The mission of the Berks Youth Chorus is to enrich our community by fostering and promoting choral excellence in young people through music education and quality performances.

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Artistic Staff
Christopher Hoster ................................................................. Director of MasterSingers
James Wilson .............................................................................. Director of Chorale
Michelle Metz .............................................................. Director of Training Chorus, Summer Sing Director
Mary Bishop .................................................................................. Accompanist
Linda Ebersole ........................................................................ Accompanist
Alexandra Booth .................................................................. Summer Sing Director

Administrative Staff
Dail Mahood Richie ................................................................. Executive Director
Alison Whalen ............................................................. Administrative Assistant

Board of Directors (through June 2017)
Katherine A. Sensenig, CPA ...................................................... President
Rev. Jack Abel ............................................................................ Vice-President
Rosemary Fraley ........................................................................ Secretary
Joann Pun, CPA ........................................................................ Treasurer

Michele Cramer ......................................................... Rabbi Brian Michelson ........................................ Suzanne Leach Wagner
Shelley Kauffman ........................................................ Carol Robinson ................................................................. Glenn Yeager, Esq.
Preston Knauer ........................................................................ Joseph Smith
Michelle Mart ........................................................................ Turie Sotzin

MasterSingers Representative to the Board
Jasmine Slusser ........................................................................ Member of MasterSingers

Honorary Director
Donald Hinkle ......................................................................... Founder

Advisory Board
Bruce P. Bengtson ......................................................... Christine Jordanoff ........................................ Judith Willoughby
Andrew Constantine ................................................ James Litton
Greg Funfgeld ........................................................................ Gianfranco Toso, M.D.

Parents’ Auxiliary Board (through June 2017)
Michele Cramer ................................................................. President
Alison Whalen ........................................................................ Financial Secretary

Christopher Hoster, Director of MasterSingers
Christopher Hoster joined the staff of Berks Youth Chorus in May 2016, when he was appointed Director of MasterSingers. Mr. Hoster is the Founder and Director of Opus One: Berks Chamber Choir; the Choir Director and Organist at St. John Baptist de la Salle Church, Shillington, PA; and Director of the Penn State Berks Campus Choir. He previously served as Music Director at Fleetwood Community Theater, Fleetwood, PA; Director of Choirs and Music Instructor at Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA; Concert Choir Director and Conductor at Reading Area Community College, Reading, PA; Choir Director and Organist at Nativity Lutheran Church, Reading, PA; and Choir Director and Organist at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Reading, PA. Mr. Hoster, who is equally busy as a tenor soloist, is a member of the Opera Company of Philadelphia Chorus. He currently is a candidate for a Doctorate in Musical Arts in Choral Music from the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana, IL), where he earned a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance and Literature. He earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree, summa cum laude, from Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, PA. He attended the Opera Theater Center at the Aspen Music Festival [with Julius Rudel and Vinson Cole], the Sarteano Chamber Choral Conducting Workshop [with Simon Carrington], and the St. George International Music Festival. He has studied voice with Jerold Siena and conducting with Dr. Andrew Megill.

James K. Wilson, Director of Chorale
James K. Wilson began his work with Berks Youth Chorus [then Berks Classical Children’s Chorus] as a Staff Assistant in 1992, the year the chorus was founded. From spring 1994 through spring 1995, he directed the Choristers [then Prep Chorus]. In 1995-1996, he took time off, but returned to direct the Choristers in fall 1996. In spring 1997, he was appointed Director of Chorale, a position he held through the fall concert in November 2003. In 1998, Mr. Wilson conducted the Chorale in a performance for the Eastern Division Convention of the American Choral Directors Association in Providence, Rhode Island. Mr. Wilson is listed in the 1994 edition of Who's Who Among America's Teachers and was a 1990 nominee for Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year. In June 2017, he retired from Schuylkill Elementary School in the Phoenixville Area School District near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, after a career of teaching there for 36 years. His school choir performed at the 1991 Eastern Conference of PMEA/MENC [Pennsylvania Music Educators Association/Music Educators National Conference]. His article “What Do They Hear? Can We Really Make Beautiful Music?” appeared in the PMEA News in May 1994. Since 1999, Mr. Wilson has served as the Choir Director at Christ Episcopal Church, Reading, Pennsylvania, and since 2011, he has also served as organist at the church. Mr. Wilson earned a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Music degree in Music Education from West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania. He earned a Master of Music degree in Sacred Music from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. He has received certification in Kodály musicianship and methodology.

