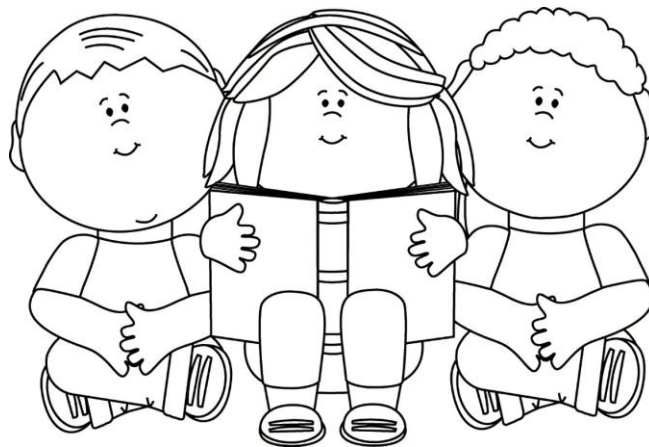




Brookville YMCA

P.A.L.

(Play And Learn)



**Nursery School
Handbook**



Dear Parents and Children,

Welcome to the Brookville YMCA's P.A.L. Nursery School. We are proud to have you as a part of our family. Over the years the YMCA has been privileged to care for thousands of children in our community. You have joined an organization that has a history of over 100 years of working towards building strong kids, strong families and strong communities. We hope your relationship with the YMCA and the P.A.L. Nursery School is a lasting and enriching experience from which your whole family will benefit.

When you enroll in P.A.L. Nursery School, you are becoming part of an international movement to put Judeo-Christian Principles into practice through programs that develop healthy bodies, minds and spirits. Our curriculum is planned with this mission in mind. Our goals are to:

- Build independence, self-esteem and confidence through creative expression.
- Teach the process of problem solving and decision-making.
- Provide an unbiased multi-cultural curriculum that allows children to respect themselves, their peers, adults, and others.
- Create a bond between children, parents and staff, which enables the nursery school to enrich the lives of all involved.
- Teach the skills needed to be prepared for Kindergarten.

In order for us to accomplish these goals, there must be certain policies and procedures in place to assure that we provide an appropriate and responsible program. This handbook is provided as a tool for you to use to help understand those policies and procedures. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference.

We look forward to working with your family and being a part of your child's growing years. We are available to speak with if you need any assistance. Please don't hesitate to call or visit us at the YMCA if you have any questions or concerns. Please see our Policies and Procedures Manual on our website to find out more details concerning our facility's policies and procedures.

Sincerely,

Kelly Belfiore
Teacher
P.A.L. Nursery School

Shela Shields
Teacher
P.A.L. Nursery School

Tina Householder
CEO
Brookville YMCA

Philosophy

The philosophy of **P.A.L. (Play and Learn) Nursery School** is based on the mission of our parent association, the **Brookville YMCA**. That mission is “**to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.**” Under the guidance of experienced, qualified teachers, each child will have the opportunity to develop **Spirit** through positive social interaction, character development education and creative expression; to develop **Mind** through discovery learning centers, themed activities and skills reinforcement; and to develop **Body** through large motor activities, cooperative sports and games, and health and wellness education. Every child will be treated as an individual, learning through hands-on fun in an age appropriate environment.

Curriculum

The **Session 1 Program** is designed to introduce three and four-year-old children to their first experience in a structured classroom. This program emphasizes social development, self-esteem, language development, basic skills, and positive values – using creative activities and developmentally appropriate curriculum in a caring and nurturing environment.

The **Session 2 Program** is designed for **Kindergarten Readiness**. This program will reinforce the basic skills necessary for a positive experience in kindergarten. Children will be encouraged to participate in age appropriate activities, which facilitate the development of the child socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically.

Our program has been designed to include lessons and activities that incorporate the following curriculum components: Character Development, Social Competence and Conflict Resolution, Following Directions, Health/Wellness/Fitness, Arts and Crafts, Discovery Science, Cooking, Math Concepts, Small and Gross Motor Skills and Language Development.

Weekly themes will be developed to assist with a variety of educational concepts throughout the year. Please reference monthly newsletters for themes.

