



LVCC

Lehigh Valley
Children's Centers

Family Handbook



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Welcome to Lehigh Valley Children's Centers

Our Mission and Policies

Lehigh Valley Children's Centers, Inc. (LVCC) is a private, not-for-profit corporation offering comprehensive early childhood education and child care services. Founded in 1970, LVCC operates more than 30 locations serving children ages 6 weeks through 12 years.

Mission

LVCC's mission is to provide high quality early education and child care to promote healthy child development, meet the needs of families, and encourage children to discover the joy of learning.

LVCC is guided by a board of directors composed of parents/guardians and representatives of the education and business communities.

LVCC is committed to continuous program improvement through participation in Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS Quality Initiative

Lehigh Valley Children's Centers, Inc. prohibits discrimination on the basis of political or religious affiliations, or because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical disability, genetic information, age, or any other non-merit factor.

Philosophy

We believe every child, regardless of economic background, deserves a quality early education and child care experience that nurtures mind, body, and spirit. LVCC is committed to providing high quality education and care for all children, from infancy through their intermediate school years.

Children thrive when families and staff work together to provide a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment in which children learn through play and exploration. We believe that the development of self-confidence, respect for others, cooperation, and decision-making skills are essential to each child's success.

LVCC programs:

- focus on education
- foster social, cognitive, emotional and physical development
- are play-based, child-centered and teacher-guided
- are developmentally appropriate and based on best practices
- emphasize creative, open-ended activities
- encourage learning through hands-on activities
- include individual and group activities
- support child health through nutritious meals and active play
- offer a cheerful environment with ample toys, books, activities and supplies



Child Development Programs

Children learn best with “child-initiated, child-directed, teacher-supported play as the essential component of the program,” according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). LVCC’s programs are child-centered. Learning occurs through active play and hands-on experiences. The Creative Curriculum® is used in infant and toddler classrooms and World of Wonders is used in preschool classrooms to tailor our programs to meet the developmental needs, abilities, and interests of each child, so they can grow socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. The curriculums are aligned with local school district curriculums and Pennsylvania State Early Learning Standards.

Infant Program (12 months – 36 months)

Based on the unique schedule of each infant, our program is an extension of the home, providing a warm, safe and stimulating environment.

Cuddling, rocking, and planned developmental activities are important aspects of the program, which is designed to meet each child’s emotional, social, cognitive, and physical needs.

LVCC staff will support ongoing strategies for transitions into the toddler room as parents and staff feel developmentally appropriate milestones are reached during discussions at parent meetings and conferences.

Toddler Program (12 months – 36 months)

Toddlers are curious and energetic. With a stimulating and supportive environment, children are eager to investigate materials that appeal to their senses.

During the time your child is in the toddler program they are encouraged to expand on vocabulary, increase creativity, cooperate with others, and increase self-awareness and decision-making skills.

Toddlers participate in activities such as story time, singing songs, simple comparison games, and finger plays. The environment is designed so that children can explore and work in areas which contain manipulative toys, blocks, books, dress-up, and art activities.

The materials introduced at this age help each child begin to grasp basic concepts necessary for success.

Toilet learning begins when parents/guardians and staff agree a child is ready, based on the child’s observable behaviors and interests.

As independent skills including self-help, fine motor, and social emotional skills are reached, short visits to the preschool aged rooms will occur and transition meetings between parents and staff will occur to ensure the success as toddlers move into a Preschool or Pre-K Counts classroom.

Preschool Program (ages 3 - 5) + Pre-K Counts Program (ages 4 - 5)

Three- to five-year-olds are imaginative, independent and creative. Our preschool and Pre-K Counts classrooms are designed so that children can explore the environment and work with materials and equipment according to their level of development. Classrooms include learning centers for activities such as art, dramatic play, science, block building, manipulative toys, math, language and literacy, and computer technology.

In the preschool and Pre-K Counts programs, your child is encouraged to develop self-organization, self-control, and self-awareness; to develop pre-reading and pre-writing skills; and to develop the ability to relate positively with others. Activities are designed to promote fine motor skills, including hand-eye coordination and spatial relationships, and large motor skills such as climbing, balancing, and throwing.

Teachers serve as guides and supporters, preparing a stimulating environment, observing and interacting with the children while posing additional challenges to expand each child’s world. Special activities, in conjunction with local school districts, are planned to ease the child’s transition to kindergarten. See Pre-K Counts section for more details.

School Age Programs

Before & After School Program

To meet the varying needs and interests of school age children, our program is both educational and recreational. The structure of the program and activities offered reflect the interests of the participating children, complementing and reinforcing skills learned at school. Time is allocated for homework. School age children may also participate in sports, playground games, arts and crafts, computer activities, table games, cooking, building, dramatics, reading and science. The program provides an environment where each child learns about him/herself and others in an informal setting.