Michelle Metz, Director of Training Chorus and Summer Sing Director
Michelle Metz joined the staff of Berks Youth Chorus in June 2009, when she was appointed Director of Training Chorus. Since June 2009, she has been one of three staff directors at Summer Sing, a BYC choir camp in downtown Reading open to non-members. She is a general music teacher and chorus director at Lauer’s Park Elementary School in the Reading School District. She also serves as the Music Director for the Olivet Boys and Girls Club Summer Theatre Camp. She previously taught beginning piano at the Olivet Boys and Girls Club Center for the Arts and previously served as the Director of the Olivet Youth Chorus. Miss Metz earned her Bachelor in Science degree in Music Education at West Chester University, West Chester, PA. She is pursuing her post graduate studies through the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.
Mary Bishop, Accompanist
Mary Bishop joined the staff of Berks Youth Chorus in July 2004. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education and a Master of Music degree in Piano Accompanying from West Chester University, West Chester, PA, where she studied with Benjamin Whitten. Mrs. Bishop has been a vocal and instrumental music teacher in both Reading School District and Rose Tree Media School District. She is the general music teacher at Shiloh Hills and Cornwall Terrace Elementary Schools in the Wilson School District. Mrs. Bishop has also enjoyed being Reading Choral Society’s accompanist since 2008.

Linda Ebersole, Accompanist
Linda Ebersole joined the staff of Berks Youth Chorus in June 2009. She has served as the accompanist for Berks Grand Opera, Berks Summer Theater, Reading Civic Opera, and Erwin Chandler Chamber Ensemble. For many years she served with her husband, Charles, in the music ministry of Grace Bible Fellowship Church. Mrs. Ebersole is currently organist and director of choirs at Calvary United Methodist Church in Mohnton, PA. She is also co-director of the Blue Mountain Heritage Chorus of Hamburg, PA. Mrs. Ebersole is a cum laude graduate of Indiana University of PA, with a Bachelor of Science in Music Education. She earned a Master of Counseling/Psychology from Pillsbury College and Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and is in private practice as a licensed therapist. She is a student at Andersonville Theological Seminary. She resides in Mohnton with her husband and son, Isaiah, and is a member of Fleetwood Bible Church.

Alexandra Booth, Summer Sing Director
Alexandra Booth joined the staff of Berks Youth Chorus in June 2009, when she was appointed as one of three staff directors at Summer Sing, a BYC choir camp in downtown Reading open to non-members. She is a general and vocal music teacher at 10th & Penn and Glenside elementary schools in the Reading School District. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree, magna cum laude, from Houghton College, Houghton, NY, and earned a Master of Arts in Education, summa cum laude, from Gratz College in Melrose Park, PA. She is a former choral and vocal music director at Glad Tidings Assembly of God in West Lawn, PA, and a former adjunct music faculty member at Valley Forge Christian College in Phoenixville, PA. She maintains a private voice and piano studio in her home. She is a singing member of the Reading Choral Society and serves as President of its Board of Directors.
Dail Mahood Richie, Executive Director

Dail Mahood Richie was appointed Executive Director of the Berks Youth Chorus (BYC), then Berks Classical Children’s Chorus, in November 1997. In May 2009, she was appointed Interim Artistic Director for one year, while continuing to serve as Executive Director. She brings professional experience in vocal performance, education, and arts management, including fundraising, staff and volunteer development, communications, leadership, and community relations. She is responsible for the organizational planning, management, financial development, and public relations of the chorus. She runs the day-to-day operations, carrying out the chorus’s physical, logistical, and business needs and coordinating volunteer help. Ms. Richie initiated three strategic planning processes since 2002, led two branding strategies, one in 2008 and one in 2012, when the chorus changed its name from Berks Classical Children’s Chorus to Berks Youth Chorus, and leads the board, staff, and constituents in the implementation of those plans. She also steered the chorus during the transition of Artistic Director and Founder Donald Hinkle’s retirement in 2005, and the subsequent search for new artistic leadership.

Prior to joining the BYC staff, she served as Choir Director at Christ Episcopal Church, Reading, PA, for thirteen years. As Choir Director, she served as Chair of the Fall Festival of the Arts, a four-day multi-disciplinary arts festival presented annually by Christ Church and Trinity Lutheran Church, Reading, PA. She served on the Board of Directors of the Reading Symphony Orchestra, Reading, PA, from 1988 to 1997. During part of that time, she served as President of the Friends of the (Reading) Symphony, founded the award-winning Kinderkonzert, and supervised volunteer activities including the Symphony Ball and Silent Auction. She has been a singing member of the Reading Choral Society since 1984 and served on its Board from 1985 to 2005. In February 2008 and February 2011, she served on the music application review panel for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

Ms. Richie has appeared as soloist for numerous organizations, including the Reading Symphony Orchestra, Reading Symphony Orchestra League, Reading Choral Society, Albright College, Fall Festival of the Arts, Berks Youth Chorus, Christ Episcopal Church, and Trinity Lutheran Church. A member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Ms. Richie has served as an Adjunct Professor of Voice at Albright College and West Chester University. She currently teaches voice at the GoggleWorks campus of the Community Music School of Allentown, and serves on the Board of Directors for the school. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the GoggleWorks Center for the Arts. Ms. Richie holds a Bachelor of Music degree, cum laude, in Voice Performance from Salem College, Winston-Salem, NC, and a Master of Music degree in Voice Performance from The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC. Additional course work includes study at The Blossom Festival [of the Cleveland Orchestra]; Salem [College] in Italy, and the University of Maryland. In June 1998, she was one of 14 professional chorus managers who attended the Chorus America Summer Management Institute at Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.