Early Learning Standards

The curriculum of the P.A.L. Nursery School is based on the Early Learning Standards developed as a joint project of the Departments of Education and Public Welfare as part of Governor Rendell’s commitment to early childhood education and care. The Early Learning Standards are meant to guide the development of pre-kindergarten programs, and were developed by a Task Force consisting of early childhood practitioners and administrators, policy analysts and researchers, and university faculty. If you would like to review a copy of

Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards, please express your interest to the P.A.L. Nursery School Director.

Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy

The Brookville YMCA and the P.A.L. Nursery School are open to all applicants regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, disability, age, or Limited English Proficiency (LEP). There is no discrimination in admission policy or the use of the facility. Anyone who believes he/she has been discriminated against may file a complaint with any of the following agencies:

Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance
Department of Public Welfare
Room 412 Health and Welfare Building
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Region III, P.O. Box 137116
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance
Department of Public Welfare
Western Field Office
702 State Office Building
300 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15333

Location and Hours

The P.A.L. Nursery School is located on the top floor of the Brookville YMCA. The program will have access to the swimming pool, the gymnasium, the dining room and the dance studio. Classes will run from September through May. The nursery school will observe the same holidays as the Brookville School District.

Program Hours:

Session 1	Ages 3-4	9:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Monday/Wednesday
		9:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Tuesday/Thursday
Session 2	Ages 4-5	9:00 – 11:30 a.m.	Monday/Wednesday/Friday

Staff/child ratios are kept low to insure a quality preschool education. Each Session 1 class is limited to twelve children, and each Session 2 class is limited to fifteen children, with at least one certified teacher and one aide present at all times.

Snow Days and Delayed Openings

The P.A.L. Nursery School will be closed on any day that the Brookville School District is closed for inclement weather. If the school district should experience a two-hour delay, the nursery school will be closed. Closings and delays will be announced on local radio stations and will be posted on the Brookville Area School District website.

Staffing

All YMCA staff members are trained in CPR, Child Abuse Prevention, and Bloodborne Pathogens. All classroom teachers are certified by the Department of Education. Swimming Instructors are certified in Red Cross Lifesaving, CPR and First Aid. All YMCA staff members are required to have criminal background checks.

Parent/Staff Communication

We believe that parent involvement is essential to the success of your child's nursery school experience. Your understanding and cooperation with all policies is basic to the smooth operation of the school. Please feel free to discuss your child's experience with our teachers as soon as a question or problem arises. Any information pertinent to your child's health or happenings at home, which may affect his/her behavior at school, should be shared with the teachers.

It is important for you to read all of the materials that are sent home in your child's backpack. To keep you better informed, you will receive a monthly newsletter, containing administrative information, descriptions of themes and activities, field trip and special event information, and ideas for supplementing classroom learning.

Backpacks

Your child is required to bring a backpack to school each day, labeled with his/her name. All personal items should be carried in the backpack, leaving your child's hands free to hold the railing when climbing steps. Items are less likely to be dropped and lost if secured in a backpack. Craft projects and important parent information will come home in your child's backpack, so please check them everyday!

Clothing

We strongly recommend dressing your child in rubber-soled shoes or sneakers with clothing that you do not mind being soiled or stained. This allows children to relax and enjoy school without worrying about their clothes. Please label all coats and boots with your child's name.

Parents are asked to send a change of clothing that may be kept at the nursery school in case of an accident. Place a shirt, pair of pants, socks and underwear in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name. If your child should have an accident, the soiled clothing will be returned to you sealed in the Ziploc bag.

Potty Training/Diapers

All children must be potty-trained to participate in the nursery school program. No pull-ups will be accepted.

Illness Policy

Your child's teachers should be informed about the nature of any illness. Children are not allowed to attend nursery school if they have a contagious disease or condition. We cannot keep children who have a fever, vomiting or severe diarrhea, unidentified rashes or a severe cold. Children having any of these symptoms 24 hours prior to their scheduled class time should not be sent to school. This is to protect your child, as well as, others from as much illness as possible.

Standards of Cleanliness

The P.A.L. Nursery School is cleaned by the YMCA housekeeping staff on a nightly basis. Each evening, the garbage cans are emptied; floors are mopped and carpets are swept; bathrooms and toilets are cleaned and sanitized. All cleaning supplies are stored out of the reach of children.

