CASA Family Guide

Everything you need to know for an amazing year

2019-2020

ADA—Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need reasonable accommodations in order to participate, call the PRCS Main Office for more information.
Welcome CASA Families!

The entire CASA team extends a warm greeting to you and your family. We are so excited to welcome back our returning CASA kids and get to know the new faces.

This year promises to be a fun one. We have many activities planned from fitness to STEM to literacy. Plus, the kids will have time to explore interests and form meaningful friendships.

Over the next year, you and your child will become a valued part of the CASA community. Our staff is here for you. Feel free to reach out to the site supervisor to ask about your child’s day, express concerns or share compliments. Your supervisor will keep you up to date on special events, activities at site and opportunities for you to participate with your child. Know that our staff truly cares about your child. Kids come first in CASA!

Feel free to reach out to us at any time. Email casa@loudoun.gov or give us a call at 703-777-0343.

Thanks for choosing CASA!
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Program Goals:

CASA continually strives to build a meaningful curriculum by using our experience, knowledge and resources to design, implement and evaluate a program that promotes comprehensive learning and development for children. At CASA, we encourage children to learn and participate in the following goals:

**Respect for self and others**: we believe that every child in our program is valuable and we make every effort to create an environment that fosters self-confidence and esteem building. With this in mind, we seek to develop children’s respect for themselves and others by:

**Promoting positive peer interaction**: we emphasize the importance of good manners, positive communication, effective problem solving, and team building.

**Fostering cooperation with adults**: staff will establish fair and consistent rules and policies for all of the children. We expect the children to follow these rules, and likewise hold ourselves to a standard of excellence and professionalism when explaining and enforcing rules. We positively influence children’s attitudes and learning.

**Empowering children to make safe and healthy decisions**: we establish boundaries that teach children to be responsible for their own actions. We promote independent thought and learning. CASA staff lead children by example and act as role models by illustrating appropriate manners, conduct and appearance. As adults, we observe, document, and address potential concerns in the program as they arise.
Program Mission:

The PRCS mission is to provide a quality program in an inclusive, safe and nurturing environment. We deliver an experience that empowers children to explore their interests and passions in a social, educational and recreational setting.

Our Values:

• We have a commitment to excellence in all aspects of our programs with safety at the forefront of our minds to ensure the highest quality programs are provided to our participants.
• We value the diversity and inclusion of our participants and staff and will work to ensure all are treated with dignity and respect.
• We value positive staff engagement with our participants to create a recreational and educational environment that is warm and welcoming for all.
• We value our commitments as a team and we work toward the same end goal.

ADA Accommodations:

Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department is committed to complying with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Parents whose children may need reasonable accommodations to participate in the child care programs should submit a written request for ADA accommodations to the Manager. Response to requests will be on a “case by case” basis and will take into consideration the individual needs of the child. Concerns about a child’s development, speech, hearing, socialization skills or abnormal behaviors will be shared with the parent.
Contact Information:
Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS)
742 Miller Drive SE, Leesburg, VA 20175
Monday – Friday 8:30am-5:00pm
Main # 703-737-8042
Fax # 703-771-5383

CASA Admin Contact Information:
Division Manager: Kristin Garrett 703-777-0398
Children's Program Manager: Danielle Barger 571-258-3108
Children's Program Coordinator: Alita Howard 703-771-5139
Children’s Program Coordinator: Mark Davis 703-777-0357
Administrative Assistant: Sara Genco 703-771-5952
Substitute Specialist: Linda Lifsey 703-777-0432
Leesburg Cluster Specialist: Chris Parker 703-771-5616
Sterling Cluster Specialist: Sarah Gibson 703-737-8817
Waxpool Cluster Specialist: Katie Davis 571-258-3612
Ashburn Cluster Specialist: Monique Wilson 703-737-8710
South Riding Cluster Specialist: Derek Greygor 703-737-8823
Western Cluster Specialist: Lori Snowden 703-771-5927
Brambleton Cluster Specialist: Rebecca Salvato 703-737-8356
Stone Ridge Cluster Specialist: Vacant TBD
Belmont Ridge Cluster Specialist: Kellan Vanscoy 703-737-8327
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASA Site</th>
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<td>571-233-1172</td>
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<td>Arcola</td>
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<td>571-233-2631</td>
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<td>571-233-1780</td>
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<td>Balls Bluff</td>
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<td>571-233-1718</td>
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<td>Belmont Station</td>
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<td>Cardinal Ridge</td>
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<td>571-209-0719</td>
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<td>Catoctin</td>
<td>703-779-9341</td>
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<td>Cedar Lane</td>
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<td>571-233-1924</td>
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<td>703-779-0208</td>
<td>571-233-1976</td>
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<td>Countryside</td>
<td>703-433-5727</td>
<td>571-233-1993</td>
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<td>Creighton's Corner</td>
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<td>571-233-0786</td>
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<td>Discovery</td>
<td>571-209-8108</td>
<td>571-233-0397</td>
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<td>Dominion Trail</td>
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<td>Evergreen Mills</td>
<td>703-779-0251</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:evergreenmillprcs@loudoun.gov">evergreenmillprcs@loudoun.gov</a></td>
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<td>Forest Grove</td>
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## Site Locations & Activity Codes