Alison Whalen, Administrative Assistant

Alison M. Whalen joined the staff of Berks Youth Chorus when she was appointed Administrative Assistant in March 2012. Mrs. Whalen is responsible for the daily business and financial aspects of the chorus. She also is in charge of the music library, heads the uniform committee and assists behind the scenes with rehearsals and performances, and serves as the Treasurer for the Parents’ Auxiliary.

Mrs. Whalen brings extensive business and arts administrative skills to the chorus. She was a part owner and Vice President of Operations at Frank Woolley & Co Inc., Reading, PA, a company that specialized in production and distribution of polarized animated signs. She is past Treasurer of Berks Opera Company, Reading. She is Treasurer for the Fall Festival of the Arts, a multi-disciplinary arts festival presented annually by Christ Episcopal Church and Trinity Lutheran Church, Reading, and has served as its Co-Chair and Secretary. A life-long choral singer, she sings in the choir at Christ Episcopal, where she has served on the Worship, Shelter, Counting, Inreach, Outreach, Hospitality, Office committees and on the Vestry. Mrs. Whalen earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Russian and French from American University in Washington, DC.
Staff Contact Information

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Mission Statement
The mission of the Berks Youth Chorus is to enrich our community by fostering and promoting choral excellence in young people through music education and quality performances.

Values and Guiding Principles
Each student will be given every reasonable opportunity to acquire a fundamentally balanced education in the vocal musical art.

Our professional staff is dedicated to providing a quality education in the vocal musical art through the study of elementary music theory, development of artistic discipline, and the experience of vocal performance.

Our volunteers and contributors are recognized for their various contributions of time, talent, financial resources, and opportunity in their collective effort to nurture and sustain the organization. Our musical programs are designed to encourage a child to utilize musical talent as a means of self-enrichment as well as enrichment of the local and expanded community through artistic contribution.

Purpose
Berks Youth Chorus exists to broaden the artistic horizons of qualified youngsters between 8 and 18. The choral experience opens many doors of learning by teaching singers new skills and enhancing existing skills. BYC members learn teamwork and self-discipline through the choral process. They are introduced to and learn to appreciate a wide diversity of cultures through the music they study and perform. They hone retention abilities by singing many foreign languages, as well as English, from memory. They are exposed to a variety of life situations as a result of performing in locations as diverse as nursing, school, and community centers.

Commitment
BYC expects each singer to demonstrate a commitment to faithful, consistent and punctual attendance, and to remain active and committed to the program for the entire year.

Non-Profit
Berks Youth Chorus is a registered 501(c)3, nonprofit, charitable organization. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.
Parent Volunteers
BYC parents are known for their genuine commitment to the Chorus and its mission. Parent participation assures continued growth and success of BYC, improves communication, and instills a sense of responsibility for the organization. Each parent is encouraged to volunteer each year, by participating as a POD [See Parents on Duty, p. 19] and/or serving on one or more committees in areas that best suit his/her abilities, talents, interests, or hobbies. Committees work closely with the Executive Director and other staff. Each parent is automatically a member of the Parents’ Auxiliary and should support its activities.

Parents’ Auxiliary
All parents are members of the Parents’ Auxiliary. [See Parents’ Auxiliary, page 18.] Parents are asked to support the activities sponsored by the Parents’ Auxiliary. The Parents’ Auxiliary has set a goal for each family to raise $100 profit by participating in fundraisers and/or opting out with a contribution to the Parents’ Auxiliary. Fundraisers currently planned are:

1. Kauffman’s Chicken Barbecue, Sunday, August
2. Boscov’s Friends Helping Friends Day, Tuesday, October
3. ShopwithScrip, throughout the year

Security
Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, including the changes and updates made by PA House Bill 435 (Act 153), requires BYC employees and volunteers, who work directly with children, to provide: 1) Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearances (CY113); 2) Pennsylvania Criminal Record Checks (SP4-164); 3) FBI Clearance [for those who have not lived in PA for ten consecutive years]. See Child Welfare and Abuse Prevention Policy, page 23.

Non-Discrimination Policy
Berks Youth Chorus does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, familial status, religious creed, ancestry, handicap or disability, age, sex, national origin, the use of a guide or support animal because of the blindness, deafness or physical handicap of the user or because the user is a handler or trainer of support or guide animals in regard to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students in the chorus, in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, or other chorus-administered programs.