Summer School Age Program

The summer program is both educational and recreational. It is designed around weekly, child-centered themes. Along with all the activities available during the school year, our summer program offers in-house programming, field trips, and more frequent outdoor activities.

Curriculum and Assessments

The Creative Curriculum® is used to design the classroom environment and plan individualized activities for infants and toddlers. The World of Wonders Curriculum prepares preschool aged children for transition into the district classroom setting. LVCC uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, (a parent-completed monitoring system and observation-based assessment tool) for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, followed by annual assessments using Teaching Strategies GOLD™.

Although each child's progress is assessed throughout the year, parent/guardian conferences are offered a minimum of three times a year and are available upon request.

Child Assessments/Screenings and Family Conferences

As a high-quality program, LVCC teachers conduct regular assessments to track children's progress and help plan appropriate activities:

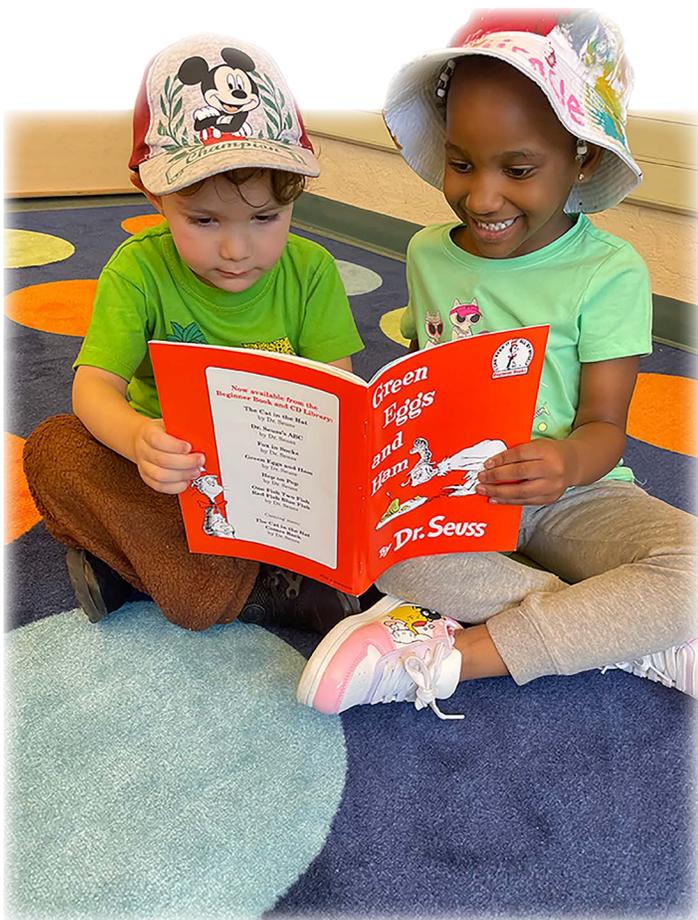
During enrollment, parents/guardians will complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire about their child(ren) as well as a "Getting to Know You" questionnaire.

Within 45 days, LVCC staff complete the appropriate Ages and Stages Questionnaire and offer parents/guardians a "Getting to Know You" meeting.

PA state certified assessments are completed two to three times a year and shared with parents/guardians during conferences. LVCC teachers work with parents and guardians to set appropriate developmental goals for each child.

School age children have formal observations three times throughout the school year; there is a 45-day "Getting to Know You" meeting followed by parent conferences in February and in May.

Family conferences are offered during the spring and fall and as needed.



Family Engagement

Cooperation

LVCC encourages parents/families/guardians to visit the center at any time and hosts several events throughout the year.

Please feel free to voice your questions or concerns to your child's head teacher or Center Director. (Please make sure your child is not within earshot during discussions.) It is important that you understand our program's philosophy and policies since your child's well-being is both your and our primary concern.

Parents/Guardians also have the opportunity to provide feedback by evaluating LVCC with surveys distributed throughout the year. The more we work together, the better our program works!

LVCC centers host parent/guardian events monthly. These events include festivals, fundraisers, informational meetings and holiday gatherings.

Parents/Guardians are also welcome to join their children's classrooms to share interests or read to the children.

Please check your child's mailbox daily for information, messages, and child's work.

Daily Reports

Parents/Guardians of infants, toddlers and preschoolers receive a written report each day. School age children can have daily reports if requested by parents/guardians. The report includes information about the amount the child ate; how long they slept; special accomplishments, and other comments.



Parent/Family/Guardian Partnership/ Stakeholders

Parents/families/guardians play an important role in the LVCC family by helping to strengthen ties to the community. LVCC welcomes the opportunity to partner with local organizations or businesses with which families are affiliated. Please contact your Center Director if you would like your business or organization to partner with LVCC.

