

**West End Center for Youth**

**Parent Handbook**

**2019-2020**

**This handbook contains several important updates regarding tuition, late pick up, parent behavior, and the tuition credit program (parent volunteer hours).**

**Please read the handbook in it its entirety and sign and return the required pages to the office.**

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**Welcome to the West End Center for Youth Family!**

Who We Are

The Center was founded in 1979 as a neighborhood outreach program committed to bettering the lives of young people in the West End and Hurt Park neighborhoods. Our programs are organized to provide a structured atmosphere for children in grades K-12. The Center is a private non-profit organization operated by a board of directors and the executive director.

WEC staff is committed to maintaining an environment that is inclusive of and successful for children with various special needs. To better serve children with special needs, WEC collaborates with Family Service\* to provide a variety of mental health services to many children.

\*Family Services of Roanoke Valley - **a private, not-for-profit organization that has served Roanoke Valley residents since 1901. Organized around the mission of strengthening individuals, family and communities, Family Service is a dynamic multi-service agency serving a diverse population of clients that spans the area's economic, ethnic, and cultural divisions.**

What We Do

West End Center creates a positive and nurturing child development community by promoting youth development with an age-specific asset building approach. The goal of our program is to enable youth to become happy, successful adults. Youth development is a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences that help them to become socially, ethically, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent. West End Center seeks to build core competencies by building internal and external assets through our after school and summer programs featuring:

-Homework Assistance

-Literacy Program

-PeaceBuilders & Leadership Programs

-Fitness & Nutrition Programs

-Mentoring Program

-Parent and Family Care

-Teen Program

**Section 1 – Expectations and Conduct**

**Parental Expectations: What to Expect of WEC**

Parents may expect that:

1. Their children will be cared for in a safe, supportive environment. Their children will be treated with dignity and respect.
2. They may visit with the Group leaders and the Director about concerns related to their children and our program.
3. They will be notified of serious misbehavior on the part of their child and are encouraged to work with WEC staff to bring about improvement to the situation.
4. They will be regularly informed about WEC activities and events.
5. All records of their child(ren) will be maintained in a secure and confidential manner.
6. WEC staff will help them access community services their child may need to be successful.

**WEC’s Expectations of Parents**

WEC expects that parents will:

1. Follow all WEC rules and policies.
2. Pay attention to any communications from WEC staff, in both communications that apply specifically for the child’s behavior and communication regarding WEC events and scheduling.
3. Conduct themselves appropriately at all times. West End Center believes that everyone has the duty to be a Peacebuilder. As such, we expect that all parents or guardians and their guests will conduct themselves in a manner that promotes peace and conflict resolution.

The following behaviors may result in the immediate dismissal of your child from our program:

* Violence or any aggression, raising your voice or shouting, threatening or abusive language, swearing at or making offensive remarks, malicious allegations, and threats or threatening behavior or harassment.

1. Pick up your child immediately if their behavior becomes unmanageable, or for any other reason WEC requests you pick up your child.

**Children’s Expectations of WEC**

Children can expect:

1. To have a safe, supportive and consistent environment.
2. To use all the program equipment, materials and facilities on an equal basis.
3. To receive respectful treatment.
4. To have discipline that is fair and consistent.
5. To receive nurturing care from WEC staff members and volunteers.

**WEC’s Expectations of Children**

WEC expects children enrolled in our program to:

1. Be responsible for their actions
2. Respect all WEC rules, staff and volunteers at all times.
3. Remain with their assigned group and group leader at all times.
4. Take care of materials, equipment and property and to return them to their place when done or before taking out new ones.
5. Arrive at the program promptly and prepared.
6. Respect peers, staff, volunteers and visitors of WEC at all times.

West End Center employs a simple behavior management strategy based on the following rules and consequences.

Rules:

1. Listen and follow directions.
2. Raise your hand.
3. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
4. Be respectful. (Be nice.)

Consequences:

1. Reminder.
2. Thinking Time- 10 minutes.
3. Office Time.
4. Discussion with parents.

Rules and consequences are posted throughout the center and reviewed regularly.

**Suspension and Dismissal**

Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment at WEC. Our program cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior, especially if the parents are not involved and/or supportive.

Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity that may include, but is not limited to behavior that:

-requires constant staff attention

-inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children

-abuses the staff or other adults

-ignores or disobeys the rules that guide behavior at WEC

If a child cannot adjust to the program setting and behave appropriately, the child may be discharged from WEC. Reasonable efforts will be made to assist children in adjusting to the program setting. Suspensions and removal from the program are at the judgment of Executive Director. Duration of the suspension is at the discretion of the Executive Director and length of suspension correlates to severity of the behavior.

West End Center works hard to avoid dismissing children, but at times this becomes necessary. If your child is dismissed from the program for any reason, West End Center expects that tuition balances will be paid in full.

**Section 2 – Registration & Enrollment Policies**

**Updating Registration**

Every year we are required to update our registrations. This will be done once a year, at the end of the school year. Updated forms must be completed and turned into the office by the due date. If your child’s updated application is not turned in to the office in time, your child will not be permitted to attend WEC. This includes both our Summer Program and After-School Program.

**Updating Vital Information:**

Vital information, such as phone numbers, address, school, medications, emergency contacts, etc. always need to be kept up to date. If your child has a change in any vital information, please notify WEC immediately. Do NOT wait for the yearly update time. It is extremely important that we always have this correct information. It is your responsibili8ty to keep this information up to date with the office. Failure to keep this information up to date may result in you missing out on vital information.

**Hours of Operation and Drop Off & Pick Up Time**

**Hours of Operation**

WEC follows the Roanoke City School schedule. During the school year, if Roanoke City schools close for any reason, WEC will also be closed. This includes scheduled closings and weather-related closings.

Office Hours: 10a.m. to 5:45 p.m. Monday - Friday

After School Program Hours: 2:30p.m. to 6p.m. Monday - Friday

Summer Hours (Office and Program): 9a.m. to 4:30p.m. Monday – Friday

**Pick Up Time**

During the school year children typically arrive by bus. If you are dropping off your child, you may not drop them off before 2:30pm. During the summer hours, children may not be dropped off before 9am. During the school year, pick up time is 6:00pm, and during the summer pick up time is 4:30pm.

**Late Pick Up**

You must pick your child up from West End Center by 6:00pm. West End Center understands that occasionally a parent or caregiver may run late, thus a 5 minute grace period is given. After 5 minutes a late fee will be assessed.

Late Pick Up fees are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **# of Minutes Late** | **Fee** |
| 6-15 minutes | $5/child |
| 16-30 minutes | $10/child |
| 31-45 minutes | $15/child |
| 46-60 minutes | $25/child (If the child is not picked up by 7pm Social Services will be contacted.) |

Please note that:

* All late fees must be paid prior to the child returning to WEC on the following day.
* If fees are not paid, parents will be contacted to pick up child immediately and child may face suspension time.
* If there are three offenses of a child being dropped off early or picked up late, then the child’s placement will be evaluated, and your child may be removed from the program.

**Absences, Attendance, Withdrawal**

**Absences**

Parents are expected to notify WEC of any absences your child will have. If your child will be absent for an extended amount of time due to health reasons, after-school programs or sports please set up a time to discuss this with WEC office staff and your child’s Group Leader.

Parents will still be responsible for weekly tuition fees to hold the child’s spot on WEC’s roll.

If a child does not attend school for ANY reason, they may not attend WEC that day. This includes, but is not limited to, illnesses & suspensions.

**Attendance**

WEC has a strict 50% attendance policy. Your child is expected to attend at least 50% of regular programming hours at WEC each month. If your child does not meet this attendance policy, he or she may be dropped from our rolls.

This rule will especially be enforced during times that there are children on the waiting list. If your child is dropped due to lack of attendance, parents/guardians will be contacted by phone or in person and by mail and will be responsible for the full amount of the balance at that time.

**Withdrawal from the Program**

Parents wishing to withdrawal their child from WEC should notify the office in writing **two weeks prior** to withdrawing them.

If we are not notified in writing, your account will be continued to be billed.

WEC does not charge for days attended by the child, we charge weekly to hold the spot open. You will be billed whether you child attends or not, therefore we require written notification of your intent to withdrawal your child(ren).

**School Closings, Early Dismissals, West End Center Closings**

**School Closings**

**Scheduled School Closings:**

When Roanoke City Schools are scheduled to be closed during the school year, WEC will also be closed for children (holidays, teacher work days, spring break, etc.).