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* Also serving Hamilton
** Also serving Emerick & Lincoln
*** Also serving Guilford & Sully
Emergency Pick Ups:

- Two emergency contacts, other than parents or guardians, must be listed on each child’s registration form before a child will be admitted to the program.
- Emergency contacts will be contacted if a parent or guardian cannot be reached to pick up a child in the event of an emergency. If a child is not picked up within 15 minutes after the close of the program and a parent or guardian cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be contacted to pick up the child.
- If after 45 minutes of site closing, PRCS staff can’t reach any parent/guardian or emergency contact, PRCS will request the services of Child Protective Services and the Loudoun County’s Sheriff’s Office. If you are habitually late picking up, your child you may be asked to leave the PRCS program.
- Late fees will be applied to the household account of any participant remaining on site after program closure.

Health and Emergency Forms:

- All Participation information, Health and emergency forms must be completed for the current program year before a child may attend our program. If you need to make any updates, use this link to submit additional documents.
- The PRCS program requires documentation that each child has received the immunizations required by the State Board of Health before the child can attend.
- Please refer to the program specific handbook for additional details.
Immunizations:

• Each child is required to have the immunizations and vaccinations appropriate for a child their age before acceptance into the program. The child's immunizations must be certified by a doctor on the type of medical form provided by the program.
• A child may be exempted from the immunization if the parents submit a "Certificate of Religious Exemption."

Daily Health Check:

• Each child has a daily health check upon arrival at the program. If the staff feels the child is not well, or has a fever, recurring vomiting or diarrhea, the parent/guardian will be asked to take the child home. To allow a child to attend, while sick or before complete recovery is individually harmful and exposes the entire group to the risk of infection.

Ill and Injured Children Policy

• Please call the program if your child will not be attending the program for any reason.
• It is our policy that children do not attend the program if they have a fever. Children who have been sick and running a fever of 100 degrees should remain home for at least 24 hours after the fever breaks.
• If your child was absent from school due to illness or discipline, they are not permitted to attend any PRCS program for that day.
• If a child enrolled in the program has a communicable disease, the parents are urged to notify PRCS immediately.
• If a child becomes ill or injured while at the program the parent will be immediately contacted to make arrangements to have the child picked up as soon as possible. If the parent is not available, an emergency contact person will be called. During an emergency, children will be taken to and cared for in the site or center office until they are picked up. If appropriate, the child will be taken by the local rescue squad to the closest emergency facility.
Medications:

- If a child must take medication during the program hours, a Medication Authorization form must be completed and given to the PRCS staff along with the medication. If the medication is for a food allergy, then a food allergy action plan must be filled out as well and signed by the child’s physician. Only medication in its original bottle, with a prescription label may be given. Please tell the staff if there are any side effects to watch for.
- The medicine will be kept where the program is operating, in a locked Medicine Box.
- The Medication Authorization Form must include: Child’s name, program site, the name of the medicine, exact dosage and time to administer, route, authorization dates and any special instructions along with parent or guardian signature. Parents/guardians should take the medication home at the conclusion of the program.
- The Short-Term Medication Authorization Form is good for a maximum of 10 program days.
- Long term medications requires section B to be filled out and signed by your child’s physician. Documentation of administering medication will be recorded in the medication log.

