



# School Age Child Care Family Handbook



Update 8/2014

*Dear School-Age Family:*

*Welcome to the School Age Child Care Program (SACC)! We look forward to a wonderful year working with your children!*

*Here are a few reminders for the school year:*

- Pay close attention to the Jewish holiday closings on the child care closings card. The JCC is not used as a bus stop on those days.*
- When there are school closings or early dismissals, we will place sign-up sheets directly outside the classrooms. Please sign your child up on those days that your child will attend the program so that we can be appropriately staffed and plan activities and lunch accordingly.*
- Newsletters, updates and other information will be provided via email. If you do not have an email address please indicate on the paperwork and we will do our best to provide paper copies for your child.*

*We often receive requests from the media to photograph or videotape children in our School Age program. If you prefer that your child not appear in any media coverage, please include a letter to this effect along with an identifiable photo of your child when submitting required paperwork.*

*Again, welcome to the JCC School Age Child Care Program. We are excited to have you with us this year!*

*George Kapterian  
School-Age Director*

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## **Welcome to the JCC School-Age Childcare Program**

We are pleased that you have chosen our program. Caring for your child is a privilege and a responsibility which we are proud to share with your family.

Please read through this handbook. It should help you with most of our routines and policies.

### **Statement of Goal**

The mission of the JCC School-Age Childcare (SACC) Program is:

To create an environment for school-age children that encourages self-direction and self-expression and fosters the growth of well-rounded individuals.

To create an inclusionary program that provides a safe and nurturing environment for children with disabilities and promotes friendship and understanding between typically developing children and children with developmental challenges.

To provide flexible care arrangements for school-age children that meet the varied needs of families in the York community.

To work with social service agencies, schools, and families to coordinate all facets of care and education for school-age children.

Our program is committed to forging a strong partnership between each family and the JCC in order to provide the highest quality of care for each child enrolled in the program as well as preparing children for the social rigors of each concurrent grade by allowing them increased freedoms and responsibilities.

## **Curriculum Statement**

### **Goals**

Children will develop new skills and use existing skills to create, shape, build, and expand a social environment in which all are respected and every person has an opportunity to participate at his or her own pace.

### **Experiences**

To achieve these goals, the children will have the following opportunities:

- Structured, small group activities (ex: art, cooking, science)
- Structured, large group activities (ex: gym, outside, meeting)
- Child initiated activities that allow individual, small group, and large group interactions
- Time to plan events or share ideas (i.e. meeting, gym, auditorium)

### **Materials**

The following is a basic list of supplies and materials. Each bullet corresponds to the experience listed above. As a particular situation arises, however, items will be purchased or rotated in/out to support the children's development.

- Paint, markers, paper, clay, string, looms, measuring cups, recipe books, cutting boards, utensils
- Balls, scooters, jump ropes, goals, cones, chairs
- Blocks, dress up clothes, books, board games, cards

- Suggestion box, paper, pencil, flipping coin

### **Roles**

- Staff will consistently model mature behavior in their interactions with other staff, with families, and with children, always striving to follow the JCC Code of Caring and Code of Conduct.
- Staff is responsible for planning activities based on the children's ages and interests.
- Staff will offer children experiences and responsibilities consistent with each child's developmental level and will support children as they learn to make good decisions in shaping their own experiences within the program.
- Staff will support children as they establish a balance between meeting their own needs and those of the larger group.
- Staff will observe children regularly and be able to discuss each child's developmental progress, special skills, and any concerns with the Director.
- Staff will greet families by name at arrival and departure times.

### **Families**

- We invite families to speak to the Director about any concerns they have about their children or their children's program at the JCC.
- We invite families to visit the program, participate in field trips, and to share interesting hobbies and skills with our children and staff.

### **School Age Director**

- The Director will model mature behavior with families, children and staff, always striving to follow the JCC Code of Caring and Code of Conduct.
- The Director will be sensitive to the learning styles of children and staff.
- The Director will offer regular Family/Program conferences to families at least once per school year and as needed or requested by a family.
- The Director will be responsible for meeting with all newly enrolling families.
- The Director is responsible for adhering to the standards set by the state of Pennsylvania for 4 STAR Keystone stars school age child care programs.

