. If required, parents/guardians will be contacted by text, phone or email and advised of the state of emergency and the program's operating status. MCCA will not refund or prorate tuition fees due to illness, vacations, holidays, emergency closings, voluntary absences or other cancellations.

BABYSITTING FOR FAMILIES

In an effort to maintain the professional status of program staff and prevent any potential conflicts of interest, MCCA discourages families from engaging its staff for babysitting duties. MCCA staff may only babysit for families outside of the program premises and on their personal time. This is a private arrangement between staff and families and MCCA is not responsible or liable for the actions of any staff member while they are performing personal babysitting or other duties. Staff are not permitted to take children out of the program, may not sign them out in order to babysit, and may not transport children for a family to or from the program.

COMMUNICATION WITH DUAL CUSTODY FAMILIES

MCCA must remain a neutral, safe haven for each child. MCCA will in no way be forced into the middle of disagreements or choose sides between disagreeing parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are expected to support their child's well-being by abiding by any set agreements or schedules. If, at any time, a parent/guardian acts inappropriately MCCA reserves the right to dismiss his or her child from the program.

RELEASE OF CHILD TO INTOXICATED OR DRUGGED INDIVIDUAL

In order to protect a child from any potential danger that could arise because of a parent's/guardian's condition, MCCA will take reasonable steps to avoid releasing a child to a person in a drugged or intoxicated state, to be determined at the sole discretion of MCCA.

REPORTING ABUSE, NEGLECT AND INJURIOUS TREATMENT

MCCA is required by law to report evidence or suspicion of child abuse, neglect or injurious treatment to law enforcement or the Department of Social Services.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

MCCA welcomes family participation and values the meaningful contributions that families can provide to the Association. Parents are encouraged to help support creating community through participating in classroom learning, family activities, staff appreciation events, education and training seminars. Volunteers will be required to undergo a federal and Maryland State criminal background check. Parent meetings may be periodically scheduled by the Center or Program Director to share ideas, identify parent/guardian volunteer opportunities and assist in planning MCCA approved events. Participation in parent meetings is voluntary and parents are not agents and have no management or decision-making authority on behalf of MCCA.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

Each parent/guardian must fully complete and sign all required documents including an Enrollment and Financial Agreement and at the time of enrollment of the child and may be required to sign periodic forms updates and other waivers. The Enrollment and Financial Agreement states, in part:

- Parents/guardians shall initially pay a **nonrefundable registration (intent) fee** and **nonrefundable deposit equal to one month's tuition** upon signing the agreement and shall be responsible for making regular payments thereafter.
- Tuition is due **in advance** of child care services rendered and **payment is due by the first day of each month** for MCCA to provide care for that month.
- MCCA will not refund or prorate tuition fees due to illness, vacations, holidays, emergency closings, voluntary absences or other cancellations.
- MCCA reserves the right to suspend care if a tuition bill is not paid in full by the end of the month for which care was provided. MCCA reserves the right to add late fees, penalties and other charges to delinquent accounts.
- MCCA must receive **written notice of withdrawal at least 30 days prior to the withdrawal date**. Parents/guardians are responsible for payment of the 30 day notice withdrawal period even if they choose to withdraw the child upon fewer than 30 days' notice.
- In the event that the parent/guardian needs to **reduce** their child's enrollment schedule, the parent/guardian must provide 30 days written notice to the MCCA Administrative Office. In the event that a parent/guardian needs to **increase** their child's enrollment schedule, the change will be effective when space becomes available. In both instances, the parent/guardian will be notified of any change in the tuition rate due to the schedule change and agrees to pay tuition at the updated rate.

BILLING

MCCA uses an automated enrollment and billing system, Enrollsy, that is managed by the MCCA Administrative Office which handles accounting for all MCCA programs. Payments are **due by the first day of the month** for MCCA to provide child care for that month. If payment is not received by the tenth of the month, a \$30.00 late fee will be charged. MCCA reserves the right to suspend care if a tuition bill is not paid in full by the end of the month for which care was provided.

MCCA offers the option of paying MCCA invoices by credit card or by direct draft from your bank account and requires certain forms and documents to be completed in order to participate in Enrollsy and pay your tuition bills electronically.