Arrival and Departure

Please escort your child to the nursery school classroom each morning. Do not arrive more than ten minutes before the start of class.

All parents or persons picking up children must come into the YMCA and wait in the lobby. Do not come to the classroom, as the nursery school teachers will bring the children downstairs to the lobby at the end of class. We understand that occasional delays happen due to emergencies, traffic, or other circumstances. If this is the case, please notify the school as soon as possible.

On your child's Emergency Contact Form, provide the names of anyone to whom we may release your child. Children will not be released to anyone whose name does not appear on the form, unless we receive written consent, which includes the name of the person, the date and your signature. During an emergency, phone calls will be accepted. You must tell the staff the nature of the emergency, the name and a visual description of the pick-up person, and expected arrival time.

We will not release your child to anyone who cannot produce the proper identification (if unknown to the staff) or anyone under the age of eighteen. If there are custody issues involving your child, you must provide the school with court papers in advance indicating who has permission to pick-up the child.

Daily Schedule for Session One

Monday/Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday Schedule

9:00 – 9:10 a.m.	Arrival/Greeting
9:10 – 10:10 a.m.	Guided Free Play and Learning Centers – Arts and Crafts, Science and Nature, Cooking, Language Arts, Math Concepts, etc.
10:10 – 10:40 a.m.	Circle Time – Pledge, calendar, weather, theme introduction and/or lesson, theme related songs, games and stories
10:40 – 11:00 a.m.	Bathroom and Snack
11:00 – 11:25 a.m.	Developmental Gym Class, Climbing Wall, Gross Motor Activities in Gym, or Special Programming.
11:25 – 11:30 a.m.	Prepare for Departure

Session One children will swim the last Wednesday or Thursday of each month.

The schedule will be adjusted accordingly.

Daily Schedule for Session Two

Monday and Wednesday Schedule

9:00 – 9:10 a.m.	Arrival/Greeting
9:10 – 10:10 a.m.	Guided Free Play and Learning Centers – Arts and Crafts, Science and Nature, Cooking, Language Arts, Math Concepts, etc.
10:10 – 10:40 a.m.	Circle Time – Pledge, calendar, weather, theme introduction and/or lesson, theme related songs, games and stories
10:40 – 11:00 a.m.	Bathroom and Snack
11:00 – 11:25 a.m.	Developmental Gym Class, Climbing Wall, Gross Motor Activities in Gym, or Special Programming.
11:25 – 11:30 a.m.	Prepare for Departure

Friday Schedule

9:00 – 9:10 a.m.	Arrival/Greeting
9:10 – 10:10 a.m.	Guided Free Play and Learning Centers – Arts and Crafts, Science and Nature, Cooking, Language Arts, Math Concepts, etc.
10:10 – 10:40 a.m.	Circle Time – Pledge, calendar, weather, theme introduction and/or lesson, theme related songs, games and stories

10:40 – 11:00 a.m.	Bathroom and Snack
11:00 – 11:25 a.m.	Swimming
11:25 – 11:30 a.m.	Prepare for Departure

Time frames are similar for the afternoon class.

Swimming

Session 2 Students will use the YMCA pool every Friday. Students will be tested by trained swimming instructors on skill level prior to the first swimming lesson. Two instructors will be in the water with your children; two more adults will remain on the pool deck. Floaties and goggles are provided. We will allow time for both swimming instruction and free play in the pool.

Session 1 Students will use the YMCA pool on the last Wednesday or Thursday of each month, unless a change is made due to holidays or snow days.

Children are to wear their swimsuits under their play clothes. Towels and underwear should be sent in a plastic bag, which will be used to send home wet items. It is important that you label all items with your child's name. Please let us know if your child needs to wear earplugs.

Physical Education

Your child's future health and well-being are directly related to the development and strengthening of his/her gross motor skills including muscle control, balance and coordination. All children will be given weekly opportunities to experience active indoor play through developmental gym classes, yoga or dance classes, use of the climbing wall, or sports and games in the gym. Remember to send your child in rubber-soled shoes or sneakers!