### **Inclusion Policy**

#### **Inclusion Policy**

We believe that inclusion programs provide the best educational settings for all children and that each child contributes his or her own personal value to our program. Children benefit from an environment that promotes diversity and respect for differences. All children learn best when they participate with others who have different learning goals and abilities.

We welcome children with special needs into our program and make sure that they are fully integrated members of the classroom in which they are enrolled. However, our programs can

neither meet the needs of every child nor of every family. Our teacher to child ratios and level of staff knowledge are not adequate to meet every special need. To make certain that our classroom environment is appropriate for your child, we ask that you set up an appointment with the School Age Director to discuss your child and our ability to meet his or her needs. We also ask that you provide information from other professionals involved with your child, such as an Early Intervention professional, an LIU teacher, or a therapist. To maintain a high quality of care and education for all enrolled children, we ask that a family provide a special aide (TSS) for a child that requires frequent and prolonged one-on-one guidance or care from an adult.

We are committed to working with the community partners that support the special care and educational needs of children. We ask that families help us collaborate with other professionals working with a child by providing up to date reports and inviting JCC staff to Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meetings. Any information JCC staff learn from such collaboration is held in strict confidence and used only to gain a more effective understanding of a child's unique care and educational needs. With family permission, we invite Early Intervention professionals to observe individual children in the childcare classroom.

### **Individual Education Plans (IEP) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP)**

Our Keystone STARS Performance standards require that we have copies of existing IEPs, IFSPs, and behavioral plans on file for children enrolled in our School, Child Care, and School Age programs.

If your child has an educational or behavioral plan in place, through a school, other child services organization, or through private testing and therapists, it is additionally important for our staff to have this information available in order to care for and educate them in the best way possible.

The information on these forms is protected by privacy laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). We require each member of our teaching teams to sign a Confidentiality Agreement and instruct our teachers to discuss useful confidential information only in relation to a child's care and education.

## **Certification & Status**

### **Certification Information**

The SACC program is certified through the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Each of our sites are also involved with Keystone STARS at varying levels. Please feel free to ask for information on any standards or regulations set by any of the above agencies and organizations.

### **Change of Status Forms**

A Change of Status for Child or Family Form is required for all billing changes including a change in your child's schedule, membership, vacation, and withdrawal. The form is available at the JCC Front Desk, or Early Childhood Lobby. Return the completed form to the JCC front desk or a drop box.

### **Transfer of Child Records**

At the request of the family, a copy of the child's file will be made available when the child transfers to another child care setting. A request for this must be made in writing. The copy will be given to the family to give to the other facility.

## **Scholarship Program**

The JCC recognizes the need to serve all members of the community regardless of their ability to pay the full cost of programs, membership, or School/Child Care tuition. As a not-for-profit United Way Agency, we have limited scholarship funds available for families that meet our financial assistance guidelines. If you think you may qualify for assistance, please ask for our Financial Assistance Application at the JCC front desk. All families that apply for tuition assistance for SACC must also apply for a state subsidy through Child Care Consultants, our local Child Care Information Service (854-2273).

## **Hours**

### **Program Hours**

The SACC program is open from 6:30 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday. A facilitator will stay to supervise the child until a family member or other authorized adult comes to pick up the child if after 6 PM. A late fee may be imposed on families arriving more than five minutes after their child's home base closing time. At the Director's discretion, the late fee of \$5.00 per five minutes (\$5.00 for 6 – 10 minutes, \$10.00 for 11 –15 minutes, etc.) may be applied. Please make every effort to pick your child up by your child's home base closing time.

### **Arrivals**

Please record your child's time of arrival on the sign-in/out sheet. In the absence of sign-in and sign-out times the child's account will be charged from opening time (6:30 AM) until bus pick-up time.

### **Departures**

Because we want to maintain a high quality of care and experience for our children, we use our facilities to the fullest extent possible, rather than limiting the children to a single classroom. Though the use of different classrooms, the outdoors, and the gym may require an extra walk down the hallway to retrieve your child, we feel the extra activities we can offer the children are worth the minor inconvenience. If an adult other than those listed on the Child Emergency Information Form is to pick up your child from the JCC, you should notify us in writing. We do realize that unforeseen situations may require a parent to make a last-minute phone call to inform facilitators of pick-up by a person not authorized on the child's enrollment forms. Please help us to identify the non-authorized pick-up person and prepare the pick-up person ahead of time, so that they are prepared to show a current form of identification before we will release your child into their custody.