A fee will also be charged to families for a check returned to MCCA by the bank. If a second check is returned to MCCA, the family may be asked to pay all future bills by money order, bank check or cash. If a child's account goes into collections, the child may not be enrolled in any MCCA program. Families will be responsible for paying for any collection related fees prior to re-enrollment if they have been subject to a collections process.

In addition to monthly tuition charges, additional fees, such as registration, activity or late pick up fees may be added to monthly charges. These fees are nonrefundable and payable when billed.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES

Income eligible parents/guardians may qualify for the State of Maryland's Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Program <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-scholarship-program>

or Montgomery County's Working Parents Assistance (WPA) program <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Program.aspx?id=CYF/CYFChildCareSubs-p307.html> to assist with the cost of child care. Call the Montgomery County Childcare subsidy office at 240-777-1177 for more information.

THE CINDY O'CARROLL EMERGENCY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

MCCA offers Emergency Scholarships through a reserve fund named in honor of long-term Director, Cindy O'Carroll. Families experiencing a sudden emergency (such as death, illness or loss of job) may apply for this temporary financial support. To apply, submit a letter describing the emergency need to your Center or Program Director along with your last three pay stubs and most recent Federal or State tax return. Applications are reviewed and awards are made by the MCCA Executive Director subject to the availability of funds.

VACATIONS/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

MCCA does not hold spaces for children who leave the program for the summer, extended vacations, maternity leave of parents/guardians, etc., unless full time tuition fees are paid during the absence.

TUITION DISCOUNTS

Discounts may be available at selected programs, subject to qualification and availability. Contact your director for more information. If available, discounts will be applied to the child's account through an adjustment or credit to reduce the amount of ongoing tuition charges due **after the full fee tuition deposit has been paid**. All discounts, regardless of type, will end and full fee tuition will immediately be due if the family's eligibility for the established discount criteria changes or ends.

PARENT/GUARDIAN COLLECTIONS FOR CENTER STAFF

Parent/guardian solicitations and the collection and distribution of money as gifts from parents/guardians to program staff are not encouraged and parent participation is strictly optional. Perceived or real equity issues due to gifts can cause staff morale issues. If parent gifts are made the



amount paid to any one staff member by any one family in any one gift giving cycle (e.g., holidays, Week of the Young Child, etc.) cannot exceed \$25.00.

The IRS has ruled that any gifts above \$25.00 to child care providers are taxable. As such, if a parent/guardian or group of parents/guardians initiates a gift giving campaign they must follow MCCA guidelines and all donations must be distributed to MCCA employees through the MCCA payroll system.

APPENDIX I

MCCA’s Opening and Closing Schedule is subject to change due to weather, emergency events, MCPS schedule changes and other circumstances at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. No make-up days or refunds will be provided. Advance notice of schedule changes will be provided to MCCA families as soon as possible based on the nature of the specific closing related circumstances.

Opening and Closing Schedule for the 2023-2024 School Year – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	MCPS Action	MCCA Status
Monday, August 28	First Day of School for MCPS	Open
Monday, September 4	No School - MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Friday, September 22	Early Release - MCPS	Open
Monday, September 25	No School - MCPS	Open
Monday, October 9	No School - MCPS	Open
Wednesday, November 1	No School – MCPS	Open
Monday, November 20	Early Release – MCPS	Open
Tuesday, November 21	Early Release– MCPS	Open
Wednesday, November 22	No School– MCPS	Open
Thurs. & Fri., November 23, 24	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Monday-Wednesday Dec. 25, 26, 27	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Thurs. & Fri., December 28, 29	No School – MCPS	Open
Monday, January 1	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Tuesday, January 2	No School - MCPS	Open
Monday, January 15	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Monday, January 29	No School – MCPS Holiday	Open
Monday, February 19	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Friday, March 1	Early Release – MCPS	Open
Mon.-Thurs., March 25-28	No School MCPS - MCPS	Open
Friday, March 29	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Professional Day
Monday, April 1	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED

Wednesday, April 10	No School – MCPS	Open
Monday, April 22	No School – MCPS	Open
Wednesday, May 14	No School – MCPS Holiday	Open
Monday, May 27	No School – MCPS Holiday	CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Thursday, June 13	Early Release – MCPS	Open
Friday, June 14		CLOSED – MCCA Changeover Day
Wednesday, June 19		CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Thursday, July 4		CLOSED – MCCA Holiday
Friday, August 23		CLOSED – MCCA Changeover Day

APPENDIX II

ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION SYMPTOMS

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Licensing Regulations do not permit sick children to be brought to child care, or to remain in care after it is discovered that they are ill. Parents/guardians are expected to pick up their child within one hour of being notified that their child is ill. **Emergency contact information and numbers need to be kept up to date, so please immediately notify the program of any changes.**

Special supplements published periodically detailing outbreaks, illness and other procedures must also be followed in addition to the information provided below.

GENERAL SIGNS OF ILLNESS

- Warm to the touch and/or has a flush face; temperature above 100.4 degrees
- Uncontrolled coughing or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Itchy skin or head
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Unusual spots or rash

If your child is sent home, s/he should remain at home, symptom-free, for at least 24 hours or as indicated by the type of illness. A written statement from your health care professional will be accepted for approving a return to the program and may be required in some circumstances. Please notify the program office within 24 hours if your child has developed a known communicable disease. More information about communicable diseases can be found at:

<http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/Pages/home.aspx>

ILLNESS GUIDELINES

MCCA uses a number of guidelines to determine if a child has to be sent home and how we will support the child's return to our program. These policies have been established for the health and safety of your child as well as the staff and other children in the program.

If a child has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, the parent/guardian will be called to pick up him/her. (NOTE: Accommodations are made in certain situations such as teething and children with higher than usual normal body temperatures, when accompanied with a licensed health practitioner's note.)

When a child is sent home with a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater, s/he may not return to child care until 24 hours after the fever has broken without the use of medications. For example: a child develops a fever on a Monday morning and is sent home; the parent gives the child medication (such as Children's Tylenol) during the day on Monday; the child's fever breaks at 7:00 pm Monday night and the parent does not give the child any more medication. If the fever does not return for 24 hours from 7:00 pm Monday night, the child can return to the program the following Wednesday.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to notify the program if their child becomes acutely ill so that we can notify other families. This will allow us to take steps to try to limit the risk of further infection. Some examples are strep throat, pink eye, etc. When a child is diagnosed as having a contagious illness s/he is excluded from the child care program for 24 hours after antibiotics have begun.

Parents/guardians are required to inform the program management if their child is infected with or has been exposed to a reportable communicable disease (for example, coronavirus, whooping cough (pertussis), rubella, hepatitis A, mumps, TB). MCCA cannot admit a child who is infected with a communicable disease during the period of communicability as indicated by the MSDE Office of Child Care. Re-admission to child care requires a written note by a licensed health practitioner.

Other symptoms of illness which require exclusion from MCCA programs include a change in bowel habits (i.e., loose, watery, stools that occur more than twice or with other symptoms), vomiting that occurs more than twice or with additional symptoms, undiagnosed rashes and cold symptoms that do not subside. When a child is sent home for any of these symptoms, s/he may not return to the center for 24 hours, or if returning to the program earlier, must submit a written statement from your health care professional approving the return. A doctor's note indicating that the child is not contagious will be needed if the symptoms persist.

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

The Center staff are permitted to give medication (prescription and over-the-counter) only if parents/guardians have completed the required "Medication Administration Authorization Form" (OCC 1216), available on the MSDE Office of Child Care website. Any medication must be properly labeled and in its original container. At least one dose of a prescription medicine must be given to the child at home before the Center can dispense the medication.

Medications include:

- prescription medications
- non-prescription medications (including Tylenol, cough drops, and cold medication)

NOTE: Lotion, sunscreen, lip balm, diaper ointment, diaper powder may only be administered by MCCA with the "Topical Basic Care Product Application Authorization Form" (OCC 1216E) signed by the child's parent or legal guardian (physician's signature not required).

The Medication Administration Authorization Form (OCC 1216) must contain:



- the child’s name
- approval for Center to administer the medication
- the name of the medication to be administered
- the dosage amounts
- the times for medication to be administered
- possible side effects from the medication, if any, completed by the doctor
- the beginning and ending dates that the medication should be administered

Note: A new Medication Administration Authorization Form will be required every 12 months or when medication doses change.