Allergies:

- The parent will supply a complete list of what foods or allergens their child is allergic to and therefore needs to be avoided. Copies will be provided to the program staff, so they are aware of the type and severity of the allergy. If your child has a Food Allergy, then a Food Allergy Action Plan must be filled out and signed by the child’s physician. Allergy lists are compiled by site, and accessible to staff at each site.
Registration Procedures:

Parents and guardians may register their children for the upcoming school year online from March-July at www.Loudoun.gov/CASA. Visit our website for the actual dates.

In person registrations are done at the PRCS administrative office. Enrollment is limited and available on a first come, first served basis.

All items below are required to register/comply with Virginia State Licensing.

- A PRCS registration form is required. Forms may be completed online at www.loudoun.gov/prcsforms until the end of July. The forms are also available at the PRCS main office.
- Current identity verification for each child. Acceptable forms include an original or certified copy of the child’s birth certificate, birth registration card, passport, or report card. https://lfportal.loudoun.gov/forms/idverify
- If your child will require medication at site, a PRCS medication authorization form will need to be completed before they can attend this PRCS program. If your child is at risk of anaphylaxis from an allergy, the food allergy & anaphylaxis emergency care plan will also need to be completed before your child can attend the PRCS program.

It is the responsibility of the parents to provide casa staff with the proper registration information and current phone numbers for the child’s file. Please request an information update form from your site supervisor to document any changes in information as soon as they occur.
Monthly Fee:

There is a non-refundable deposit of $50.00 per child. This is due at the time of registration in order to hold your child’s spot. For 2019-2020, the monthly fee is $335.

CASA now offers reduced tuition fees for students who receive free and reduced lunch at their school. Families whose students receive free lunch will pay 50% or $167.50 each month. Families whose students receive reduced lunch will pay $251.25 per month. Bring your official letter from the school to qualify for these reduced tuition fees.

CASA’s Pre-Payment System:

CASA fees are billed monthly and must be paid by the 1st of each month for the next month. For example, October’s payment is due September 1st, November’s payment is due October 1st.

September’s payment must be received by August 1st. If payment is not received by August 1st, your child will be dropped and may not attend CASA at the beginning of the school year. If space is available, you may re-register your child.

Payments made October though June that are received after the 1st of the month will be assessed a $25.00 late fee per child. If payment is not received by the 10th, the child is dropped and may not attend CASA beginning with the next month. If space is available, you may re-register by paying a $25 late payment fee per child in addition to the monthly fee.

If a child was enrolled for the entire school year, no payment is required for June. For children starting after winter break, a partial payment will be due. If a child starts after April 1st, full payment for June is due.
Payment Options:

Payment for our programs can be made online through Webtrac; via check mailed to our administration office; or in person at any manned county facility, including our administration office. If you choose to mail in a check, please be sure to leave adequate time for your check to arrive and be processed – your child will be dropped from the program if payment is not made by the due date.

The address for the PRCS administration building is:

742 Miller Drive SE
P.O. Box 7800
Leesburg, VA 20177-7800

There will be a $35 charge for any check returned for insufficient funds.
Late Pick-Up Fee:

A $15 per child late pick up fee will be assessed for every 15-minute time period from 6:01pm for the sites that close at 6pm. If your child’s location closes at 6:15pm, the late fee will be assessed starting at 6:16pm. For example, a 6:10pm pick up will be assessed $15 per child, for sites that close at 6pm. A 6:35pm pick up will be assessed $45 per child for sites that close at 6pm and $30 per child for sites that close at 6:15 pm. Upon your arrival, you will be asked to sign a late pick-up form. Parents who are frequently late may be asked to seek an alternate program. Late pick-up fees are due with the next program fee or within two weeks of the end of the program.

CASA Cancellation Policy:

If you wish to cancel your child from CASA, please email CASA@Loudoun.gov for us to process the cancellation. Please include your child’s name, CASA location, household number, and the last day your child will be attending.

If Canceling For the Month of August/September

If you need to cancel September and you make the request 15 or more days before the start of school, a full refund will be offered—minus the $50 non-refundable fee to secure your child’s space in CASA. If you cancel between 14-1 days before the start of school, a 50% refund will be offered. If you cancel after the program has begun, no refund will be given, but your child may continue to attend for the remainder of the month.

If canceling for the Months of October-June*

If you cancel and you make the request 15 or more days before the first of the month, a full refund will be offered—MINUS a 15% administrative fee (to a maximum of $15). If you cancel between 14-1 days before the first of the month, a 50% refund will be offered. If you cancel after the program has begun, no refund will be given, but your child may continue to attend for the remainder of the month.