Please record your child's departure time on the sign-in/out sheet.

## **Safety Procedures**

### **Programs at School Sites**

Each site has specific procedures for entry. Please see below for your child's school information.

If at any time you are in a hurry at pick up, or a staff person is not readily available, please call the site cell phone.

Dallastown Area Intermediate School Students (DAIS) - Please enter the building through the Red Wing entrance. Please use the sign-in/out sheets to confirm your student's attendance. We also use the sheets for billing purposes. Our program staff will take the student to class. We will pick them up from class starting at 3:15pm.

York Area Regional Charter School (YARCS) - Please enter through the parking lot vestibule. You can knock on the door call the site phone and staff will allow you access..

### **Emergency Weather Closings or Delays**

Closings or delayed openings due to snow or hazardous driving conditions will be announced via email, our website ([www.yorkjcc.org](http://www.yorkjcc.org)) and television station WGAL-TV 8. The child care program will operate as the Jewish Community Center operates. Do not confuse a JCC School for the Early Years cancellation with a JCC child care closing. We will make every effort to keep our child care center open despite difficult driving conditions. When in doubt, please call the JCC before leaving home to drop off your child.

### Dallastown Area Intermediate School (DAIS) and Loganville-Springfield Elementary @ DAIS

Closings -Care provided at the JCC

Delays -On-site at DAIS

Early Dismissals -On-site at DAIS

### York Area Regional Charter School (YARCS)

Closings -Care provided on-site at YARCS

Delays -On-site at YARCS

Early Dismissals -On-site at YARCS

### **School-Scheduled Closings**

We will post sign-up sheets at least a week in advance for families needing care during school-scheduled closings. Use the sheets to sign your child up to attend our program on these days. We plan for lunches and staffing based on the numbers of children listed on the sign-up sheets. Please check your Child Care Fee Structure for payment details.

### **Communications**

#### **Communication between Family and School**

A solid family/JCC partnership is as important to the success of our child care program as it is to the well-being of your child. When communication between the JCC and family is a two-way channel; both facilitators and families are more confident with the care giving partnership and the child benefits.

#### **Notes to the Facilitator**

Please be sure that all important messages to facilitators take the form of a written note. Notes should be handed directly to the facilitator. It is wise to deliver the note yourself or to stand by as your child does so. Notes left in children's book bags may never reach their destination.

#### **Talking to the Facilitator**

Throughout the year, families and facilitators will have information to share about children. A change of routine at home or at the JCC, conflicts with another child, or a particularly amusing anecdote may all warrant a brief conversation. It is important to discuss these topics when all children are out of ear-shot. If a facilitator is unable to leave her group at drop-off or pick-up time, you may leave a note and a staff member will get back to you, or you may call the JCC front desk and a facilitator will return your call as soon as possible.

### **Concerns/Suggestions/Grievances**

Please share all concerns or suggestions with your child's home base teachers. If you want to take a suggestion or concern beyond the home base please contact (in order): The School-Age Director ► The Executive Director ► The Board of Directors.

If a family feels they have been discriminated against, a complaint may be filed with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Civil Rights, the DPW Bureau of Equal Opportunity (BEO) and/or the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

### **Conferences and Assessments**

Conferences provide an opportunity for families and facilitators to share valuable insights and information about the child. If, at any time during the year, you would like a conference with either the child's facilitators, the School Age Director, or the Assistant School Age Director please contact us and we will arrange for one.

A developmental assessment will be conducted within 90 days of your child's enrollment. This assessment will be used to help our facilitators get to know your child better. A copy of the assessment will be provided to you and a conference will be offered.

### **Confidentiality**

All information concerning individual children is on file in the main office. All financial information pertaining to individual families is kept in a locked file. People who have access to a child's files include: the Directors, the child's classroom teachers, the child's family/guardians, and the child care administrative assistants. Only the Financial Assistance Director and the family have access to a family's financial information. Files or information from the file may be released to schools or other agencies only with a signed parental consent form. Information about a child or his family is confidential and may not be shared with other families.