Activities
Annually, BYC performs for thousands in concerts it produces, in contracted performances with other musical organizations, and for area churches and community organizations. BYC annually produces three concerts: fall, winter, and spring. BYC works to maintain a performance schedule that provides superior educational opportunities while respecting the time involvement of the singer and his family. BYC promotes public interest and enjoyment of music and the arts in general.
BYC Handbook

BYC STRUCTURE
The BYC music education curriculum is designed to take the young singer from his/her first introduction to the art of choral singing through a full course of study. The curriculum is divided into a carefully structured sequence of three levels designed to develop skill, stamina, and discipline in keeping with each singer’s maturity and vocal development. A director is assigned exclusively to each level. From the beginning to the most advanced, the levels are Training Chorus, Chorale, and MasterSingers.

Training Chorus (Girls and Boys in Grades 3 – 4): The Training Chorus, the entry level-treble choir, offers a beginning music education curriculum, which teaches the basic fundamentals of music in a choral setting.

Chorale (Girls and Boys in Grades 5 – 8): Chorale is the upper level treble choir. The curriculum strengthens skills learned in Training Chorus. This group appears in programs and concerts by invitation in addition to performing in BYC concerts. Past performances include appearances with the Reading Symphony Orchestra and The Bach Choir of Bethlehem.

MasterSingers (Girls in Grades 9 – 12; Young Men with Changed Voices): The MasterSingers is an advanced SATB ensemble. Like the Chorale, this group appears in programs and concerts by invitation in addition to performing in BYC concerts. Past performances include appearances with Allentown Symphony, The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Reading Choral Society, and Wheatland Chorale.

MasterSingers are chosen by invitation of the Director on the basis of an audition and, if applicable, their past record of discipline, commitment, cooperation, and responsibility. Membership is not automatic. A balance of voice parts must be maintained.

Boy’s voice change: With correct supervision and training, most boys can continue singing treble through the voice change. No boy will be allowed to move into MasterSingers because of voice change unless the Directors determine that continuation in the Chorale would be detrimental to his voice. Each case would be considered individually and based upon the recommendations of the Directors.
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Auditions – BYC seeks children who love to sing and possess a positive attitude. Children should be able to sing with a clear tone to blend well with others, sing in tune, demonstrate a good sense of rhythm, and commit to a one-year membership. Exact placement in Training Chorus, Chorale, or MasterSingers is determined through an audition when a singer enters the chorus.

Singers entering grades three through twelve the following academic year audition in May for membership. Once selected, singers may enroll in the chorus’s progressive development program through grade twelve.

Evaluations – Evaluations of singers may be held in the spring, at the discretion of the directors. Evaluations give the singers the chance to demonstrate their developing skills and musical independence and indicate both areas of strength and areas requiring more focus. Evaluations are conducted individually or in small groups. Chorus placement for the following year may be influenced by the results of these evaluations.

Membership Orientation Meeting – At least one parent, preferably both, of each singer, must attend the Membership Orientation Meeting, usually held in June, or meet personally with the Executive Director to discuss schedules, policies, etc. Parents of new and returning singers should attend. All singers are highly encouraged to attend.

Email – Email is the primary form of communication. It is used to inform singers and parents of changes or updates, or any information that needs to be communicated. Although a weekly newsletter is emailed usually on Wednesday or Thursday, it is essential that singers and parents check their email daily. They should print out important messages and keep them handy for reminders or reference. BYC will mail or hand-deliver messages to those who do not have access to e-mail. It is the responsibility of each family to inform the chorus if they cannot check their email, do not have email, or have changed their email address.

Website and Facebook – The BYC website and Facebook page contain important information for everyone, including a rehearsal and performance schedule which is updated regularly. Up-to-date calendar pages can be viewed and printed from the website. Singers and parents are encouraged to “like” BYC on Facebook to help spread the word about the activities and achievements of the chorus.

MasterSingers Summer and Winter Retreats; Training Chorus and Chorale Summer Camp
Rehearsals for singers begin each season during the summer. MasterSingers have a week-end Summer Retreat the end of July/beginning of August. Training Chorus and Chorale have a week-long Summer Camp in August. These rehearsals provide opportunity to build personal relationships and create community while learning music for the coming year. MasterSingers also have Winter Retreats, held on three Saturdays during winter months. All members must attend unless excused by the Director or Executive Director after consultation with parents. Tuition includes camp and retreats.

Health Guidelines – If children are to learn about and share their vocal instruments, they must be well rested, alert, and healthy. Singers are encouraged to get a good night’s sleep the night before a performance or lengthy rehearsal and refrain from attending overnights or slumber parties at such times. Singing is a very physical activity and demands respect for the body every bit as much as athletic activities. The singer’s body is his instrument! Any type of screaming or yelling is very damaging to the vocal cords, especially cheerleading. BYC singers are asked to refrain from these potentially damaging activities.

