



Community Art Center, Inc.

119 Windsor Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

617-868-7100
www.communityartcenter.org

School Age Child Care Parent Information Packet 2024 - 2025





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PARENT INFORMATION

Welcome to the **School Age Child Care Program (SACC)** of the Community Art Center. The SACC Program is licensed by the **Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, or EEC** (Regulations available upon request). Our program has written procedures and policies to ensure that the program is staffed by professionals, some of whom are also residents of **Cambridge's Area 4 neighborhood**. Using the **arts** as a catalyst for **learning**, we offer a curriculum that supports the educational, social, physical, and cultural development of each child.

The SACC Program has a strong commitment to **youth development**. We will be giving youth the tools they need to become productive and healthy adults. Our programs are safe, affordable, supportive, clean, comfortable, and diverse. The SACC Program at the Art Center, located at **119 Windsor Street** in Cambridge, is a full-year program for 78 children which opened in 1932. Our staff members are **experienced** artists and **qualified** childcare workers who care deeply about children. They are available to answer any questions you have. We encourage and invite parents to **participate** in any number of ways. We have seasonal program celebrations and offer parent conferences at the end of the school year. You can also **visit the program** to observe and request meetings with the staff.

Your child's well-being is our number one priority. We will do everything we can to make your experience with the Community Art Center a pleasant one.

Please call either of us at **(617) 868-7100** if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Erin Muirhead McCarty

Executive Director

Jada Alleyne

School Age Programs Manager

Michael Matfess

Director of Operations and Finance

Sarah Winter

Director of Programs



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Community Art Center's mission is to *cultivate an engaged community of youth whose powerful artistic voices transform their lives, their neighborhoods and their worlds.*

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Community Art Center, Inc., operates the SACC program. This program is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). All EEC regulations and policies are fully enforced. The overall goal of the SACC Program is to provide an enriching environment for children ages 5-12 years during the out of school time in order for parents to continue working or attend training programs.

Specific objectives to achieve this goal are:

1. Provide children with a variety of activities that encourage educational, cultural, emotional, and social development. See Program Plan for curriculum activities.
2. Provide qualified personnel who are sensitive to the needs of children and who are positive role models and meet EEC qualifications.
3. Develop internal policies and procedures to ensure safety, order, and good communication.
4. Communicate frequently with parents through orientations, monthly meetings and parent teacher conferences in order to facilitate parent input/feedback.

LICENSING INFORMATION

The Community Art Center, Inc. School-Age Child Care Program is licensed to operate a program for 78 children by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. (Regulations available upon request.)

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Community Art Center's programs do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, color, age, creed, national origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, cultural orientation, marital status, cultural heritage, political beliefs or veteran status in its employment practices or its delivery of services to children/families. The Community Art Center's programs promote a workplace and child care service free of discrimination and harassment. Toilet training is not an eligibility requirement for student enrollment.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.



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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:

[https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-](https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf)

[0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf](https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN SERVED

All children enrolled in the program are ages 5 -12. The children are primarily residents of the Area IV neighborhood and are therefore a diverse population. The majority (94%) of our families are low-income working families, and the remaining (6%) are of moderate income. Students who may not be community residents also attend our programs. We accept children from homeless shelters as well as children with specific special needs. Our staff receives training and participates throughout the year in workshops around special needs.



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ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

The Community Art Center's chief administrator is the Executive Director, who reports to a 12-member Board of Directors. Some members of the Board are community residents; we also encourage parents of children enrolled in the After School Programs to become members. The School Age Program Manager is responsible for curriculum development and program management. They work to support day to day operations of the program including space cleanliness, meals and transportation. They also coordinate all student mental health services, referrals, parent communication and support teachers with student behavior responses as needed. The Group Leaders/Teachers are responsible for the teaching, culture, and administration of their individual classroom.

CAC SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM STAFF

Erin Muirhead McCarty – Executive Director
Michael Matfess – Director of Operations and Finance
Jada Alleyne – School Age Program Manager
Sarah Winter – Director of Programs
Antaliyah Maxwell - School Age Teacher / Group Leader
Kylah Murphy – School Age Teacher / Group Leader
Jordan Plourde - School Age Teacher / Group Leader
Michaela Leboeuf - School Age Teacher/Group Leader
Nya Cruz - Assistant Teacher
Khora Lane - Assistant Teacher
Jeanette Sylvester – Student Transportation
Shayla Young – Administrative Assistant

OTHER STAFF

Lionel Blaise Jr. – Teen Media Program Manager
Jack O'Hearn – Teen Public Art Manager
Kosar Mohammed – Port Family Advocate
Aishea Henry - Mental Health Clinician
Marisol Rosa – Development Manager
Jose Yax - Custodian

PROGRAM PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

The Center's School-Age Child Care Program serves children, ages 5-12, with a comprehensive year-round program that includes after-school programs Monday-Friday from 2:00-6:00 pm and full day programs (8:00 am - 6:00 pm) during school vacations and throughout the summer. Our unique approach to integrating the arts and social services offers children the opportunity to learn, grow and achieve their full potential. Morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, and dinner are provided throughout the year according to our hours of operation.