### **The Newsletter and Notes Home**

Every month a brief newsletter is sent via email to give families an overview of activities and projects underway in the program. Any parent who feels a daily report would be useful should speak to the child's facilitator.

### **Visits to the Home Base**

Families are encouraged to visit their child's home base at any time during the year. You may stop by for an informal visit or schedule a visit to help with a particular group project. If you have a special talent or interest you would like to share with the children please let our School-Age Director know.

### **Program Surveys**

We ask that all families complete a program survey once a year. These forms are an integral part of our strategy for building and maintaining high quality in our children's programming.

### **Guidance**

Facilitators in each home base work as a team, guiding the children's behavior as the children learn to follow group routines and schedules and to meet age-appropriate behavioral expectations on their own. Adults model appropriate behavior in the way that they talk to each other and to the children. Rather than emphasize what cannot be done, facilitators let children know what they can do. Planning interesting and meaningful activities with the children's

participation goes a long way towards creating a harmonious environment.

Impulsive behavior is common within groups of school age children. Facilitators watch their groups carefully and consistently and will intervene when children become either physically or verbally aggressive. Talking to a child and allowing her to suffer the consequences of her behavior is effective discipline in most cases. A child who is loud and disruptive during a snack or mealtime might be asked to move away from friends and sit with a facilitator, for example. A child who has hit or pushed another child will be spoken to firmly about the need for safety and be asked to check on the child whom he has hurt.

Although facilitators expect to deal with the impulsive behavior of the school-age child, frequent or dangerous aggression, disruptive, and/or inappropriate behavior cannot be permitted. Families will be notified immediately if their child's behavior is unduly disruptive or if the child does not respond to his facilitator's efforts at discipline. We rely on a parent's cooperation in handling such behavior. When family and JCC staff, working together, cannot control a child's disruptive behavior, the JCC retains the right to terminate care for the child.

If you have concerns with another family's child's behavior, please speak confidentially to a staff person and allow the staff to handle the child's behavior. If you feel you must discipline your own child at the JCC, please avoid loud yelling and physical punishments of any kind.

### **Separation**

Beginnings, endings, or goodbyes continue to arouse strong emotions in most of us throughout our lives. As adults, we have learned to cope with our emotions. We may say, "New situations always make me nervous," with the understanding that new situations eventually become familiar. Children have not yet mastered the intellectual tools to understand their emotions.

Some tips:

- Visit your child's new home base ahead of time to meet the staff and the other children. Your visit can be scheduled at your convenience to last as long as you and your child think is necessary.
- Let a facilitator know if you think your child will need help feeling comfortable after you leave.
- If you are worried about your child's adjustment, call us from work.
- Tell us if you think there is something more we could do to help you and your child feel comfortable at the JCC. It's our job to make each child's transition into the program as smooth as possible.

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Health and Emergency Forms**

To comply with regulations from the Department of Public Welfare, we are required to keep completed health forms and emergency information forms on file for each child. Health forms must be submitted for all new enrollees and those children entering the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Emergency Information Forms must be reviewed and signed by a parent or guardian every six months.

#### **Health Policy**

When a family sends a child to school, we assume that the child is in good health and can participate in all activities including swimming, gym, and outdoor play. If, for any reason, a child is not to participate in a scheduled activity, please notify the classroom facilitator.

Runny noses, mild coughs, and colds should not keep children from participating in JCC activities. A day at the JCC places both physical and emotional demands on the child. If your child is truly sick, he is better off at home. If a child becomes sick while in our program, we will call to ask you to make arrangements to pick up the child as soon as possible.

We will send a child home with any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 101 degrees or higher taken under the arm
- Vomiting
- Severe diarrhea, defined as two or three very loose stools within one hour
- Any unexplained, possibly contagious rash such as (impetigo or ringworm)
- Head lice (Head lice requires that you contact your child's doctor and the JCC immediately. Your child may return to child care after being treated with Nix shampoo or physician-approved treatment with a doctor's note.)

If your child has been sick with a communicable disease other than a cold or flu, please check with your physician before sending the child back to child care. If there is an outbreak of strep throat, head lice, etc., we will notify you. When a child is going to be absent from care please call to let us know.