As long as students feel well enough to attend, they are encouraged to come to rehearsals, to participate in the aural and visual instruction, even if they do not feel well enough to participate in the singing. BYC does not expect a student to sing while experiencing a vocal problem such as a sore throat, hoarseness, or laryngitis. Obviously, children with fevers or contagious conditions should not attend rehearsals or performances.
CURRICULUM GOALS

Training Chorus
1. Produce a head tone after having heard the sound modeled
2. Match pitch on vocal exercises (accompanied)
3. Accurately echo clap simple rhythmic patterns
4. Accurately echo sing simple melodic patterns (unaccompanied)
5. Accurately sight read and sing simple patterns using Kodály solfège
6. Use correct posture while singing (seated and standing)
7. Use correct breathing technique while singing
8. Sing with a pleasant and well-produced tone
9. Know the names of the lines and spaces on the treble clef
10. Sing in head tone
11. Sing in tune
12. Demonstrate the level of maturity necessary to work in the choir level setting, as well as the ability to focus and follow directions

Chorale
Same as Training Chorus plus:
13. Perform concert works memorized
14. Sing music in major tonalities at sight that consists of predominately stepwise movement
15. Echo clap rhythmic patterns that consist of whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, dotted quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes
16. Clap or speak words in rhythm that contain whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, dotted quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes
17. Sing the upper and lower pitches of primary triads
18. Solfège a major scale in several different keys
19. Sing a phrase heard one time
20. Sing a two part and a three part work performed during the choir season with other singers
21. Solfège minor scales in several different keys
22. Understand the 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, and 6/8 meter signatures
23. Use correct musical terminology pertaining to works sung during the choir season
24. Tell something about the composers of the works sung during the choir season
25. Sing music in major and minor keys at sight using solfège
26. Sing a work performed during the choir season in a language other than English

MasterSingers
Same as Chorale plus:
27. Perform concert works memorized
28. Sing chromatic and whole tone scales
29. Understand asymmetrical meter signatures
30. Tell something about the periods of musical history of the works sung during the choir season
31. Sing music in major and minor keys at sight that contains leaps of seventh and octave
32. Sing an eight measure melody heard one time
33. Clap rhythmic patterns that consist of dotted eighth notes and triplet figures
34. Sing three works performed during the choir season
35. Sing a two, three or more part work performed during the choir season with other singers
36. Sing two works performed during the choir season in a language other English
**POLICIES**

**Schedules and Attendance**

BYC expects each singer to demonstrate a commitment to faithful, consistent and punctual attendance, and to remain active and committed to the program for the entire year.

Schedules are posted on the BYC Website: www.berksyouthchorus.org. Training Chorus and Chorale rehearsals, unless otherwise noted, are held at GoggleWorks, Reading, PA. MasterSingers rehearsals, unless otherwise noted, are held at Atonement Lutheran Church, Wyomissing, PA. Dates and times are subject to change; additional rehearsals may be scheduled as needed. Typically, there are two to three weeks off in December for the holidays.

**Training Chorus:** Regular rehearsals are held every Monday, from 6:30 – 8:00 PM, during the school year. A few rehearsals may be held from 6:30 – 8:30 PM, as announced, in preparation for concerts.

**Chorale:** Regular rehearsals are held every Monday, from 6:30 – 8:30 PM, during the school year.

**MasterSingers:** Regular rehearsals are held Sundays from 3:00 – 5:30 PM, during the school year. No rehearsals are held on the Sunday after Thanksgiving or on Easter Day.

**Training Chorus and Chorale Summer Camp**

A one-week Summer Camp is held Monday through Friday, during August for new and returning Training Chorus and Chorale members. Training Chorus attends 9:00 AM to 12:15 PM, Monday through Thursday, and 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM, Friday; Chorale attends 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM, all week. Summer Camp is held at Atonement Lutheran Church, Wyomissing, PA. A mini-concert is held on Friday, the last day of camp.

**MasterSingers Summer and Winter Retreats**

A three-day weekend Summer Retreat is held Friday evening, all day Saturday, and Sunday afternoon, in late July/early August for new and returning MasterSingers. Summer Retreat is held at GoggleWorks and Atonement Lutheran Church, Wyomissing, PA. A day-long Winter Retreat is held on two or three Saturdays during the winter months at Atonement Lutheran Church.

**Attendance**

In order to provide the BYC staff with the opportunity to effectively educate any child in music and the choral art, it is necessary that each child attends all rehearsals and performances in prompt fashion. Absences due to illness, family emergencies, school concerts, and other school activities for which a grade is given are excused. See the registration contract for further explanation.

**Notification of an absence** should be made to the Executive Director as much in advance possible. Given delays in delivery of email, last minute notifications (less than 24 hours) should be made by phone to the Office [610-898-7664] – not a text to the Executive Director.

If a singer has more than TWO (2) absences during each term (Sept. to Dec.; Jan. to May), he/she:

1. Will jeopardize his or her chances of being invited or accepted into the Chorus in the following year, subject to review and consideration of illness or other extenuating circumstances by the staff and Board of Directors.

2. May be asked to sing for the Director, who will then decide if he/she is ready to participate in the next concert or event. Such a reevaluation is intended to let a student know what needs to be learned in order to participate in any upcoming events. If a singer is found to be too far behind, dismissal from the choir for the rest of the term could result. However, BYC prefers to view reevaluations in a more positive light as a time for singers to take action responsibly and find out how they can make up what they have missed.