**Unscheduled School Closings:**

If there is bad weather, and Roanoke City Schools decide to close, WEC will also be closed for children. WEC office staff will do their best to get this posted on all major news stations. WEC staff may or may not be able to get into the office if the weather is bad, but WEC will be closed for all children.

**School Dismissals**

**Scheduled Early Dismissals:**

When Roanoke City Schools are scheduled to have early dismissals during the school year, WEC will be OPEN. Children will arrive by school bus or by usual transport. WEC staff will be ready for them when they arrive. Parents will be expected to pick children up at normal time. (By 6 PM)

**Unscheduled Early Dismissals:**

If Roanoke City Schools make the decision to close early due to weather, WEC will more than likely close as well. WEC staff will closely monitor the status of Roanoke City’s decision along with the weather. Unfortunately, it is usually a case by case situation. WEC staff makes every effort to contact all parents to notify them of our plans. Parents are welcome to call WEC’s office to check on our status and decision or check our Facebook page for up to date information.

**WEC Early Dismissals:**

On any day that WEC chooses to close early, it will be clearly posted. Closings will be posted in our front lobby, on the parent information board and on all front doors. We also make every attempt to pass out flyers and notify parents. However, it is the responsibility of the parent to know our schedule and closings. If there is ever a question, please contact the WEC Office or speak with any staff member.

If WEC closes early, and a child is not picked up on time, regular late fees will be applied as well as the following:

Additional $25 late fee, regardless of when child is picked up. If it is passed the 15-minute grace period, this additional $25 will be applied on top of the regular late fees.

Child will automatically be suspended for 1 day, when WEC re-opens.

Late fees must be paid before child can return to WEC. If a child returns without late fees being paid, parents and/or emergency contacts will be notified to come pick up the child immediately. The child could also face possible suspension time.

**Section 3: Tuition & Fees**

Tuition

Tuition fees will apply to all weeks that West End Center is open. Our fee is a flat rate regardless of whether your child is absent or not. **We do not prorate tuition or fees.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Child** | **School Year Rate** |
| 1st Child | $15/week |
| 2nd Child | $10/week |
| 3rd Child | $5/week |
| 4th Child | None |

There is no charge for high school students to attend West End Center.

**Tuition must be prepaid**. Your child will not be permitted to attend if you have not prepaid for the week. **This means that by 5:45 on Fridays your tuition must be paid for the *following* week.**

**Payments made after the payment deadline will be assessed a $15 late fee.** You may not send your child until tuition and the late fee are paid.

**After one week of non-payment your child(ren) will be dropped.**

If, after that time, your child arrives at WEC with an unpaid balance, you will be required to immediately pick them up. The office will call you and/or any emergency contact until someone comes to get your child.

In the event that neither you nor an emergency contact can be reached, we will contact Social Services to have someone pick up your child.

Parents may make payments anytime online at [www.westendcenter.org](http://www.westendcenter.org) by going to the Parents page and clicking the Pay Tuition Now button.

Parents may also pay tuition in the office, Monday-Friday, 10:00am-5:45pm.

It is your responsibility to make sure tuition is paid on time. If you are experiencing a financial crisis you must speak with the Executive Director *before* tuition is due.

**Summer Tuition and Activity Fees**

Summer tuition is the same weekly rate as the academic year, plus a $5 per child, per week activity fee, which helps offset the cost of the many fun activities your child will participate in throughout the summer. This fee will be added on to your regular tuition amount, which will be prepaid weekly.

Please refer to the chart below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Child** | **School Year Rate** | **Summer Rate** |
| 1st Child | $15/week | $20/week |
| 2nd Child | $10/week | $15/week |
| 3rd Child | $5/week | $10/week |
| 4th Child | None | None |

**Tuition Credit Program**

West End Center is pleased to offer tuition credit for parent volunteer hours. The Tuition Credit Program (TCP) fosters a sense of community between parents, between parents and children, and between parents and staff, while also providing financial relief for parents and freeing staff time to focus on other areas. We value and respect your time, and as such we believe tuition credit should be the same rate as a livable wage, which is currently $15/hour.

Participating in the TCP can include a variety of tasks ranging from assisting with supervision of children to cleaning, and many things in between.