Some of our current partnerships/stakeholders include, but are not limited to, Da Vinci Science Center, Lehigh Valley Zoo, Rotary, Kiwanis clubs, Early Intervention, local district schools

Donations

As a non-profit early education and child care provider, LVCC relies on the generosity of community-minded individuals and organizations to keep early education and child care affordable and accessible to all families. There are several ways you can help:

- Make a donation – by giving a monetary gift, at whatever level you can afford, you can help us provide each child with quality learning and care.
- Ask your employer to match your gift – many local companies have matching gift programs that will double your donation!
- Donate your time – consider volunteering at your center or participating on an advisory committee. Ask your Center Director for more information.

Nutrition Program

Breakfast, lunch, and a snack are served family style as part of our regular early learning programs. Pre-K Counts children receive a daily morning snack and lunch. The children are encouraged to try a wide variety of foods, including vegetables and fruits.

Meals are designed to be well balanced and nutritious. Monthly menus are posted for parent/guardian review and are available on LVCC's website at www.LVCCOnline.org.

LVCC participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a federal program which ensures that children in child care settings receive nutritious meals. The CACFP requires that each enrolled family complete yearly forms.

If your child is on a special diet or has allergies to certain foods, please talk to the Center Director as a note from your doctor will be needed. Although simple substitutions may be available, it may be necessary for you to supply healthy meals and snacks for your child. Food brought from home will not be permitted unless for documented medical or religious reasons.

If medical or religious explanations are provided, parents/guardians must provide pre-made meals daily.

Infant Nutrition

Breastfeeding mothers who are able to come to the center to feed their babies are encouraged to do so. Breast milk can be brought to the centers for feedings as well.

Baby foods, including cereal, strained vegetables, fruits, meats, and a USDA approved, iron-fortified formula (for specific brand of formula, see Center Director), are provided by Lehigh Valley Children's Centers. Other formula and special diets are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

An infant diet information form is completed at admission and updated by the parent/guardian as the infant begins each new food. LVCC follows the feeding recommendations of the USDA. A doctor's note is needed for any exceptions.



LVCC Provided Items

Center Provides

- breakfast*
 - lunch (except school-age children at some centers)
 - afternoon snack
 - baby food and formula
 - appropriate toys, games, books, art materials, etc.
 - crib or mat
 - infant equipment
- *See Pre-K Counts under Nutrition Program

Toys from home, other than those needed to make rest time more pleasant or those specifically requested by staff, can be disruptive to the child and to the program. Please leave toys at home, as they can be lost or broken. LVCC and staff will not be responsible for lost or damaged toys and assumes no liability or responsibility. Please label everything with your child's name. LVCC is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property.

Parent/ Family Provides:

Infant

- disposable diapers
- formula (if other than what LVCC provides)
- diaper wipes
- bottles, nipples, caps
- blanket
- bibs
- two complete sets of clothing

Toddler

- disposable diapers or a large supply of training pants
- diaper wipes (if applicable)
- small blanket
- Two complete sets of seasonably appropriate clothing including pants, shirts, socks, and underwear

Preschool

- small blanket
- one or two complete sets of clothing including pants, shirts, socks, and underwear

School Age

- 1 complete set of clothing (if needed)

Hours of Operation

Most LVCC locations open at 6:30 A.M., Monday through Friday, and close at 6:00 P.M. The hours of the center are determined by the type of service and the needs of the families enrolled at each location. Please check with the Center Director for hours of operation.

Holidays / Staff In-Service Days

Lehigh Valley Children's Centers is closed for several holidays and two annual staff in-service days.

A list of planned closings is distributed a year in advance for the convenience of families. Calendars are distributed mid-August to mid-September and posted annually in each center. LVCC reserves the right to change this schedule at any time with advance notice excluding emergencies.

Emergency Closings

Every effort is made to remain open during inclement weather. In the event of severe weather conditions, go on line or tune in to WFMZ for information regarding changes in center hours or closings. We ask for your cooperation and understanding during periods of inclement weather and other unexpected emergencies.

Child Arrival & Departure

The hours and days your child attends the center are arranged at your enrollment interview. Please give as much advance notice as possible of any changes in hours so that staff may be scheduled accordingly.

Child care may not be available for your child at times other than your scheduled hours if the center does not have sufficient staff coverage. Please call the center when your child will be late or absent.

Pre-K Counts children are expected to arrive 15 minutes before the program starts, but no earlier.

Each child must be accompanied into the classroom by parent or to an individual designated in writing by the enrolling parent. The parent/designee must sign the child IN and have the arrival acknowledged by a staff person.

The same process is required for departure where a child shall be released only to the child's parent or to an individual designated in writing by the enrolling parent. This is a Department of Human Services Regulation that applies to all children enrolled in the center, regardless of age.

The center must be notified if you will be delayed in picking up your child. If possible, please arrange for someone else to pick up your child at the scheduled time if you are going to be late. Children may become anxious if they are not picked up at the regular time.

You must notify the center if someone who is not designated on the application will be picking up your child. In addition, unfamiliar escorts must supply identification and sign a verbal release form.