### **Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Procedures**

The Jewish Community Center has a staff handbook, the JCC Emergency Plan, to establish procedures for handling crises within the JCC building, off-site programs, and the local community. These procedures include means of handling crises such as weather related or other environmental hazards, medical and dental emergencies, intruders, and fire. The JCC posts emergency evacuation routes in classrooms and hallways throughout the building. Our emergency procedures are updated annually. The York County Emergency Management Agency reviews and signs the JCC Emergency Plan annually. All JCC staff are trained and drilled in the emergency procedures outlined in the handbook. New teaching/childcare staff must be trained in emergency evacuation procedures within three weeks of hire. Additionally, all teaching/care giving staff receives annual emergency training and annual fire safety training.

### **Administration of Prescription Medicines**

Please contact site staff with any questions about procedures specific to your child.

A facilitator will administer physician prescribed medicine to your child when necessary. Our certification agency, the Department of Public Welfare, enforces the following strict regulations that we must adhere to for the safety of both staff and children:

### **Prescription Medications**

Medications must arrive at the JCC in an original container, labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, an exact time medication is to be given, and a dosage. Medications for asthma such as inhalers or nebulizers will sometimes be prescribed on an "as needed basis". This is fine as long as a physician's note accompanies the prescription describing the symptoms that constitute the "as needed" situation. For example, "Administer two puffs as needed for symptoms of excessive coughing or wheezing."

### **Over-the-Counter Medicines**

- We cannot administer over-the-counter medications without a physician's prescription

stating a dosage and exact time of administration.

- We cannot store over-the-counter medications at the JCC for use past the date(s) prescribed by the physician.
- A physician must supply a new prescription for over-the-counter medications, if needed, at the time of each illness.

### **The Medication Log**

A parent or home caregiver must sign the home base Medication Log and provide the child's name, name of the medication, an exact time the medication is to be given and a dosage. If your child is to be on a medication over a period of time, please ask the home base teacher for a separate Medication Log sheet. Remember that a parent/ home caregiver must provide a signature for each day that the medication is to be administered. **Staff cannot administer medication without the appropriate signature.**

### **All Medications**

Make sure to hand all medications to a home base facilitator. Do not leave medicine in a child's backpack or cubby. Even products as mild as sunscreen or chapstick for chapped lips must be delivered to staff.

Please keep in mind the following suggestions:

- Many antibiotics can be administered on an early morning and evening schedule, eliminating the need to send medicine to the JCC. It is always safest that your child take medicines at home.
- If your child is taking medication at home please inform a home base facilitator.
- Consider **not** using over-the-counter medications. We will deal with runny noses, coughing, and mild fevers (under-the-arm readings less than 101 degrees). Many of the over-the-counter drugs are not effective and no medication is one hundred percent safe.

### **Allergies**

Information about a child's allergies must be listed on their health form. In addition, we ask that you speak to your child's facilitator about any precautions staff should take to protect your child.

### **Special Health Needs**

If your child has special health needs, please provide us with a written plan or statement detailing your expectations of how we can collaborate with you in providing the best care for your child. Please make sure that this written statement is accompanied by a written confirmation of your statement from your child's physician.

### **Routines & Policies**

#### **Outdoor Policy**

We will go outdoors in almost any weather. Lightning and thunderstorms will keep us indoors; drizzle will not. Dangerous conditions, such as a play yard slicked with ice, or subzero temperatures, will lead us to skip outdoor time, but snow, even slush, may send us bounding out the door. Our policy is based on the belief that weather has little, if any, effect on the children's health. We understand that not everyone shares this view. Please let us know your feelings.

During cold or snowy winter weather, we recommend that you send your child to school with a warm jacket, snow pants, hat, mittens, and boots every day with the expectation that he/she will

be going outdoors. As a rule, we ask the children to wear whatever outdoor clothing they have brought to school. Let us know how firmly you want us to adhere to this rule with your child. When it is bitterly cold, we insist that children keep their hats on their heads and mittens on hands. On more temperate days, we will allow children to remove hats or gloves if they feel more comfortable without them. We are able and willing to be firm, however, and will ask children to wear hats or gloves if it is important to you.

