

# YMCA of the Pines Preschool FAQ

In partnership with Medford Township Public Schools

## Contact Information

**Q:** What is the best way to contact YMCA of the Pines?

**A:** The best way to reach us is by calling 609-654-8225 M-F, 9am-5pm. You can reach our Executive Director of School Age Child Care, Becca Gutwirth, at [becca@ycamp.org](mailto:becca@ycamp.org) and x1520. Once the program opens for fall, we will also provide direct contact information for the program director.

## Location

**Q:** Where will the program be located?

**A:** The program will be located on our 800-acre campus at 1303 Stokes Road in Medford. Access to the preschool building will be via McKendimmen Rd. While there is no distinct address for access to the preschool building, the entrance is located just southeast of 499 McKendimmen road, on the opposite side of the street. The entrance will be well-marked. Coming from Medford Lakes, the entrance is the first right PAST the entrance to Lake Stockwell Day Camp.

**Q:** Will the preschool students have access to the camp property?

**A:** The preschool program will operate primarily within the preschool building. A fenced playground area is attached to the building. All parents will also be asked to sign a walking permission form in keeping with Department of Children and Families child care guidelines. This will allow us to take the preschool students on nature walks within our property and will give us a unique opportunity for nature study, recreation, and other cross-curricular activities.

## Scheduling

**Q:** Is this a full day program? What will the hours be?

**A:** The State requires that a full-day preschool schedule run for no less than 6 hours per day, 180 days per school year. The program will run from 8:45 am – 3:10 pm.

**Q:** Will preschool students have access to before/after care programs?

**A:** Before and afterschool care are available at the preschool location for an additional fee. We open at 7:00 am and close at 6:00 pm.

**Q:** Will students have a designated rest time?

**A:** Yes. Those who do not sleep will rest and have a choice of quiet activities. Cots or nap mats will be provided and parents will supply bedding for each child. The parent will be responsible for laundering the bedding each week.

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**Q:** Will there be separate options for 3 and 4 year olds?

**A:** Preschool classes will contain a mix of 3 and 4 year olds. This practice is encouraged by the NJ DOE.

## Transportation

**Q:** How will students get to and from school?

**A:** Families with students in the preschool at YMCA of the Pines must provide their own transportation.

## Health and Nutrition

**Q:** Can my student eat breakfast at school in the morning?

**A:** Students participating in the before care program may bring breakfast with them. They must finish eating by 8:35 am, prior to the arrival of students for the school day.

**Q:** Will student have snack at school?

**A:** Students will have a snack period during the day. Students should bring a snack from home that can be eaten without additional preparation.

**Q:** Where will the students eat lunch? What options are available for lunch?

**A:** Preschool students will eat lunch each day in their classrooms. Lunch will run 40 minutes to align with contractual lunch time for teachers. Students may opt to buy lunch (delivered from the Medford Township School District) or bring lunch from home. Families who qualify may receive free or reduced lunch options for their child. Applications for free/reduced lunch will be provided to all families who wish to be considered for this program.

**Q:** Will a nurse be available on site?

**A:** A nurse will not be available at YMCA of the Pines. In keeping with DCF licensing guidelines, at least two staff members will be on site at all times who are CPR and First Aid certified. The YMCA of the Pines is committed to training and certifying all staff in CPR and First Aid. Staff also receive training in medication administration.

**Q:** What if my child has food allergies, will there be any food restrictions for others in class?

**A:** Food restrictions in the classroom will be based on the specific needs of the students in the classroom. We will document and communicate allergies or other health issues with all necessary staff to ensure the safety of students.

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## Programming

**Q:** What curriculum will YMCA of the Pines utilize?

**A:** We will parallel the district and utilize Creative Curriculum.

**Q:** What age must my child be to attend the Pre-K program?

**A:** A general education student must be age 3 and 4 on October 1st, 2024.

**Q:** How many students will be in a preschool class?

**A:** Class sizes will not exceed 15 students.

**Q:** What will be included in the daily schedule?

**A:** The preschool program will follow a research-based model. If accommodations and modifications are needed, the team will make recommendations based on students' needs. Quiet/nap time, snack, lunch, outdoor time, as well as small group time, center time, music and movement, morning meeting, are just a sampling of the components of a full day preschool schedule.

**Q:** Will students be required to be potty trained before entering the program?

**A:** No. A child cannot be denied access if they are not toilet trained.

**Q:** What will be the cost for a child to attend?

**A:** The full day program will be free for all Medford residents with children who meet the age requirement.

**Q:** Once enrolled, will students be required to attend daily?

**A:** An expectation for regular attendance will be established to support learning.

**Q:** Will there be an opportunity for students and families to meet the teacher and see the classroom?

**A:** Yes, the district will hold an information session for parents and provide an opportunity to meet the teacher and see the classroom prior to the first day of school.

**Q:** Will preschool students attend field trips?

**A:** There may be opportunities for students to attend preschool field trips which align to the instruction in the classroom.

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**Q:** How will parents receive communication about their child's progress?

**A:** There will be a variety of opportunities for parents to receive student progress including scheduled reports and parent teacher conferences.

**Q:** How will growth be measured?

**A:** Observation-based and performance-based assessments will be used to monitor student growth.

**Q:** Can a preschool student be retained?

**A:** Preschool students do not get retained. When they meet the birth date criteria, they will enroll in kindergarten.

**Q:** Can a parent request a change in placement for the next school year before the new enrollment process begins?

**A:** The child is grandfathered in at his/her current location. Parents who wish to switch locations for their children must enter into the lottery for the new location.

**Q:** Can parents regularly volunteer in the classroom?

**A:** Parents may have the opportunity to volunteer in classrooms at scheduled times at the teacher's discretion. These include opportunities such as Friday readers and end of unit celebrations.

**Q:** What will happen to my child's preschool placement for next year if she/he is enrolled this year?

**A:** If your student is enrolled as a 3 year old, you will be provided a preschool spot in the same location for the next school year. You may reenter the lottery if you want your child to be considered for an alternate location.

## Special Education

**Q:** Will preschool students have access to support services?

**A:** Yes, students will have access to services according to their IEP.

**Q:** Are general education and classified programs being offered and will they be combined?

**A:** The district will continue to have preschool disabled classes and inclusion classes.

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**Q:** Are general education and classified programs being offered and will they be combined?

**A:** The district will continue to have preschool disabled classes and inclusion classes.

**Q:** How does the full day preschool program affect a student's IEP services?

**A:** Services in a student's IEP will continue.

**Q:** Are IEP students going to be placed in the new general education classes?

**A:** Students with an IEP will be placed in the least restrictive environment, which means that there will be students with IEPs placed in certain general education classes.

## Staff

**Q:** What kind of training will the teachers have?

**A:** Teachers will be required to hold a preschool certification. As a licensed day care centers, teachers and assistants will also be required to complete training through the Department of Children and Families.

**Q:** Will there be PD for staff?

**A:** Professional Development will be ongoing. A district Preschool Instructional Coach (PIC) will provide training to teachers in their classrooms.