*no refund will be offered for June if your June fee was $0
**Adjustments and Refunds:**

Fees will not be adjusted or refunded for absences, early pick-ups, unanticipated calendar changes, closings due to weather conditions, or other emergency situations.

**Returned Checks:**

There will be a $35 charge for any check returned for insufficient funds.

**Installment Billing:**

Installment billing can be completed by visiting the PRCS Admin Office at 742 Miller Drive SE, Leesburg, VA 20175

**Childcare Statements:**

Childcare statements are available on WebTrac for families who need to submit for reimbursement. Our tax identification number is 54-094-8306.
Waitlist:

Each location has a maximum capacity and openings are available on a first come first served basis. We are not able to guarantee or predict when space will become available at a particular location. If you are put on the waitlist, an administrative assistant will contact you through e-mail to let you know when space is available. When you are offered a space, you have the option to accept the space, be moved to the bottom of the waitlist, or decline. Future placement is not guaranteed and the waitlist is re-established each program year.

Schools without the CASA program:

The CASA program is offered in most of the Loudoun county public schools. If a child’s school does not offer the CASA program, please call our main office to see if transportation is offered to another school for CASA.

Children with Disabilities:

Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services works closely with families to provide a successful experience for all children. We will attempt to accommodate a participant’s special needs to ensure successful participation in the program. Please give us at least 2 weeks’ notice prior to your child starting the program to make any necessary accommodations.
Curriculum:

The primary purpose of a day in Loudoun County’s CASA program is to provide safe, accountable, fun activities to all participants. The program goal is to provide activities that help all students exceed their potential. Site staff create lesson plans for the daily schedule that keep all children safe and engaged in the program. All activities must be planned according to Virginia licensing guidelines and will offer all the elements listed below during the daily schedule as planned by the site supervisor.

Active Play Time:

Age appropriate active games and sports help build confidence of each child. At least 25% of the program day must offer active time to every child. All children in the program should wear closed-toe shoes for the safety of each participant.

Homework & Quiet Time:

At least 30 minutes of quiet time is offered to focus on homework, or an activity to stimulate creativity and challenge each child’s skills (Monday-Thursday). If a child has no homework, a theme-based quiet option such as library time, art, or research will be provided.

Snack Time:

CASA provides a daily USDA approved snack. All snack menus are posted for parental information at each site. Since we do not supply food for special diets, religious, or medical reasons, parents are required to provide such food for their child. Parents must provide documentation identifying the reason for the special diet and the diet must comply with the USDA nutritional guidelines. The children may not share their snack with other children. All students, whether they are having snack or not, must wash their hands before and after snack. Snack times are typically 20-30 minutes long. Students may bring their own snack, but not share it.
Outdoor Play Policy

- Outdoor play is an important part of our daily schedule. We ask that you dress your child according to the weather conditions.

- During periods of extreme heat or extreme cold PRCS staff will alter outdoor activities.

Creative Time:

Creative time offers age appropriate activities such as arts and crafts, drama, dance, and time to think outside the box to meet each child’s interests. Activities are often theme based and offered throughout the program year.

Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill

- 30° is chilly and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is cold
- 0° to 15° is very cold
- 32° to 0° is bitter cold with significant risk of frostbite
- -20° to -60° is extreme cold and frostbite is likely
- -60° is frigid and exposed skin will freeze in 1 minute

Heat Index

- 80° or below is considered comfortable
- 90° beginning to feel uncomfortable
- 100° uncomfortable and may be hazardous
- 110° considered dangerous

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit.
Sunscreen/Insect Repellent Use

- Use of sunscreen is encouraged to protect your child from exposure to the sun. Parents are responsible for providing sunscreen with at least 30 SPF for their child.
- Staff will supervise the application of sunscreen as a group activity prior to going outside. If they require assistance, we will assist with a sunscreen supplied by the parent. Sunscreen will only be applied to areas not covered by a swimsuit.
- Sunscreen should be labeled with the child’s name and a date. Parental permission must be on file to administer sunscreen and/or insect repellent. Application of sunscreen and insect repellent will be documented. Children should arrive at the program site each day with sunscreen already applied, even on cloudy days.