At departure, please remember that you are in charge of your child even when staff members are visible. This clarification of "who is in charge" is necessary to prevent program disruption and potential child injury which can occur at transition times when responsibilities may be confused.

Children who attend the Pre-K Counts program are expected to be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the program ends. Chronic lateness could result in dismissal from program.



Classroom Management

LVCC considers discipline as an individual growth process. Our centers promote a safe environment by setting logical limits in each classroom.

These limits are explained to children to encourage them to develop self-control naturally. Hopefully children learn to treat people and objects with kindness. The staff understands that children will 'test' these limits as part of normal development.

Staff members endeavor to be firm, consistent, and patient in implementing discipline. Children are encouraged to use appropriate words and touches to express their needs and feelings.

Physical punishment is strictly prohibited by LVCC policies and Department of Human Services Regulations.

Inclusion

Understanding, valuing and respecting diversity in all its forms is central to developing high quality early childhood programs and systems. Like all children, it is critical for children with disabilities to be exposed to a variety of rich experiences where they can learn in the context of play and everyday interactions and engage with their peers with and without disabilities.

LVCC will provide meaningful inclusion to support children with and without disabilities in reaching their full potential. LVCC staff will recognize and respond to children's individual strengths, abilities and interests to ensure that all children have the support they need to reach their full potential. LVCC will also support the development of a child's home language while fostering the acquisition to English. Staff will provide different language opportunities throughout the classroom and within daily activities and lessons while supporting families in their cultural values and norms.

Referral

Staff will help identify a broad-based contact and referral list, including social, mental health, educational, wellness and medical services. Brochures and resource directories will be made available to families upon enrollment and when needed.

Staff will network with colleagues to identify experienced providers and secure their contact information to talk with professionals who provide other services for children and families in the community.

Staff will connect with social services and special education at local schools to secure contact information for child study teams, school psychologists, and early intervention teams.

IEP/IFSP

To ensure best practices are followed within that child's classroom, goal planning, and within the curriculum and corresponding lesson plans will follow all IEP/IFSP shared information from family.



A child's growth and development is measured through developmental assessments, if a child currently has an IEP or IFSP it is beneficial to the child for the parent to share a copy of this document. Sharing these documents would ensure that recommended guidelines would be put into practice and that lesson plans are created in accordance to the IEP/IFSP.

LVCC also recommends that families allow LVCC teachers to take part in all IEP and IFSP meetings to allow for full collaboration of family and academic needs.

Suspension/Expulsion

Early Education and Child Care settings focusing on prevention, developing and communicating clear behavioral expectations, and ensuring fairness, equity, and continuous improvement, can and should be applied across settings where children learn. LVCC's goal of ensuring that all children's social-emotional and behavioral health are fostered in an appropriate high-quality early learning program, working toward eventually eliminating expulsion and suspension practices across early learning settings.

Behavioral Supports

LVCC directors and staff will work with families on the understanding of meaningful inclusion within the centers and classrooms. Directors will evaluate classroom settings for needed supports.

Needed supports include onsite coaching/mentoring, observations of the classroom, training to site specific or classroom specific issues.

Director and staff will work together to find resources and supports for each child through the process and behavioral meetings will occur to ensure all individuals are understanding.

Dismissal Policy

Lehigh Valley Children's Centers reserves the right to terminate services under specific circumstances. LVCC will work with parents/legal guardians to accommodate children and their needs.

Services may be suspended or terminated for the following:

- nonpayment;
- excessive absences/tardiness of the Pre-K Counts program;
- or noncompliance in submitting DHS/LVCC state-mandated paperwork.

In the case of a deteriorating relationship between the parent/family member/guardian or other authorized individual and the center, LVCC reserves the right to terminate services. Resource and referral information about other centers and other types of arrangements will be provided upon request.

Release/Transfer of Child's Records

The legal parent/guardian may request a copy of their child's LVCC generated records or request that copies be sent to another location including, but not limited to, another early education and child care provider or school district.

The request must be in writing, signed and dated by the parent/guardian. Electronic requests with signature and date are also accepted. Records should be requested at least two business weeks in advance of the date needed.

Copies of records will not include addresses, phone numbers, or emergency contacts. To ensure confidentiality of records, requests must be made and fulfilled only by the Center Director or authorized administrator. All outgoing copies of records must be reviewed and signed off by the Center Director or LVCC administrator.

There is no monetary charge for a one-time copy of the record, either in part or in full. Future copies will be \$.50 per page.



Contracted Slots Policies

Child Eligibility/ Funding Considerations

Children must be between the ages of six weeks and 36 months of age at time of enrollment. The family must be eligible for Child Care Works or on the waiting list. Children needing full-week, full-time care will be prioritized for Contracted Slots funding.

Annually, families will be required to sign off that they are aware of the eligibility requirements of both CCW and Pre-K Counts, and the options for continuing care.