**Special rehearsals**

Special rehearsals for performances with other organizations, such as the Reading Youth Orchestra and Reading Choral Society, etc., are usually dictated by those organizations and are subject to change.
POLICIES, CONTINUED

Concert call
Warm-up and rehearsal times before most concerts (but not all) will be scheduled two hours before a concert, i.e. 2 PM for a 4 PM concert, with a 15 – 30 minute break before the concert.

Rehearsal Cancellation
In the event of inclement weather, a cancellation notification will be placed on the BYC answering machine at 610-898-7664. If time permits, a cancellation notice will be posted on the BYC Facebook page and will be emailed to parents. In most circumstances, BYC will not use a phone chain for rehearsal cancellations.

Discipline Policy
Electronic devices: Singers who bring electronic devices, such as cell phones, games, and mp3 players, to a rehearsal or concert must turn them off. Singers may only use them if given permission by a staff member.

Inappropriate behavior: When a singer disrupts a rehearsal by talking out of turn, using an electronic device, reading a book, or with any other inappropriate behavior, he/she will be given a warning. Continued disruptions will result in contacting parents. Further problems will result in termination of the singer as a member of BYC. Tuition will not be returned.

Code of Conduct
Berks Youth Chorus is an organization with a specific musical and character development purpose and program. It seeks to provide a safe, nurturing environment that supports teamwork, respect, and musical and vocal growth while protecting against vocal abuse. The rules and regulations that follow are intended to protect each member and the organization. Each member is asked to read them, understand them and the need for them, and know the consequences of breaking any one of them.

Violation of any one of the following rules while attending any BYC activity is grounds for disciplinary action including immediate dismissal from the organization.
1. Smoking will not be permitted at any time. The damaging effects of smoking on the voice are immediate and cannot be tolerated.
2. Drinking alcohol or being under the influence of any intoxicants will not be permitted.
3. Possession, use, receipt, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of illegal or medically unauthorized drugs will not be permitted.
4. All members of BYC are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that creates a favorable impression of BYC.

Any violation of the rules that is brought to the attention of the BYC Staff, the Board of Directors, or PODs will be given immediate and serious attention and appropriate action will be taken.

Travel Policy
BYC usually hires a bus to transport singers when an event is more than an hour away from the BYC rehearsal site. There are several reasons for this policy: 1) Bus transportation ensures the safety of the singers. Many of our MasterSingers drive themselves to and from BYC events. BYC believes that singers are safer riding a bus than driving long distances themselves. 2) Bus transportation assures the arrival of singers on time at the event venue. 4) Bus transportation provides fun, "down" time for the singers. Building relationships among the singers is a very important component of the BYC experience. 5) Bus transportation helps parents!

BYC expects all singers to ride the bus unless otherwise notified. The only reason NOT to ride the bus that is fully understood and appreciated would be to eliminate unnecessary travel time. For example, if a singer lives closer to the event venue than the bus pick up and drop off site, it would be permissible for the singer to get to the event venue on his own. If any singer would not ride the bus, his/her parents must request permission in writing to the Executive Director a minimum of two weeks before the day of the event explaining why and stating who will transport their child. Requests on the day of the event to transport one’s child may be denied.
FEES

Annual Tuition
Non-refundable tuition for the academic year 2017-2018

| Training Chorus: | $500 |
| Chorale: | $550 |
| MasterSingers: | $625 |

Scholarships: Tuition, Tickets, Rehearsal and Concert Attire
Scholarship help to qualified singers is available as funds allow. Applications for financial aid, with a non-refundable $25 tuition deposit, must be received by July 1 for summer registrations. Application forms and requirements are found in the contract. The Finance Committee will review each case individually. No child who clearly demonstrates talent and strong desire to sing in BYC will be prevented from joining due to financial reasons. Singers who receive financial aid are held to the highest expectations for participation and attendance at rehearsals and concerts. A decision to renew or continue aid will also be based upon the student/family’s demonstration of commitment as shown in participation and attendance at rehearsals and concerts. In addition to tuition, scholarship awards will include two free adult tickets for fall concert and two free adult tickets for spring concert per family; scholarship awards may also include rehearsal and concert attire.

Property Deposit
All new singers, including scholarship applicants, shall pay a $50 Refundable Property Deposit. It is intended that this amount will be on deposit throughout the singer’s tenure with BYC.

When a singer graduates from the chorus after the final spring performance, the Property Deposit shall be returned if the singer/parents provide a Property Deposit refund request by July 1, provided that all property is returned in good condition, by May 31, unless notified otherwise, and the singer does not otherwise owe anything to BYC.

If a singer leaves the chorus after the final spring performance, the Property Deposit shall be returned if the singer/parents provide a letter of resignation and a Property Deposit refund request by July 1, provided that all property is returned in good condition, by May 31, unless notified otherwise, and the singer does not otherwise owe anything to BYC.