Belongings:

A designated area will be provided for children’s personal belongings. All children are encouraged to have a book bag or backpack for their belongings. Children are strongly discouraged from bringing valuable items to the program. Staff are not responsible for money or personal belongings.
The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community services offers school’s out camps that follow the Loudoun County Public School calendar. The camps are offered at PRCS community centers. The camps operate when schools are closed, for teacher workdays or breaks, and typically operate from 7:30am-6:00pm. Look in the quarterly PRCS activity guide under elementary age program listings for your closest community center. CASA only operates on days that LCPS is in session. Below is a copy of the LCPS calendar. Please keep in mind that these dates are subject to change.

**Note to parents with childcare or other weekday scheduling concerns: The date of the MOVEABLE Planning/Records/Conference Day between first and second semesters may change, if the school calendar must be changed due to school closings for inclement weather or other emergencies. Parents with childcare or other scheduling concerns should be prepared.
School Closings and Weather Delays:

CASA is closed if there is an early dismissal or when school is closed. (weather related or other reasons)

CASA is not considered an LCPS afterschool activity. If LCPS closes early due to inclement weather, CASA will not be in session. If LCPS remains open until normal dismissal hours, CASA will be in session.

Parents and school officials are responsible for implementing any emergency pick-up arrangements during school hours. If weather conditions worsen during CASA hours, site staff may contact parents to pick up participants earlier than normal. Please note, this will occur only at the direction of the director of PRCS. CASA staff will remain on site until all participants have been picked up.

General Information:

Frequent and open communication between staff and parents is key to a successful program. Please keep staff informed of any changes to personal information or schedule changes. Please provide us with regular feedback on any issues, complaints, or concerns. We will do the same by providing an opportunity for you to speak with staff one-on-one regarding your child's development, behavior, adjustment, and needs.

The site telephone is for emergencies only during program hours. Children are allowed access to the casa site phone with permission from staff. Cell phone use is prohibited during casa in accordance with the Loudoun County public school policy.

Parents are welcome to observe and participate at any time that their child is enrolled in the program and is attending that day. This is in accordance with 63.2-1813 of the Code of Virginia.

We welcome any talent you would like to share. Please notify the site supervisor about your interest.
Dismissal-Cause and Procedure

Causes
1. Failure to pay tuition as required.
2. Failure to provide all necessary paperwork for registration and including required medication documentation.
3. Failure to comply with program policies, procedures and rules of behavior.

PRCS staff are trained to use discipline techniques that are constructive, age appropriate and that focus on redirection and positive reinforcement. Students contribute to the establishment of site rules and are expected to follow them. Staff will set clear expectations.

In the event of inappropriate behavior, the following steps may be taken:

- Incident Report(s)
- Parent Meeting(s)
- Suspension
- Dismissal

The PRCS program and staff are committed to make every effort to keep a child in the program. Only after all procedures have failed on the part of staff and parents and with just cause will dismissal be considered. PRCS staff will proactively work with families and staff to address any behavior issues.
Behavior Management

CASA focuses on honesty, respect, fairness, trust, caring, and responsibility. Program rules are designed for the safety, health, and happiness of the children, staff and volunteers. We want each child to enjoy the activities and to benefit from his/her experience in the program.

General discipline techniques will include positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviors and careful explanation of behaviors that are unacceptable. Discipline will be progressive in nature. It will be constructive and age appropriate for redirection and conflict resolution.

Behaviors that may lead to an incident report, possible suspension, or termination from the program:

- refusing to follow basic safety and program rules.
- stealing or defacing Casa, school property, or the property of others.
- bullying and/or engaging in fights. Loudoun County PRCS will call parents to pick up any participant who is unable to function cooperatively with others or is a threat to the safety of him/herself or others.
- repeated disrespect towards staff or rude and inappropriate behavior towards others, (By children or parents).
- immediate removal from the program may occur if Casa administration feels they cannot maintain the safety and welfare of the child or other participants in the program, or the child engaged in behaviors associated with the zero tolerance policy.

Zero Tolerance Policy:

PRCS does not permit the use of tobacco products, alcohol, drugs, or fireworks during our Casa program. Verbal threats as well as the use of weapons are also prohibited.

In addition, theft, violent behavior, or destruction of property will not be tolerated.