Family Co-Payment

A family receiving Contracted Slots funding will not be charged a co-payment related to the specific child enrolled in the Contracted Slots Program. If a family receiving Contracted Slots funding has other eligible children enrolled in CCW, a co-payment for those children may be charged.

A family receiving Contracted Slots funding may be charged late pick up fees in cases where the child is not picked up by closing.

Attendance

A child's success in the Contracted Slots program depends on regular attendance; therefore, daily attendance is suggested. Staffing is arranged based on the agreed upon schedule at enrollment.

When your child is absent from the classroom, you are required to call the center to alert them to your child's absence.

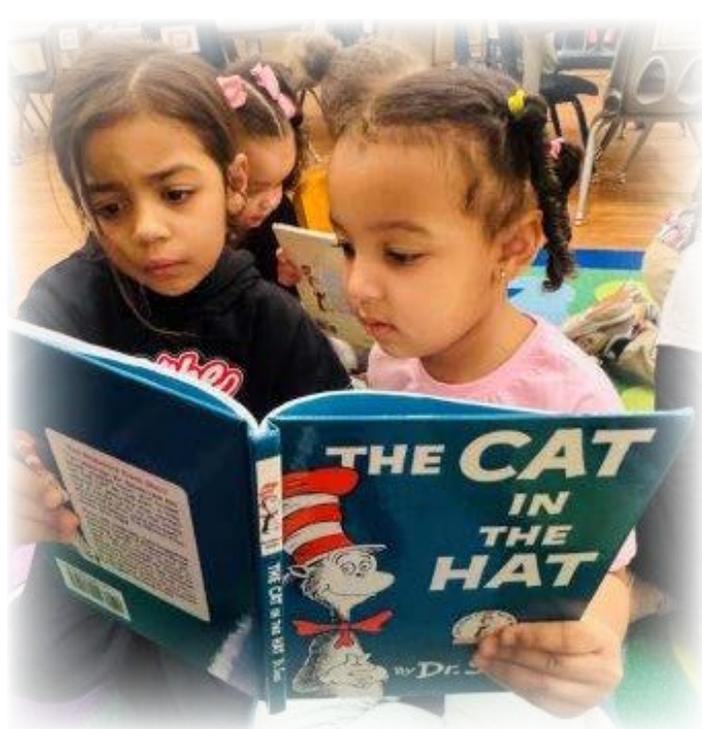
Families will be contacted when children are absent for 3 consecutive days to offer support, as appropriate.

Absences over 5 days for extenuating circumstances, such as families experiencing homelessness, significant child or family illness must be approved by LVCC. When children have more than 5 consecutive unexcused absences, the provider and family, together, must discuss the reasons for the absence and determine ways to support the child's attendance in school.

When absences in a single year exceed 20, the program and family must create an attendance action plan.

The maximum number of allowable annual absences (July 1 through June 30) for a child funded with Infant Toddler Contracted Slots funding is 40 days.

Once a child reaches 40 days absent within a fiscal year, the child will be removed from the Contracted Slots program.



Pre-K Counts Policies

Attendance/Late Arrival Policy

A child's success in the Pre-K Counts program depends on regular attendance; therefore, daily attendance is mandatory and excessive tardiness will not be tolerated.

Children who arrive late for class miss valuable program time. It's important to remember that this program is a privilege, not a right, and should be taken as seriously. If you are having trouble arriving on time daily, please contact your classroom teacher or Center Director.

When your child is absent from the classroom, you are required to send in a written note from the parent/legal guardian or physician stating reason for absence.

We are committed to supporting every child's success in Pre-K, and regular attendance is essential for learning and development. While we understand that occasional absences may happen due to illness or family needs, frequent absences can impact a child's progress. Our team is here to partner with families to overcome any challenges that affect consistent attendance.

Attendance: Recorded when a child is present on an instructional day.

Excused Absences: Illness, family emergency, medical/dental appointments, natural disasters, or other urgent, approved reasons.

Unexcused Absences: Any absence not meeting the criteria for an excused absence.

Absence Notifications

5 Absences: Phone call or meeting

10 Absences: First letter sent

15 Absences: Second letter sent

10 Absences: Final letter sent

Family Support & Staff Involvement

At each stage, staff will connect with families to understand and address attendance concerns. Our shared goal is to identify barriers, provide help, and promote consistent attendance.

Staff will review the attendance plan and collect a signed acknowledgment to ensure understanding and partnership with each Pre-K family enrolled.



Curriculum & Assessment

Each child's developmental progress is assessed within the first six weeks of the program and three times during the program year.

The World of Wonders Curriculum is used to design the classroom environment and plan individualized activities for Pre-K children. Teaching Strategies GOLD™ is a PA state certified assessment tool used to evaluate each child's progress and to plan activities which will further develop their learning skills and knowledge of basic concepts.