HOMEWORK FIRST!

The Community Art Center's SACC program believes that when children spend time on meaningful homework assignments, they are more likely to achieve academic success. Homework builds on schoolwork and encourages the



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development of self-discipline and personal responsibility. It is also an important means of promoting cooperation between after school programs, schools and parents. The teachers are responsible for providing the environment for children to do their homework during homework time. Each week, children can sign up for up to three additional

homework time sessions, offered during class time. We do not guarantee that all assignments will be completed daily, only that we will provide time and assistance.

TRIBAL RHYTHMS

The Community Art Center, Inc. believes it is vital for young children to develop habits of discipline and governance. For over 15 years, the SACC has employed a curriculum formed in collaboration with Cooperative Artists Institute and its initiative, Tribal Rhythms. Practices based on "Creating the Village," as a guide for building community with children. The curriculum gives an agency the tools to create a "micro-society" in which children learn by doing and thrive both socially and academically. When the children first arrive at the Art Center they have time allotted for homework and free play activities such as board games and sports. They then meet weekly for 15 minutes for Tribal Council. Various Tribal Rituals are used for organizing and conducting meetings that deal with Tribal news and business. The meeting structure is designed to encourage the children's understanding of the elements of democratic process. Children meet weekly with their age-specific Tribes during class time to do projects focused on group building and individual goal setting.

THE ACTIVITIES

The goals and outcomes for the SACC Program are based on the needs and interests of the children. Each child at CAC is engaged in a hands-on, arts-based curriculum. Grouping for classes varies according to age group, gender and individual interests. We offer 4 arts disciplines, with activities rotating throughout the year. Throughout the day children engage in constructive play and have opportunities to select what they want to do, from activities including indoor and outdoor time, and noisy and quiet times. In addition, children have the opportunity to develop literacy skills as well as gross motor skills (sports, fitness and recreation). The SACC Program is flexible about changing activities when the children seem to need to do so. All teaching techniques utilized here at the Art Center stress learning how to work together, cooperate with others and communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings.

- **VISUAL ARTS:** The goal of the visual arts program is to provide the tools for children to use their imaginations to create their own pictures, sculpture, drawings and other projects designed by the visual arts teacher. The visual arts are taught in a setting that strongly values creativity. Children work within a wide variety of mediums including painting, drawing, sculpture and mixed media and work creatively both individually and in groups. It is our hope that when the children see their work displayed they are proud of the creative choices they have made and can celebrate their individuality as artists.
- **PERFORMING ARTS:** Our performing arts curriculum currently focuses on drama and movement. It has culminated with original performances at our Family Nights at the end of each semester. The overall goal of this program is to provide children with the opportunities for gaining a strong sense of self-esteem through improvisation, theater games, plays and folk tales both traditional and original. Children are encouraged to express their own thoughts and feelings. Children develop reading and analytical skills to learn to work together cooperatively as well as to gain an individual and collective ability to concentrate on creating a unique project.
- **MEDIA ARTS:** The goal of the media arts program is to provide children with the tools to comprehend, interpret, and critically analyze the wide range of media images and technology tools in their lives. Classes focus on offering opportunities for gaining basic media literacy skills and understanding the roles involved in producing video, photography and graphic design. Students will be exposed to the digital arts through projects using the following software/programs (among others): Garage Band, Photoshop, iMovie and Sketch-up. Many of the students who participate in the Media Arts program graduate into the Community Art Center's Teen Media Program.



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- **DANCE:** The goal of our Dance program is to introduce children to various forms of dance including Hip Hop, Step, Latin, Ballet and African dance. Dance classes feature original choreography created by our dance teacher and by students and culminate in a performance at our seasonal Family Nights.

CLASS STRUCTURE

Currently classes are arranged so that each week, the children will have the opportunity to enroll in **Choice Classes** - a variety of arts activities offered by Art Center teachers and Visiting Artists – or **Focus Classes** – discipline specific classes running twice a week throughout the semester that culminate in a final project featured at seasonal Family Nights. **Tribe** is held once a week and involves same-age groups of students in a project based learning framework. It is our goal to schedule classes in advance so that children and parents can talk about the options together. It is the responsibility of the Tribe Leaders/Teachers to explain the class options and procedures to the children in their tribe. This is best accomplished during the arrival and/or Tribe gatherings each day.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The Art Center is open throughout the year. We correspond with the Cambridge Public School Department calendar and use it as our framework. When school begins in September, we are open after school, half days and full days during school vacations and most snow days (see attached school calendar). The after school programs run to the end of June and the summer program commences the first week of July. The Art Center is open on some selected holidays and closed on certain days for professional development.