Snack Policy

Parents will be asked to provide the classroom snack and drink on a rotating basis. A schedule will be included with the monthly newsletter. We request that the snacks be a "healthy choice" and that the drink be milk or juice. Water will also be available at the school. Please provide napkins and cups or plastic utensils, if necessary. There will be a refrigerator available to keep snack/drinks cold. **Do not send any food that contains nuts or peanut butter!** Please notify the teachers if your child has a food allergy.

Birthdays

We will plan for your scheduled snack day to fall on your child's birthday, or as close to it as possible. You may send in a special treat that day, but please keep it simple. (Cupcakes are

easier to manage than a large cake that must be cut and served.) Take-home treats may be sent to school, but will not be passed out until it is time to go home. Your child will be able to select an item from the “birthday box”! Summer birthdays will be celebrated on a special day in May.

Show and Tell

Show and Tell encourages self-confidence and stimulates each child’s ability to express himself/herself. To make it a successful part of your child’s experience at school, please keep in mind the following:

- Each child may bring in a *Show and Tell* item only on his/her assigned snack day.
- Limit *Show and Tell* to one item.
- The item must be able to fit inside your child’s backpack.
- Pets are welcome at the discretion of the Director. Please give advance notice to your child’s teacher so that we may identify any allergies and receive prior written consent forms from each child’s parents.

Field Trips

Trips outside the classroom are planned to broaden the children’s awareness of their community and to enhance the curriculum of the classroom. You will receive information about fieldtrips in the monthly newsletter. Permission slips will be sent home to be signed by a parent and returned to school. A child may not attend a field trip without a signed permission slip. Parents are welcome to accompany the group on all field trips. If the trip location is not within walking distance from the school, we will use an ATA bus for transportation. Parents have the option of transporting their own children.

Behavior Management Policy

From time to time, all children need assistance and direction in deciding what behavior is appropriate. A disruptive child can quickly destroy the cooperative atmosphere of a program. Children need a stable, safe and enjoyable environment to enable their healthy development. If a child poses a clear threat to the safety or welfare of other children, creates an unsafe environment and/or exhibits behavior that interferes with the activities of other children, the following steps will be taken:

- 1st Offense A parent/guardian conference will be scheduled and a plan of action will be implemented.

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| 2 nd Offense | A written warning will be placed in the child's file and a copy given to the parent/guardian. |
| 3 rd Offense | Child will be suspended for two scheduled days of nursery school. |
| 4 th Offense | Child will be dismissed from the program. |

Medical Emergency and Accident Plan

If your child is injured while attending the P.A.L. Nursery School, the following action will be taken:

1. We will make every attempt to contact the parent or guardian.
2. We will attempt to contact you through your designated emergency contact persons.
3. If your child requires medical care, and we cannot make contact, we will have the child transported to an emergency room in the company of a YMCA staff person. The staff person will remain with your child and provide to the hospital the parent's health insurance information.

Emergency Operations Plan

The Emergency Operations Plan describes the procedures that will be used by the P.A.L. Nursery School in the event of extraordinary circumstances that threaten lives and property. (Parents/Guardians are welcome to view the plan in its entirety at any time.) In the event that we must evacuate the YMCA building, children and staff will relocate to the First United Methodist Church at the corner of Jefferson and Pickering Sts. Emergency card information will be taken along, and parents will be notified from the shelter of the need to pick-up their children.

A fire drill will be held at the YMCA facility on a monthly basis. Nursery school staff and children shall participate in the fire drill.

Child Abuse Prevention

The Brookville YMCA has a "Child Abuse Prevention Policy" which outlines the procedures involved in the hiring, training and supervision of staff; appropriate conduct related to the supervision of children; reporting procedures of suspected abuse; responsibilities to parents and recommendations for good practices related to the above. (Parents/Guardians are welcome to view the policy in its entirety at any time.)

All YMCA staff members are required to have training in child abuse prevention and must obtain a Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance.

The Brookville YMCA prohibits its employees from babysitting the children who attend YMCA programs, unless (1) there was a relationship prior to meeting at the YMCA **or** (2) the staff person obtains a written waiver from the child's parent or guardian. The YMCA also prohibits its employees from transporting children enrolled in YMCA programs in non-YMCA owned or leased vehicles during and outside of program hours. Your cooperation with these policies is appreciated.