If a singer leaves the chorus during the year [before the final spring performance], the Property Deposit shall be returned, if the singer/parents provide a letter of resignation and a Property Deposit refund request, provided that all property is returned in good condition, within the week of said resignation, and the singer does not otherwise owe anything to BYC.

All Property Refunds will be issued in July.

With respect to missing or damaged pieces of music, there is a $5.00 re-order charge per item for most pieces of music and $10.00 per item for some of the larger pieces. During the singer’s tenure, should one or more pieces of music be determined to be missing or damaged, the singer’s parents will be notified and a charge assessed. It will be necessary for the singer/parent to promptly reimburse BYC for the assessment so that the Property Deposit remains at the required $50 level which is necessary to keep the singer in good standing with BYC. Note: This deposit is in addition to the non-refundable $25 tuition registration fee.

Property includes:
- ✔ Notebook
- ✔ Music

Property might include:
- ✔ Concert attire, returned only upon request, if applicable, from scholarship recipients

Payment for the tuition and property fee for the academic year shall be made in accordance with the selected payment plan. Payment may be made by check to BYC or by credit card.

Unless other arrangements are made in writing and approved in advance by BYC, payment in full of tuition and property fee due is a prerequisite to a child’s participation in rehearsal and concerts. Those who participate in the monthly payment plans are expected to make payments on time.
UNIFORMS – REHEARSAL AND CONCERT ATTIRE

ALL SINGERS – REHEARSAL ATTIRE
- BYC short-sleeved, navy blue polo shirt
- BYC sweatshirt or BYC long-sleeved shirt, optional
- BYC t-shirt - Singers will be given a BYC t-shirt, which is worn as requested or allowed at specific times during the year.
- Skirts, pants, and/or shorts in an appropriate, modest style
- Tennis shoes, as requested
- Name tag - Training Chorus and Chorale members

ALL SINGERS – CASUAL CONCERT ATTIRE
- BYC short-sleeved, navy blue polo shirt or BYC t-shirt
- Long (usually black) slacks
- Tennis shoes, as requested

ALL SINGERS – CONCERT ATTIRE
Dresses and pants should be hemmed one inch from the floor [pants hemmed to cover the top of the shoe] with some hem to allow for growth.

Training Chorus Girls and Guys
- White BYC short-sleeved polo shirt [provided by BYC]
- Black dress pants
- Plain, flat, solid black leather dress shoes with no buckles, bows, glitter, etc.
- Black socks
- Plain black belt, if desired

Chorale Girls
- Long, claret satin dress – similar to more sophisticated style worn by MasterSingers girls
- Plain, flat, solid black leather dress shoes with no buckles, bows, glitter, etc.
- Nude hose

MasterSingers Girls
- Long, claret satin dress – similar to a more youthful style worn by Chorale girls
- Black “character” shoes
- Nude hose

Chorale and MasterSingers Guys
- Claret satin vest – should cover waistband and extend at least 1” below band
- Claret satin, long tie
- Plain front, long-sleeved, white dress shirt
- Tuxedo pants
- Black socks
- Flat, solid black leather dress shoes
REHEARSAL POLO AND CONCERT ATTIRE PURCHASE PROCEDURE
Singers are responsible for purchasing their own rehearsal and concert attire through the BYC office.

- **Scholarship recipients**, however, may receive attire at no cost or reduced cost, as determined through their financial aid application, but must still order attire through the BYC office.
- **Attire** should be ordered **by Sat July 15**.
- BYC concert dresses and vests are custom orders with a 4 – 6 week lead time.
- **After Sat July 15**, there are additional fees to cover shipping and handling for dresses and vests. The minimum charge for shipping and handling for individual orders is $20. By placing multiple orders, rather than individual orders, BYC is able to split the shipping and handling costs among parents.
- **Prices for concert attire increase August 1.**
- A deposit of $25 is **due at time of order**.
- Final payment due on pick-up of items.
- Checks are made to Berks Youth Chorus.
- **All sales are final.** BYC is unable to return items to the wholesaler.

Concert shoes and hose/socks shall be purchased by singers at stores of their choice.

UNIFORM COSTS
Prices are approximate and are subject to change
Singers should wear the rehearsal polo to all rehearsals, including retreat and summer camp. Shirts are not in stock, but must be ordered. Please allow time for order to be placed and received.