Hours of Operation

Pre-K Counts classes begin promptly at designated times. Please speak to your child's Center Director or teacher to confirm start and end times. It is important to arrive on time each day for drop off and pick up.

Fees apply for extended child care services needed outside of Pre-K Counts operational hours. For those families who have arranged for extended child care services, most LVCC locations open at 6:30 A.M., Monday through Friday, and close at 6:00 P.M. The hours of the center are determined by the type of service and the needs of the parents enrolled at each location. Children not enrolled in extended child care must be picked up promptly at the conclusion of the Pre-K Counts day.

Emergency Closings

Pre-K Counts classrooms will follow School District closures (the school district in which the program operates), delays and early dismissals due to inclement weather.

Since every effort is made for centers to remain open during inclement weather, you may opt to utilize wrap-around services at the center on days when Pre-K Counts classrooms are closed.

Parents that do not typically pay for wrap around care, must first call to determine availability of space and will be charged the full day drop-in rate.

Parents who do utilize wraparound care will be charged the difference between the part day and full time daily rate. In the event of severe weather conditions, tune in to local radio and television stations for information on changes in center hours or closings.

Family Engagement (required)

Cooperation

Families are encouraged to visit the center at any time. Please feel free to voice your questions or concerns to your child's teacher or Center Director. (Please make sure your child is not within earshot during discussions of his/her behavior.)

It is important that you understand our program philosophy and policies since your child's well-being is both your and our primary concern. The more we work together, the better our program works! Please check your child's mailbox daily and folder for information, messages, and works of art.



Family Support Services

The Pre-K Counts Educational Coordinator will help ensure your child's success in the program by providing the following services:

- help you complete program enrollment forms;
- help you access subsidies and other programs for extended child care services;
- provide referrals to agencies that provide food, medical or dental care, early intervention, mental health services, adult education, etc.

The Pre-K Counts Educational Coordinator is available to meet with you to discuss how to build upon your family's strengths to meet your child's needs.

Teacher Conferences (required)

Families are required to attend conferences and to attend all meetings. Meetings will be held monthly on topics of interest. Each center holds semi-annual family events which are announced in advance.

Individual parent/guardian-teacher conferences are required three times a year. This gives everyone an opportunity to discuss your child's growth and development and to answer any questions. At these meetings, you will be asked to help set goals for your child both at school and at home.

Health and Supervision

We can better assure the safety of all children enrolled at LVCC centers if parents/guardians understand and support the following safety measures:

For outside doors that are equipped with keypad combination locks, please remember the combination, keep it a secret, and never hold the door open to let in another person (even if you know that person to be another parent/guardian or staff person).

If your child needs to take medicine at the center, the parent/guardian must hand the medicine directly to a teacher. Never leave medicine in a backpack or cubby. (See more on medication requirements on page 15).

Parents/Guardians must sign their child IN and OUT of the center each day. Parents/Guardians must escort their child to the classroom. Each child will wear a color-coded wristband each day at LVCC. These wristbands help staff members identify children as members of their specific supervision group. Please remove the wristband when you pick up your child, and leave it at the center. If your child wears it home, please return it the following day.

As per regulation 3270.113; Each staff person is assigned the responsibility for supervision of specific group of children.

The staff must be able to see, hear, direct, assist, assess and the staff must know the names and whereabouts of the children in his/her assigned group. The staff person must be physically present with the children in his/her group at all times.

When traveling in an LVCC van or bus, children are required to be in a safety seat/booster seat. We use approved child safety seats for younger children and seat belts for older ones.



Outdoor Recreation Policy

Our daily programming includes outdoor play time, weather permitting. If the temperatures are above 90 degrees or below 25 degrees, children are kept indoors. Gross motor activities appropriate for indoor spaces are provided.

As with all inclement weather decisions, we will make the best decision possible with the information we have available at the time. We will also make every effort to reschedule canceled activities or trips.

On days when planned trips are canceled, children may still be taken outdoors, at their center, for intervals of no more than 15 minutes and brought indoors more frequently.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Normal day-to-day procedures usually are not sufficient for effective disaster response, as emergency measures have to be implemented quickly.

Therefore, emergency procedures and actions to cope with the possibility of a disaster occurring are addressed in the LVCC Emergency Preparedness Plan.

The plan has been customized for each of our centers. All parents/guardians should become familiar with the Emergency Preparedness Plan before a disaster or emergency takes place (see your child's teacher/Center Director for center-specific information). Parents/Guardians are notified annually of each center's plan with a parent/guardian letter.

Successful implementation of our Emergency Plan, should it become necessary, requires the full cooperation of everyone. You can do your part by cooperating in the following ways:

- Keeping your emergency contact information current
- Listening to local TV or radio in the event of an emergency to find out what you should do.
- Refraining from calling the center, enabling the center phone lines to be kept open so that critical information can be delivered to the center

- Ensuring that all authorized pick-up persons have photo identification readily available to show staff
- Proceeding immediately to the center to pick-up your child if the national alert is raised to RED or SEVERE level

- Understanding if the order to Shelter in Place is given, to protect the safety of the children and staff, no one will be allowed in or out of the building until the all clear signal is given.