Any violation may result in immediate dismissal from Casa with no refund of Casa fees. Parents will be expected to provide immediate transportation home, should an incident occur on/off site.
Typical steps pertaining to discipline and incident reports:

- Child does not abide by rules; casa staff discusses behavior and consequences with the child and informs parent/guardian. An incident report is written.
- A meeting may be required between parent(s), CASA staff, CASA specialist, and/or CASA coordinator, together with the child, to develop strategies to improve behavior. Upon parent receiving a 2nd incident report, staff will inform parents that a 3rd incident report may lead to suspension from the program.
- Child's third offense: staff writes an incident report and informs parents. Supervisor consults with casa specialist, casa coordinator, and division manager for the appropriate action. Parent is then informed of decision. If the decision is made in favor of suspension, the parent will be given 24 hours notice, if possible and appropriate, so that alternative arrangements can be made. If the problem persists following return from suspension, a conference among parents, CASA staff, CASA specialists, CASA coordinator, and division manager will be held to discuss dismissal of the child from the program.
- The CASA program and staff are pledged to make every effort to maintain a child in the program. Only after all the procedures have failed on the part of the administration staff and parents, will dismissal be considered. If, in the opinion of the CASA specialist, CASA coordinator, division manager, and PRCS director, a child's behavior presents a physical danger to him/herself or others, or if the child fails to follow rules, then an immediate suspension from the CASA program may result.
- Incident reports are also written for other serious events on site such as fire, drug reaction, security, or other unusual situations.
Schedule Change:

If your child will be absent from the program, please call the site phone number and leave a message to notify staff of the absence prior to the beginning of the program, or provide written notification to the site supervisor. You will receive a phone call every time your child is absent without notification.

Sign In/Out Policy:

It is a Licensing and PRCS requirement that an authorized adult signs each child out daily.

- For the safety of your child
- To ensure communication between casa parents and staff
- To record accurate attendance data

Loudoun County PRCS will not be liable for any child not signed out by an authorized adult. If the problem persists, services may be terminated.

Please note that staff are not permitted to send your child to meet you from another location. If you arrive to site and your child is with their group at another location such as the gym or playground, we need you to pick-up your child from that location and then sign them out of the program.
Child Abuse/ Neglect:

In accordance with the Code of Virginia, Loudoun County PRCS staff is responsible for reporting all suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family Services Child Protective Services for investigation. Any suspicion of abuse will be reported to the site supervisor immediately. On site staff will then contact their appropriate supervisor and Department policy will be followed.

Licensing Information:

• The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child day programs assuming responsibility for the supervision, protection and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 63.1, chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social Services authority to license these programs.
• Standards for licensing child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, and a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program and record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health and building codes.
• Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program which will be investigated if it violates a standard. A regular license is issued when the program meets the standards for licensure.
• If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closest to you.
  
  Fairfax Licensing Office: 3701 Pender Drive, Fairfax VA 22030
  (703) 934-1505
Emergency Preparedness and Shelter in Place

Dear Participants and/or Parents:

The events of recent years have made us all keenly aware of the need to review and refine the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services emergency plan. With that in mind, preparing for emergencies requires considering all likely scenarios. We believe that all County facilities are very safe during emergency situations. The Department has updated our emergency response plan to include the “Shelter in Place” concept. This concept has been added to the Loudoun County Public Schools Emergency Response Plan and is another safeguard to protect our participants and staff.

As you may know, “Shelter in Place” is designed to create a neutral atmosphere within a building by shutting down all ventilation systems and closing all doors and windows. The procedure is intended to seal off a building for a limited time if there is a chemical threat. “Shelter in Place” will help keep chemical agents from leaking into buildings and protect all that remain inside.

In the event that a “Shelter in Place” procedure must occur, all Parks, Recreation and Community Services program participants will be directed by emergency officials to remain inside and follow procedures. During this time, no one will be permitted to enter or leave until emergency officials have given an all-clear status. The Department is prepared to provide water and food for our participants for the limited time that the plan is necessary.

Due to the heightened awareness of emergency preparedness, please, if needed, immediately update your emergency contacts and medical information that we have on file. During emergency situations, we will make every effort to communicate the status of all facilities and programs through local television, radio and the County website. The alert system enables citizens to sign up to receive instant alert notifications from County agencies through mobile devices and email. Citizens may register for this free service at www.loudoun.gov, online services, link to Citizen Alert System and register for PRCS Childcare Emergency Alert Plan. While working with other County agencies, the Department continues to refine our safety plans. Your patience and understanding, should an emergency arise, is essential in order for the department to safely protect our program participants and calmly reopen our facilities.

Sincerely,
Steve Torpy, Director