Immunization Policy

Upon enrolling your child in the P.A.L. Nursery School, you will be required to provide the school with the specific dates of immunization for the following communicable diseases:

- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis
- Polio
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella
- H influenzae
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella

A Child Health Assessment form must be completed by your family physician. If the form is not returned within thirty (30) days from the start of school, your child will be removed from the program until the appropriate form is returned. These guidelines have been developed in accordance with The Pennsylvania Department of Health and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Student Records

The information contained in a student's records is privileged and confidential; and therefore, may not be released to another person or agency without your written consent. Parents/guardians have complete access to their child's records. A copy of the child's record shall be retained at the facility for at least one year after termination of service, unless the entire record is transferred to the parent/guardian or to another agency at the request of the parent/guardian.

Student records shall contain the following information:

- Completed Registration and Tuition Agreement
- Child Health Assessment Signed by a Physician
- Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form
- YMCA Release and Waiver of Liability and Indemnity Agreement
- Child Abuse Prevention: Parent Statement of Understanding
- Parental Consent for Use of Swimming Pool and Climbing Wall
- Photo Release
- Record of accidents, injuries and illnesses sustained while enrolled at the P.A.L. Nursery School (if necessary)

- Receipt of Parent Handbook Signature Page

All documentation must be signed and dated by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

Tuition Policies

YMCA Membership: Enrollment in P.A.L. Nursery School entitles your child to a complimentary preschool membership to the Brookville YMCA. The membership is in effect for one year beginning September 1st of the year of enrollment.

Tuition Agreement: A completed and signed tuition agreement must accompany your non-refundable \$10 registration fee to reserve your child's place

Payment Methods: Tuition is due the first program day of the month. Payments may be made by cash (obtain a receipt), money order, check, Visa or MasterCard. Please pay at the Membership Service Desk in the lobby. Submit the correct page from your monthly payment booklet with your remittance. Checks should be made out to "The Brookville YMCA". Please put your child's first and last name on your check if it is different from your own name.

Sibling Discounts: When more than one child in the family is enrolled, there is a \$10 discount per month for each additional child in the family.

Absences: You are responsible for paying every month to reserve a space for your child in the program. Tuition for the nursery school is a flat monthly fee and will not be prorated for days not attended (i.e., sickness, vacation, snow days.)

Receipts: It is the responsibility of the parents to keep all copies of receipts pertaining to the nursery school. In the event of a missing payment or question regarding payments, the receipts may be required for proof of payment.

Insufficient Funds: Returned checks are automatically forwarded to the Nursery School Director for restitution. A service fee of \$20.00 must be paid in addition to the amount of the returned check. Restitution for a returned check or draft (including service charges) must be made within five business days of notification or the child may not return to school until payment occurs.

Late Payment Fee: A late payment charge of \$10.00/weekly will be assessed for payments not received the first program day of the month. After a two-week period, the tuition including the late payment charge must be paid prior to the child returning to the program.

Early Drop Off/Late Pick-Up Policy: Please adhere to program hours. Do not drop your children off early, even if the teachers are in the classroom. Our staff needs time to prepare

their day. The late pick-up fee is \$5.00 per child for the first 15 minutes past dismissal time and \$2.50 for every 5 minutes thereafter. This charge will be added to your bill and must be paid in full with your next tuition payment. If you are going to be late, please notify the YMCA staff and/or make alternate pick-up arrangements. Consistent lateness in picking up your child may result in dismissal from the program.

Withdrawal Policy: P.A.L. Nursery School requires a 30-day written notice when a child is withdrawn from the program. No refunds will be given.

Financial Assistance: Participants who fall within the guidelines of the YMCA Scholarship Program may be eligible for financial assistance. All scholarship requests must be directed to the Nursery School Director. All application forms must be completed before financial assistance can be considered. Requests need 2 weeks for processing.

P.A.L. Nursery School

**Parent Handbook
2024-2025 School Year**

I have read, understand and agree to follow all procedures and polices stated in the P.A.L. Nursery School Parent Handbook.

Please sign, date and return this confirmation page within five days of the start of Nursery School.

Child's Name

Parent's Signature

Date