This information can be emailed, faxed directly or hand delivered to program management. MCCA will not dispense medication if we do not have this information.

Medications may not be sent to the center in a child’s lunch or back pack. Please hand-deliver all medications to the director.

MCCA staff will administer treatments for conditions connected with a disability following appropriate training in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Vaccination and Immunization requirements for children in child care in the State of Maryland can be found at:

https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/IMMUN/Shared%20Documents/2019_CCA_Vacc_Reg_Final.pdf

APPENDIX III

ITEMS FROM HOME POLICY

MCCA recognizes the important roles that toys and other items from home can play in the lives of the children in our programs. Staff and families working in partnership can support the developmental growth of the child and provide a safe and enriching learning environment that includes these elements of home. The following policies apply as they relate to items and materials brought from home:

COMFORT TOYS

Infants, toddlers and preschool children often use specific toys from home as “comfort toys.” Bringing “comfort toys” such as stuffed animals or dolls, a blanket, a special hat or T-shirt, or even toys such as footballs, trucks, horses, dinosaurs, etc. into the program should be limited to items that are integral to your child’s routine.

TOYS DEPICTING VIOLENCE

Children should not bring to an MCCA program any object that looks like a weapon or could be used as a weapon, including toy guns or knives, water guns, etc.

- Toys depicting violent themes, i.e. toy guns, knives or swords, action figures, etc. will not be permitted to be brought from home.

- If staff have knowledge that children have these types of toys in the program, the toy will be removed from the classroom, stored in the program's office and returned to the family at the end of the day.
- Video games (for computers, phones, iPads, Game Boys, etc.) brought to the program may not depict violent themes. If a child is found to be playing this type of game while at the program they will be in violation of this policy and the game/toy will be removed from the classroom.

CELL PHONES AND SMART DEVICES

Another part of our increasingly interconnected world includes the use of cell phones and smart devices. We are finding that more and more families are utilizing these tools as a means of staying connected, and that more and more of the children in our programs have cell phones, smart watches and other devices. While we appreciate the convenience that these devices can provide to families in relaying information to their children about changes in schedules or who will be picking the child up from the program, it is essential that any information related to program attendance be communicated directly to the staff rather than through the child.

In an effort to ensure that children are using their cell phones and other smart devices properly, are keeping the lines of communication open for their families to stay connected, and are keeping staff directly in the information loop, we have the following policies regarding cell phones and smart devices:

- Cell phone and smart device use when the child is at the center is limited to incoming calls from primary caregivers. Children will not be permitted to make any outgoing calls on their cell phones or other devices.
- During the time children are at the center they will be encouraged to keep their cell phones and smart devices on their person (on vibrate mode), in their cubbies or backpack, or they can be secured in the center office.
- Family members must inform staff directly concerning any information such as changes in the child's schedule, changes in who will be picking up the child, etc. Family members should email the Director to relay this information in writing or call the program phone for a last minute change.
- Children will not be permitted to use the Internet through their smart phones or other devices unless participating in an organized, public or private distancing learning program.

The program and MCCA cannot be held accountable for lost, stolen, or broken cell phones or other smart devices. The family must assume all risks of the cell phone or smart device being with their child. As with any other personal item brought from home if MCCA rules and policies are not being adhered to the cell phone or smart device will be confiscated by the staff and properly stored until it can be turned over to the family member at the end of the day.

APPENDIX IV

MEDIA POLICY

In this era of technology there are growing opportunities for children to be exposed to computers and media. MCCA's goal is to preserve hands on experiences while recognizing the changing role of media in children's early experiences. To ensure that these opportunities enhance children's experiences and

avoid exposure to inappropriate content the following guidelines will be followed for all MCCA programs:

- All media programs will conform to MCCA’s educational philosophy and be age appropriate, prescreened, and approved prior to use or viewing.
- Violent themes or images will not be permitted.
- Expectations regarding time and frequency of use of computers and other media devices will be clearly established and communicated with children and families.
- Staff will actively monitor content and supervise children during use and provide guidance as needed.
- Copying or transferring copyrighted materials and software without authorization will not be permitted.
- Noncompliance with these guidelines may include, but not be limited to, loss of privileges, suspension or expulsion from a MCCA program.
- There is no screen time for children under two years old.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