HOURS

School Days	2:00-6:00pm
Early Release Days	12:00-6:00pm
Holidays (see list)	8:00-6:00
School Vacations (Including summer)	8:00-6:00

DAILY SCHEDULE

2:00-3:00pm	Variety Time and PM Snack
3:00-4:00pm	Homework Time
4:00-4:15 pm	Tribal Council
4:15 -5:30pm	Class
5:30-6:00pm	Dinner/Dismissal

TENTATIVE HOLIDAY/VACATION SCHEDULE

8:00-9:45am	Variety Time and AM Snack
9:45-10:00am	Tribal Council
10:00-12:00pm	Class
12:00-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30 -1:30pm	Recess
1:30-5:30pm	Field Trip or Class
5:30 -6:00pm	Dinner/Dismissal



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FOOD PROGRAM

Snack and dinner are served each school day. Morning snack, lunch and dinner are served on full days during holidays and vacations. Meals are nutritionally balanced and prepared by Whitson's Foods and served daily. Parents should provide a bag lunch if children have a dietary, religious or medical reason for not eating program meals. Manager will maintain a list identifying allergies and other medical conditions for currently enrolled children. Our food program is funded by the Department of Education. There is no separate charge for the meals served and a CACFP Application will be available to all participants.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

ELIGIBILITY

A child is eligible if they

- have an interest in art
- are between 5 (must be eligible for 1st grade next year) and 12 years of age
- need after school care
- can handle being away from home all day
- are mature enough to understand and follow the CAC Code of Conduct and individual group "Tribal Agreements"

If you wish to enroll your child in the Art Center, please call or come in to schedule an intake appointment with the School Age Program Manager. Intake appointments will only be set up if there are openings in the program. If there are no openings, eligible children will be placed on a waitlist. Families are welcome and encouraged to come by and receive a Parent Handbook and visit the program during regular business hours.

FAMILIES

Our parents/guardians are an important asset to our program. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the programs and meet staff before they enroll their children). Once enrolled, we encourage parents/guardians to have frequent contact with Teachers, Administration, and other appropriate staff. We look forward to sharing ideas and expressing concerns. We encourage you to visit any time and also to sit in and observe activities.

COST, FEES AND PAYMENT

CAC has a license capacity for 78 children. EEC currently reimburses for 21 slots, which are made available to low-income families. The remaining slots are open to all families, including those who are eligible for alternative reimbursement such as vouchers are made available through the Child Care Resource Center and middle-income scholarships through the CAC. Families contribute on a sliding-fee scale based on income and family size.

The Community Art Center charges a weekly fee for every child's attendance. When a child is enrolled and the Community Art Center has openings we will determine if the family is able to receive assistance from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) for the daily fee. The amount of assistance is determined using a sliding fee scale according to your income and the number of people in your household. Community Art Center offers a limited amount of scholarships to families for which the fee presents a hardship. For subsidized or scholarship rates, Community Art Center will require verification of income. CAC also offers a 15% discount off the tuition for each sibling within the same household with one full paying sibling.



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The Community Art Center's 2023-2024 Weekly Rates are as follows:

After School Weekly Rate			Full-Time Weekly Rate		
Gross Annual Income	Family of 2-4	Family of 5+	Gross Annual Income	Family of 2-4	Family of 5+
\$100,001+	\$175	\$175	\$100,001+	\$350	\$350
\$78,001 - \$100,000	\$175	\$165	\$78,001 - \$100,000	\$350	\$330
\$73,001 - \$78,000	\$165	\$157	\$73,001 - \$78,000	\$330	\$314
\$68,001 - \$73,000	\$157	\$150	\$68,001 - \$73,000	\$314	\$300
\$63,001 - \$68,000	\$150	\$140	\$63,001 - \$68,000	\$300	\$280
\$58,000 - \$63,000	\$140	\$131	\$58,000 - \$63,000	\$280	\$262
\$53,000 - \$58,000	\$131	\$123	\$53,000 - \$58,000	\$262	\$246
\$0 - \$53,000	\$123	\$123	\$0 - \$53,000	\$246	\$246

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

The Community Art Center encourages ongoing communication with parents, and works to communicate effectively with families whose primary language is not English or who require alternative communication methods. The Community Art Center staff team includes personnel who speak English, Spanish and Haitian Creole fluently – three of the most common languages spoken by our families. We have translation services available in those languages during all hours of operation. Translation services can be made available in other languages with advanced notice.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- If you have a special skill you would like to share with a group of children, we welcome your participation and hope you will schedule an activity that you can lead or co-lead with one of our teachers. Speak to any of the staff to set up a time. You are also encouraged to assist in any other areas where you may have skills.
- You are welcome to join us on any field trip that is of interest to you. Simply stay in touch and let us know when you would like to attend.
- **FAMILY NIGHT CELEBRATIONS:** At the end of each semester, all parents, family and friends are invited to our Family Night Celebration in which the children demonstrate what they have been learning during the out-of-school hours. The program usually consists of a potluck dinner followed by a student performance including a visual arts display, dance, music and digital arts. All parents are invited to attend and contribute to this evening of entertainment!

INDIVIDUAL PARENT MEETINGS

Parent Meetings are available at any time to talk about things that are important to you, your child and the Art Center. The agenda for these meetings will be based on issues that have been raised by parents, children and staff during a period of time. If a meeting is scheduled by staff, your presence at these meetings is very important. Your input and ideas are vital to the Art Center, your children and the community. You may also simply drop by during office hours 10:00-6:00 Mon-Fri, if you would like to have a parent conference, and have not made or are unable to make an appointment in advance.