### **Sunscreen (during the summer)**

Please apply UVA/UVB protection to your child before drop off in the morning during weather warm enough for your child to be outdoors in short sleeves. Please consider encouraging your child to wear a hat.

### **Hand Washing**

Our state certification agency, the Department of Public Welfare, requires children to wash hands with soap and warm water upon arrival at the center. Please help your child wash hands at drop-off time. It is also important they wash hands before eating, after using the bathroom, and when coming back from the playground.

### **Fire Drills**

In compliance with regulations set by the Department of Public Welfare, we will hold one fire drill every two months.

### **Smoking**

The JCC is a smoke free environment. The JCC does not permit smoking in any part of its building, in the play yards, or in front of the Early Childhood entrance.

### **Peanut Free**

The SACC Program is a **peanut-free environment**. To protect our children with allergies, we ask that families refrain from sending in any foods that may contain peanuts or peanut products.

### **Toys and Electronics from Home**

Most school-age children can understand the request that they leave treasured items at home. We have carefully chosen JCC equipment and materials and established simple routines for sharing them. Toys and electronics from home are often disruptive influences in a group setting, creating stress for owner and classmates alike. During the busy day, toys are sometimes lost or misplaced. Such losses are difficult for children to accept, even when temporary, and are better avoided.

### **Meals**

Meals and snacks at the JCC are simple and healthy. Breakfast consists of unsweetened cereal and milk and toast with margarine and/or jelly and fruit. We will often have bagels, eggs, and other special breakfasts the children help prepare. You will receive a lunch menu at the beginning of every month. Our meals are kosher-style; we do not serve shellfish or pork products and separate the serving of dairy and meat products. If a meat meal is to be served at lunch, the children will be served milk at morning and afternoon snack times. Desserts are limited to fruit, applesauce, and an occasional cookie. Do pack simple healthy meals.

Some children like to pack meals from home to eat at the JCC. If you are packing breakfast or lunch, please remember:

- Do observe our kosher-style dietary policy at the JCC.

- Do limit dessert to fruit, applesauce, and plain cookies.
- Do not pack sweetened cereals, doughnuts, or cookies for breakfast.
- Do not pack cupcakes, candy, or pudding for lunch. If we are serving a special dessert on the day your child packs lunch, he is welcome to share our dessert.

### **Vending Machines**

School-age children may not use the JCC Vending machines during program hours.

### **Gum and Candy**

Please do not allow your child to bring gum or candy.

### **Treats for the Classrooms**

Staff appreciates donations of healthy edible treats for the classroom. However, our state certification and standards do not permit us to accept any foods except those that are factory sealed or boxed. We can also accept whole fruits and vegetables.

### **Clothes**

Children should wear simple, washable clothes. There are many messy activities each day and all children are encouraged to participate in all activities. Children wear smocks during art projects, but no smock seems to offer a guarantee against the occasional splatter of glue, paint, or markers.

Children must wear rubber-soled shoes in the gymnasium. Rubber-soled shoes are safer on both indoor and outdoor climbing equipment. Children play in the outdoor play yard in all weather except heavy rain. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather.

### **Activities**

At the JCC we expose our children to a great variety of hands-on experiences. Painting, building, cooking, sewing, and outdoor games and explorations can offer a depth of learning and enjoyment to the school-age child, particularly when her experiences are supported and extended by an attentive and skillful facilitator. School-age children are naturally industrious and eager to learn new skills. A good program opens the door to new interests and experiences and can be an enriching supplement to academic learning. Social skills are crucial to the school-ager's growth and development, yet the nature of the school day often limits the amount of time children may spend socializing. The JCC program is designed to provide many opportunities for children to interact, both playing and working together, in a supportive, supervised environment. Every child needs the opportunity to feel important and valued both as an individual and as a member of his peer group.

### **Swim Program at the JCC**

School-age children at the JCC have recreational swim on Friday afternoons from 4-5:30 PM throughout the school year. Swim suits and must be brought from home and taken home each week to be washed. We do not have extra suits or towels if your child forgets.

School-age children from the JCC off-site programs will have several opportunities to swim at the JCC during school closings and holiday breaks.

During the summer months the aquatics department offers a recreational swim twice a week for campers.