The use of radio or television in classrooms is not permitted due to the lack of control over content. Audio recordings of age appropriate music or stories can be used as part of classroom activities.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Video game systems are not utilized in MCCA programs. School-age children are permitted to bring handheld devices for limited use on special program designated days, school holidays and during summer programming. Teaching staff will designate timeframes for use. Children may choose to play alone or share a device with others provided the item does not cause disruptive or exclusionary play. Electronic devices will be stored with the child’s belongings when not in use. The family and child assume all risks associated with bringing in electronic items including the risk of loss and damage. Children not following guidelines will lose the privilege of bringing devices from home on established media days.

APPENDIX V

Toilet Learning Guidelines

Learning to use the toilet (i.e., “potty training”) is an important developmental milestone that commonly occurs during the second to third year of a child’s life. MCCA believes it is important for parents and teachers to partner and support each other during this process to make it as easy and smooth a transition as possible for everyone. When families feel their child is ready to start the process, they should reach out to their child’s teacher or Center Director. We will schedule a time to discuss the process and signs of readiness.

Signs of Readiness

Signs of toilet learning readiness include an increased awareness of a need to go, curiosity in others’ bathroom habits, demonstrated interest in the toilet, having words for using the toilet and being able to express a need to go, an understanding of “wet” versus “dry,” and imitation of bathroom behavior.

In order to start learning to use the toilet, a child also must be able to:

- follow simple instructions
- stay dry for at least two hours at a time during the day or be dry after naps
- understand words about the toileting process
- help pull diapers or loose pants up and down

Talking to children at home about potty training can be helpful for both getting children ready and assessing children's interest. Here are a few child friendly books to read with your child at home:

- **“Even Firefighters Go to the Potty: A Potty Training Lift-the-Flap Story”** by Wendy Wax: This lift-the-flap book has multicultural cartoon drawings and whimsically reinforces the concept that everyone has to take time to use the potty, even firefighters, police, train engineers, etc.
- **“Everyone Poops”** by Taro Gomi: The title says it all! This amusing book depicts a variety of animals and their poop. The book also introduces the differences in human toileting habits from infancy to adulthood.
- **“Going to the Potty”** by Fred Rogers: In his calm, reassuring manner and simple words, Mr. Rogers discusses learning to use the toilet in a way a young child can understand. He addresses the sensations that a child may experience or that sometimes the sound of a toilet flushing is noisy, as well as what a child may feel emotionally. The photos depict multicultural families.
- **“Toilet Tales”** by Brigitte Waisberg and Andrea Wayne Konigslow: Through humorous descriptions, the author explains why animals can't use the toilet (a goat would eat the toilet paper or an elephant would smash the toilet), but children can.

When a child is ready, learning to use the toilet should only take a few weeks. In order to be successful, it is important that families and teachers are implementing the same strategies both at home and at school.

How MCCA and Families can partner for success:

MCCA:

- Encourage, support and praise successes that your child achieves during their toilet training experience. We will expect accidents and treat them as teachable moments.
- We will watch for and identify signals that may help minimize accidents as well as encourage children to be independent in changing their own clothes as needed during the training process.
- We will take children to the bathroom at regularly scheduled times during each day and whenever a child expresses a need to go.
- Communicate to parents on a regular basis. After two weeks, we will talk with families and reevaluate where the child is in the learning process. If the child is not demonstrating readiness skills, we will discuss a later start date with you.

Families:

- Provide at least 3 changes of clothes, including pants, underwear and socks daily. Please have an extra pair of shoes in their cubby as well. Soiled clothing will go in the child's cubby to be taken home daily
- Have their child wear elastic waist clothes. No buttons, snaps, belts, or one-piece clothing. Leggings, sweat pants and elastic waist pants are best. No dresses for girls as it's hard to coordinate holding up the dress and sitting on the toilet at the same time. The children should be able to easily pull up and down their own clothing.



- Potty training should begin at home the weekend before the process starts at MCCA.
- Use the same type of undergarment at home that is being used at school (i.e., pull ups, underwear).