A menu of Tuition Credit Opportunities (TCOs) will be posted daily in the office and above the volunteer sign in book. Participants will write their name next to the opportunity that they choose to complete. Participants may choose as many opportunities to complete as they wish, and this is done on a first come first serve basis. Some jobs will allow for more than one person, while others will not.

Staff will routinely follow up to ensure that opportunities are properly completed and will provide feedback when necessary. Most jobs will have a reasonable amount of completion time assigned to them and this will be the amount of time you receive credit for. If something takes more time, let a staff person know immediately.

Persons wishing to participate in the Tuition Credit Program must complete an agreement form in the office. Only parents or legal guardians may participate in the Tuition Credit Program. Failure to properly complete tasks or parental behavior that violates the guidelines set forth in the handbook may result in loss of participation privileges.

**Section 4 –Health and Safety Policies**

**Sunscreen Policy**

WEC encourages children to wear sunscreen, especially when the UV index is above 5. Parents who give WEC permission to offer sunscreen to their child MUST sign the sunscreen permission form in the enrollment application. WEC is not responsible for providing sunscreen, therefore parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their child before they arrive. Parents who chose to send sunscreen with their child should make sure that the bottle is labeled with child’s name. WEC cannot be held responsible for keeping up with a child’s own bottle of sunscreen, however WEC staff will assist your child with application, if needed.

**Insect Repellent Policy:**

If WEC feels it necessary to apply insect repellent (hiking or outdoor trips) we will do so. If a child has had any adverse reactions to insect repellent, it MUST be indicated by the Parent on the enrollment application.

**Transportation Policy**

During the school year, most Roanoke City Schools will drop children off by bus to attend WEC’s After School Program. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation from WEC at the end of the day. If parents give their child permission to ride the City Bus, it must be indicated on the child’s enrollment application. No child in elementary school can arrive on a Valley Metro bus unsupervised.

During WEC’s Summer Program, it is the parent’s responsibility to provide transportation to and from WEC each day. Transportation to and from field trips will be provided by WEC, given that the child arrives on time for programming hours. For all field trips, parents shall be notified and given the option to withdraw their child from the field trip if necessary. However, if a child is withdrawn from a field trip, it is the parent’s responsibility to arrange for other supervision of their child. A schedule of upcoming field trips will be posted and/or notifications will be given to parents. If a WEC staff member must transport children in their own vehicle, a cleared DMV background check will be on file for that employee.

Children will be allowed to leave with only those who have been granted permission on the enrollment application.

For safety reasons, no child will be discharged to the care of anyone less than 18 years of age. All emergency contacts and people on the child’s “pick-up” list must be adults! If parent requires someone other than themselves to pick up child, they must be on the child’s list AND over the age of 18. If someone under the age of 18 tries to pick up a child from WEC, the child will not be released, and emergency contacts will be called.

WEC staff will make every effort to prevent a child from getting into a car with a parent who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The state law of Virginia requires staff report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, including parents who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.

**Medical Conditions**

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.) please instruct the Director and the Group Leader of the appropriate procedures to take in the event of an emergency while at WEC. Any known medical conditions also need to be provided on the child’s enrollment application.

**Illness**

West End Center values the health of students, parents and guardians, and all staff; as such, the following situations require you to pick up your child immediately:

* -Contagious illness
* -Fever
* -Vomiting
* -Diarrhea
* -Accidents

In serious cases, WEC staff will take the child to a local hospital by car or by emergency vehicle for treatment. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

**Emergency Plans**

WEC has developed a full emergency plan for use in the event of crises including weather, fire, intruder or national emergency.

**Extreme Temperatures**

Outdoor play will not be allowed when temperature (including wind chill) falls below 30 degrees F. On extremely hot days staff will limit exposure to the elements as best as possible and encourage children to drink water to stay hydrated.

**Insurance**

WEC carries minimal liability insurance but has no financial resources of its own. Families are encouraged to provide their own insurance coverage. Many children are covered by the parent’s policy at work and/or their own private policies. Public school students may sign up for accidental insurance through the school in the fall of the year. Parents who wish to enroll through the school should contact their child’s school office. If you need assistance with applying for Medicaid or FAMIS, please contact a WEC staff member at (540) 342-0902. We can help to get you the information.