If you have any questions about our Emergency Preparedness Plan, please speak to the Center Director.

Health Policies

Physical Exams

Based upon the recommendation of the Pennsylvania Department of Health LVCC requires that you provide the center with an updated immunization report each time your child goes to the provider and receives an immunization.



6 weeks	2 months	4 months
6 months	9 months	12 months
15 months	18 months	2 years
3 years	4 years	5 years
6 years	8 years	10 years

The majority of these visits coincide with immunization schedules of local physicians and clinics. LVCC requires parents/legal guardians to provide the center with an updated immunization report each time your child goes to a health provider and receives an immunization.

LVCC will provide a physical exam form which the doctor will complete and sign. You must return the completed exam form to your Center Director. If you have a doctor appointment and have not received the physical exam form, please request one from your Center Director in advance.

Medication

Prescription medication is administered to a child only in its original container, with a note from a physician/RPN and written permission from the parent/guardian.

Non-prescription medication, such as non-aspirin products or cough syrup, is not given without written physician's instructions and the parent/guardian's written consent.

If medication is to be given over a long period of time, an update is required from the physician every three months.

Sunscreen can be applied to children if parent/guardian provides the sunscreen and has given written permission.

Medical Emergency/Insurance Coverage

Small children in a group setting occasionally receive and cause bumps, scratches, bruises, and bites. Minor First Aid is administered to children by center staff as required, and an accident report is provided to you at the end of the day. In the case of a medical emergency, 911 is called, and the parent/guardian is notified immediately.

Please be sure to keep your emergency contact information up to date in the office, especially the telephone numbers. It is required that contact information be updated twice per year or whenever the information changes.

In case of accidents requiring medical attention, the parent/guardian's insurance is the primary source of coverage.

Illness

Children will be excluded from our centers for the following reasons:

- The child doesn't feel well enough to participate comfortably in routine activities.
- The ill child requires more care than staff is able to provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
- The illness is one from the specific list of diagnosed symptoms or conditions.

In case of an outbreak of an infectious disease, the Department of Human Services requires inadequately immunized children to be excluded from the center.

Parents will be notified immediately for pick up if a child is showing any symptoms of communicable diseases.



Tuition Policies and Procedures

Payments

A registration fee is assessed for all tuition-paying families upon enrollment (exclusions may apply). Each time a family withdraws and re-enrolls the fee will be charged again, regardless of the length of the withdrawal.

All tuition is due in full, no later than FRIDAY for services for the upcoming week. Checks or money orders must be made payable to LVCC and delivered to the center. Cash is not accepted. Your cancelled check is your receipt. To ensure that your account is properly credited, please include your child's name and center on the check.

On-line payments can be made at <https://tdbank.billeriq.com/ebpp/LVCC/> Your family ID number can be found on a statement or call our accounts receivable specialist at 610-820-5333 ext. 252

You are required to pay the full weekly fee whether or not your child attends unless you have made leave day arrangements, if applicable.

The daily and weekly rates are based on a MAXIMUM of 10 consecutive hours on any given day. Any service in excess of 10 hours is billed at the extended hourly rate. Parents/Guardians must drop off and pick up their child at the times agreed to on the tuition agreement because the center is staffed according to the children's schedules. Advance notice of any change is required.

Sibling Discount

LVCC offers families with more than one child (enrolled on a weekly, full time basis) a discount of 10% on the lowest tuition rate. This discount does not apply to Child Care Works or scholarship recipients.

Drop-In Procedure

For any family that needs drop in care, the center requires minimum notification of 24 hours before child care service is needed. Drop in space is limited and enrolled children take priority. A drop-in form must be completely filled out and payment is due on the day of service.

Late Payment Charges

If payment is not made on time, the child will not be allowed to attend until the full fee is paid. The child will not be re-enrolled until the delinquent tuition and the registration fee are paid and there is an opening in the center.

Late Pick Up Charges

Parents/Guardians picking up their child(ren) after the center's normal closing time are assessed a \$10.00 fee per child for each additional 15 minutes (or part thereof) that care is provided. Payment for late charges is due before the child/children return to the center for care.

Age Group Rates

Rates change according to the child's age. For example: the preschool rate is charged when a toddler becomes three years old, regardless of what classroom they are in.



Leave Days

Parents/Guardians paying the full weekly tuition rate are eligible for leave days. Leave days are days when the child does not attend and for which no tuition is charged. Leave days are accrued at the rate of one day for every three full months of enrollment up to a maximum of four days. Leave days may not be taken in advance of accrual and must be requested in advance. Parents/Guardians on subsidized funding are not eligible for leave days.