## **Birthdays at the JCC**

Families celebrate their children's birthdays in different ways and some do not celebrate birthdays at all. As child care providers we need to recognize and respect these differences. We intentionally keep birthday observances low key.

If you would like your child to celebrate his birthday at the JCC, you may send in a favorite snack as long as it arrives in factory sealed wrapping or box. Whole fruits and vegetables are good and healthy options. Please do not provide balloons or party favors.

Unless all children in the child's class are going to be invited, please do not distribute party invitations at the JCC. Over the years, we have seen too many children and families with hurt feelings when families have invited some, but not all, of the children from a home base.

## **Summer Camp Registration**

Currently enrolled school-age families have the first opportunity to secure places in our Center Campus "Club J" Summer Camp Program. Packets with required paperwork are distributed a month in advance of member and non-member registration in April. Dates for this registration week will be announced in the SACC newsletter. A deposit is due with your registration.

## **Holidays**

Holidays can be over-stimulating and stressful times for children. Because television and store windows bombard children with overwhelming stimuli, we try to maintain the JCC as a refuge. For this reason we do not celebrate, with parties, even those holidays generally considered non-religious and therefore shared by most families. We appreciate that not all children share the same cultural and religious backgrounds, or the same holidays. Over the course of the year, we discuss some of the Jewish holidays with the children using age-appropriate books and projects.

There are many ways to honor different heritages at the JCC. We welcome visits from family members who would like to share recipes, stories, games, or songs representative of different cultural backgrounds. The Jewish Community Center will be closed for some Jewish holidays. A calendar with a list of days that the child care center is closed will be included in our e-newsletters.

## **Jewish Holidays**

**Chanukah**, the Festival of Lights, commemorates the re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem and celebrates the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrian Army.

**Passover** or *Pesach* recalls the Jews' ordeals as slaves in Egypt and celebrates their exodus from Egypt.

**Purim**, "The Feast of Lots," commemorates the rescue of the Jews of Persia by Queen Esther and her uncle Mordecai from Haman's evil plot to destroy them **Rosh Hashanah** celebrates the anniversary of creation and marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year.

**Shavuot** means "weeks" and commemorates the giving of the Torah (Old Testament) on Mount Sinai seven weeks after the beginning of Passover. It is highlighted by the reading of the Ten Commandments.

**Shemini Atzeret** is the beginning of the season which determines the fertility of the land in the year to come.

**Simchat Torah**, "Rejoicing in the Torah," is a festival observed on the ninth and final day of Sukkot. It honors the Torah and emphasizes the importance of learning in Jewish life.

**Sukkot**, the Feast of the Tabernacles, commemorates 40 years of wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt when Jews lived in huts or sukkahs. Sukkot also marks the harvest time.

**Tisha B'Av** commemorates and mourns the destruction of the temples in Jerusalem.

**Tu B'Shevat**, Jewish Arbor Day, celebrates the beginning of Spring in Israel.

**Yom HaShoah** is the day of Holocaust remembrance.

**Yom Kippur** is the most solemn holiday of the year, also known as the "Day of Atonement."

### **School-Age Child Care Staff**



**George Kapterian, School Age Director**

George is a certified elementary school teacher (K-6). Through hard work and dedication he was promoted from Assistant School Age Director to School Age Director in 2015. Before accepting positions in the childcare department, he taught swimming at the JCC and he worked as a TSS for a wrap around behavioral health agency. He also owns and operates a martial arts school.



**Kevin Kennedy, Assistant School Age Director**

Kevin has been a teacher at the York JCC since 2000. He has worked at length with children of all ages, most recently as a preschool teacher in the School for the Early Years at the JCC. Previous to the JCC, he has worked as a summer camp counselor and administrator at Kingswood Camp for Boys in N. H. and as an assistant athletic director at York Catholic High School.



*The JCC is a United Way Member Agency.*

*The Early Childhood Education program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.*

*It is licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and has received a 4-STAR rating from Pennsylvania Keystone STARS.*

*Financial assistance is available.*

*The JCC shall not discriminate because of race, color, sex, age, veteran status, marital status, sexual preference, national origin, religion, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.*

*The JCC is an equal opportunity employer.*



*Everyone is Welcome!*

York Jewish Community Center  
2000 Hollywood Drive  
York, PA 17403