**Healthy Choices**

We work hard to teach our children the importance of healthy eating. The food provided by WEC, always meets USDA regulations and is considered healthy. We treat our children on special occasions from time to time. Any food and or snack items brought from home must be approved by WEC staff. If you child brings junk food, i.e. chips, cookies, soda, snack cakes, candy, fast food, etc., it will be confiscated. Please do not send it for your child, as they will NOT be allowed to eat it. When food is needed, it will be provided by WEC.

After School Program: WEC offers a healthy snack during the afternoon program when children arrive from school. We discourage children from bringing snacks from home. If parents wish to celebrate their child’s birthday by providing a treat for the children, WEC’s staff must be notified ahead of time. This allows for scheduling and determining the number of children to plan for.

Summer Program: WEC provides a light breakfast, a hot lunch and a healthy afternoon snack each day of the Summer Program. WEC participates in the USDA Summer Feeding Program for Kids to ensure that each child receives a nutritious, filling lunch every day. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, the West End Center is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Children are permitted to bring a **clear** water bottle to keep filled and with them throughout the day. The only beverage permitted in the water bottles is water. If staff discover that anything other than water is in the bottle it will be confiscated and given to the parent at the end of the day. WEC will provide your child with a different water bottle to use if available.

**Children’s Personal Property**

Children’s personal property (coats, clothing, bookbags, etc.) must be cleared from the activity areas at the end of each day. WEC reserves the right to dispose of any unclaimed items after 30 days. WEC makes every attempt to help children keep their items organized and stored in their assigned areas. However, WEC cannot be held responsible for any lost personal property. All personal items should be labeled with the child’s name.

Children are not permitted to bring weapons (toy or otherwise) to WEC at ANY time. Children are strongly discouraged from bringing items such as cell phones, mp3 players, game systems, etc. as these items can easily disappear. Any personal items being used during programming can be confiscated by WEC staff. It is up to each individual WEC Group Leader to determine whether these items will be allowed during free times. WEC is not responsible for the loss or damage of any personal items. Children who fail to put personal items away when asked will have them confiscated. Parents may pick these items up from WEC staff.

**Cell Phones**

West End Center understands that, for various reasons, many parents have elected to provide their child with a cell phone. West End Center’s policy is that students may not have their cell phones out at any time, for any reason. If you need to communicate with your child, please call the office or contact a staff person.

A first violation of this policy results in a verbal warning, a second violation results in confiscation of the phone, which will be returned to the parent or other adult picking up the child. Repeated violations may result in suspension or removal from the program.

**Visitors**

WEC has a strict visitation policy for the safety of our children. All volunteers, visitors and guests **MUST** sign in at the office with a WEC staff member. For liability and insurance purposes, we can **NOT** have any unregistered adults or children on our property. Please see a staff member in WEC’s main office for any information or to sign in. Parents who are picking up children need to sign in if the stay longer than 20 minutes if not meeting with a staff member. We welcome parents and community members to observe our programs; however, they must be registered with our office.

WEC cannot deny a custodial parent’s right to visit or pick up their child, unless a copy of a court order is on file with your child’s registration. If a court order is put in place, please notify WEC as soon as possible.

Thank you for partnering with us as we work to provide your child with the skills they need to be successful students now, and successful adults who contribute to society in a positive, meaningful way in the future.

Please complete the following papers and return to the office.

**Tuition Credit Program Agreement**

**Return to the office.**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that participation in the Tuition Credit Program (TCP) is a privilege and that engaging in any of the following behaviors may result in temporarily or permanently being unable to participate:

* Violence or any aggression, raising your voice or shouting, threatening or abusive language, swearing at or making offensive remarks, malicious allegations, and threats or threatening behavior or harassment.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that I must properly follow the sign-in instructions to receive tuition credit.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that participation is on a first come, first served basis.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will thoroughly complete the task I choose and understand that repeatedly failing to do so may result in loss of TCP privileges.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that staff may provide feedback on a task I have completed.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that only parents or legal guardians may participate in the TCP.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that if I have children on different accounts I must designate which account receives the credit.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that I will only receive credit for the tasks I have signed up to complete in the office.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I understand that from time to time other opportunities for Tuition Credit may arise and that participation is on a first come, first served basis.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date

**Handbook Acknowledgement**

**Return to the office.**

I acknowledge that I received and read the Parent Handbook in its entirety. I fully understand and have no questions about any of the policies. I understand that if a question arises it is my responsibility to seek out an answer from a staff person.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Date