

Women's Christian Alliance ***Learning and Development Center***

WCA's Learning and Development Center (LDC) is a twelve month program of care for children ages 12 months to 3 years, including a Head Start program for children ages 3 to 5 years that operates Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, LDC welcomes children without regard to race, religious creed, ancestry or origin. A high-tech security system monitors the facility, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The LDC mission is to provide a warm, nurturing, caring environment for children. While social and emotional areas of development are viewed as most important at these ages, LDC provides every opportunity for cognitive and physical development.

Because play is the "profession of a child," it is a significant component of the LDC program. Through play children can gain a sense of identity, an ability to relate to others and a sense of the world around them. Play also provides opportunities to practice many specific skills that will prepare children for school.

The philosophy of LDC is that children learn by experience and must first feel emotionally and physically secure to explore and learn from their environment. LDC's programs are planned at each developmental level to provide opportunities for children to try new things, both individually and in groups, make new friends and have fun.

Activities are provided in safe, spacious classrooms, out-of-doors in protected play areas, in the children's gym and on excursion trips to places of interest and enjoyment.

LDC recognizes that each child is an individual and encourages children to express themselves according to their own personalities through art, music, circle time, body movement, games, imaginary play, block play, and book time. All safety precautions are in place, at all times.

LDC teaches children to respect the feelings of others. The classroom and activities are structured in a way that allows choice and flexibility within the security of a consistent schedule and pattern of expectations.

Parents are the strongest role model for a child's behavior, language and thought processes. They are aware of their child's likes, dislikes, fears, past experiences, family patterns and ways of approach the world. A trusting relationship between parents and LDC staff is most important to a child's development. LDC strongly encourages parents to participate with their children in many LDC activities such as field trips, and special events. Parents are welcome to drop in at anytime to observe their child.

Open to all parents, the *LDC Parent Advisory Committee* functions as a liaison between parents and WCA staff and helps to plan special events and fundraisers.

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