Holidays / Closings

The regular tuition fee is charged for days LVCC programs are closed for the yearly defined holidays and staff in-service days if the family's regular schedule includes that day. Families eligible for leave days may request a leave day for holidays. See inclement weather full day center closure and fee collection below.

Part-time Status

Part-time status is defined as use of service less than five hours a day, or four or fewer days weekly. Children enrolled full time have placement priority. When classroom enrollment reaches capacity, parents/guardians are notified and given the opportunity to increase the hours their child attends to ensure continued service.

Withdrawal/Transfer

Parents/Guardians withdrawing their child are required to give one week's written notice. If notice is not received, one week's fee is charged and parent/guardian agrees to pay it based upon this rule. An account must be current to transfer from center to center or to re-enroll back into a program.

Changes

LVCC reserves the right to change the conditions of the Tuition Agreement at any time upon notice to the parents/guardians, at which time the changed conditions shall become part of the Agreement and binding on the parties. Parents/Guardians will receive as much advance notice as possible.

Subsidized Funding

Parents/Guardians receiving tuition assistance from the State of Pennsylvania must follow all rules and regulations set by the OCDEL/DHS regarding payments. LVCC policies for late pick-up and withdrawal do apply.

-ELRC/Child Care Works will pay LVCC for five (5) consecutive days of absence. On the sixth (6) consecutive day of absence, LVCC must report the absences to the ELRC.

The ELRC will notify you as the parent/guardian that the eligibility of subsidized child care will be terminated on a specific date unless your child or children return to care prior to that date.

-ELRC/Child Care Works requires that children do not miss more than 40 days per fiscal year, regardless of transfers from one provider to another provider. On the 41st absence and every day thereafter, a parent/guardian is required to pay LVCC the daily tuition rate.

Children funded through the Food Stamp/ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program are not subject to the 40 day absent limit. To remedy a Child Care Works adverse action, payment should be paid by money order, credit card, or debit card. Checks will not be accepted.



Inclement Weather Closure & Fee Collection

Fees or co-payments will be collected for full day LVCC closings - up to fifteen (15) per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Closings include:

- published holidays and in-service days,
- inclement weather
- other unforeseen closures.

After the fifteenth (15) full day closure in any fiscal year, fee collection will be waived for each full day closure thereafter.

In the event of an anticipated or unanticipated full day closure at one or all LVCC centers, fee collection will be waived each day up to a maximum of three (3) days during any fiscal year.

LVCC reserves the right to modify the tuition policies and procedures section when deemed necessary.

Financial Aid

Child Care Works Subsidy Program

The subsidized child care program helps low-income families pay their child care tuition. The state and federal governments fund this program, which is managed by the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) located in your county of residence. If you meet the guidelines, the state will pay a part of your assessed child care fee (called a subsidy payment), and you will pay a part of the fee (called a family co-pay).

The subsidy payment and the family co-pay go directly to the child care program. The ELRC office is the center for child care information and child care help in your county. You can call or visit the ELRC office for a subsidized childcare application.

For specific guidelines and information, contact the Child Care Information Services agency in your county.

Early Learning Resource Center 14
1520 Hanover Avenue Allentown, PA 18109-2360
Phone: 610-437-6000
Toll-Free: 1-800-528-7222
LVCC Scholarship Fund

The LVCC Scholarship Fund benefits low-income, working families who are eligible for child care works and are waiting for a subsidy to become available. Help is also available to pursue vocational training or to handle a family crisis. To be considered for scholarship assistance, you must qualify in one or more of the following categories:

- parenting teen attends school in pursuit of a high school diploma;
- parent/guardian is working;
- family is ineligible for any type of subsidy, but experiencing severe financial difficulties due to a life-changing event (i.e. sudden illness with medical expenses);

To apply for scholarship assistance, please take the following steps:

- Enroll your child(ren) at Lehigh Valley Children's Centers.
- Apply for a Child Care Works state subsidy.
- Complete a Scholarship Fund application (available from the director at your child's center) and return it to the Center Director with the required documentation.
- Provide your Center Director with documentation of Child Care Works eligibility or waiting list status within two weeks of submitting the Scholarship Fund application.



LVCC Administrative Office

Lehigh Valley Children's Centers, Inc.
1501 Lehigh Street, Suite 208
Allentown, PA 18103
Phone: 610-820-5333
FAX: 610-820-5338
Monday - Friday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

PLEASE NOTE: If you have questions or concerns regarding your child's education or child care, it is recommended that you first contact the lead teacher in your child's classroom, then your Center Director. If your concern is still not addressed, we invite you to contact a program coordinator and/or Pre-K Counts Educational Coordinator at the number listed above.

For questions regarding tuition and fees, please contact our accounts receivable staff member at 610-820-5333 x252.

LVCC staff email addresses are available online at www.LVCCOnline.org.



For news and information:

- Be the first to know on [Facebook.com/LVCCOnline](https://www.facebook.com/LVCCOnline)
- Follow us on Instagram @LVCCOnline