**Required Rehearsal Attire for All Singers**

- Short-sleeved, navy polo w/logo
  - Youth - $25.00
  - Adult - $27.00

**Optional Rehearsal Attire for All Singers**

- Long-sleeved, navy polo w/logo
  - Youth - $27.00
  - Adult - $29.00
- Hooded, pullover sweatshirt w/logo
  - Youth - $35.00
  - Adult - $40.00
- Hooded, zippered sweatshirt w/logo
  - Youth - $40.00
  - Adult - $45.00
- Crew neck sweatshirt w/logo
  - Youth - $25.00
  - Adult - $29.00

**Required Concert Attire**

**Training Chorus**
- Black dress pants
  - Youth $24.00 - $26.00
- White BYC polo
  - Provided by BYC

**Chorale Girls Dress**
- Youth - $74.00
- Youth Tall - $77.00

**MasterSingers Girls Dress**
- Adult - $77.00
  - Adult Tall - $82.00

**Chorale & MasterSingers Boys**
- Plain front, long-sleeved, white dress shirt
  - Youth - $19.00
  - Adult - $19.00
- Black tuxedo pants
  - Youth - $32.00
  - Adult - $32.00
- Claret vest [Add $3 if 3XL or special cut]
  - Youth - $50.00
  - Adult - $50.00
- Claret tie
  - Youth - $13.00
  - Adult - $13.00
PERSONAL GROOMING
BYC retains the right to determine if a singer is properly dressed and groomed and to require a singer to make adjustments in order to meet uniform and grooming standards.

- Please check all concert attire, especially for hem length, before each concert.
- Alterations are available at numerous dry-cleaners throughout the area. Please contact the office if you need the names and locations.
- Singers should come to all concerts with cleaned, pressed attire.
- Dry-cleaning is recommended for all concert attire, including the Chorale and MasterSingers girls’ dresses. The guys’ vests must be dry-cleaned.

Performance Grooming

Girls
Hair: Styled off the face. Recommended styles are:
- French braided from top of the head and secured by a simple ponytail holder(s).
- Chignon, French twist, or bun on the back of the head.
- Corn rows styled close to head and off the face.
- Head band or barrettes the color of the hair, if hair is too short to be styled as described above.

Nail polish: No nail polish is allowed.
Jewelry:
- Training Chorus and Chorale girls shall wear no jewelry. Training Chorus and Chorale girls may not wear earrings. Please plan ear piercing well before before concert dates.
- MasterSingers Girls may wear a simple earring – nothing dangling – on each ear. No other jewelry/piercings allowed.
- Exception: medical tags or bracelets.

Boys
Hair: Styled off the face.
Nail polish: No nail polish is allowed.
Jewelry: No jewelry/piercings allowed. No earrings, watches, etc. Exception: medical tags or bracelets.

Cleaning
All clothing items shall be clean and pressed for each concert. Dry-cleaning is recommended for all concert attire, including the Chorale and MasterSingers girls’ dresses, which are washable. The guys’ vests must be dry-cleaned.

Concert Uniform Check
The Uniform Committee will hold Concert Uniform Checks as announced, usually in the fall and winter. Singers should arrive at the rehearsal fully dressed in the concert uniform.

A Uniform Committee member will send a note home to parents if any uniform item needs to be replaced or adjusted in any way. If the Committee requests that a singer purchase new concert attire, please place the order with BYC, ideally, within the week.

While BYC conducts Concert Uniform Checks generally two to three times per year, it is the responsibility of the family to notice any changes in the growth or weight of the singer that will affect the fit of the clothing.

Uniform guidelines shall be strictly followed. A Uniform Committee member will be present at each concert to enforce the guidelines. Those not following the guidelines will be asked to make the necessary changes.
I. Purpose: To promote and enhance the educational experience of the children of the chorus through authorized, voluntary activities and projects.

II. Membership: Membership shall be open to any parent or guardian of any child enrolled as a student in the Berks Youth Chorus.

III. Meetings and Quorum: Meetings shall be held monthly from September through May, except during December. The presence of at least one elected officer and four members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the approval of actions or resolutions at general membership meetings.

IV. Officers: The officers of this committee shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The Financial Secretary shall be the BYC Bookkeeper, by appointment of the Chair, and shall serve ex-officio. These persons shall form the Executive Subcommittee.

A. The Chair, or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair, shall conduct general membership meetings and attend Board of Directors meetings of the parent organization unless specific appointment of a representative to the Board of Directors by majority vote of the general membership is made.

B. The Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

C. The Secretary shall record attendance at all meetings, take the minutes of all meetings of the general membership and perform such other duties as reasonably directed by the Chair.

D. The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the accounting of all financial and fund-raising activities by the committee and reporting the same to the BYC Treasurer in accordance with the procedures and instructions of the Treasurer.

E. The Executive Subcommittee shall meet for the purpose of planning, establishing ad hoc or other subcommittees, and reporting to the general membership and to the BYC Board of Directors.

V. Terms and Elections: The officers of this committee shall serve for one year terms and shall be elected at a meeting of the general membership no sooner than May and no later than June 30th of each year. Any officer is eligible for reelection so long as he or she remains eligible for general membership of the committee during the term of service.

VI. Subcommittees: There shall be no limit on the number of ad hoc or subcommittees created or appointed by the Chair with the approval of the Executive Subcommittee.

VII. Fundraising Activities:

A. All fundraising activities undertaken in the name of the BYC or Parent Auxiliary Committee shall be subject to prior approval by the Board of Directors or the Executive Board if the Board of Directors is not scheduled to meet within thirty (30) days of submission of the written request for approval to the Executive Director.

B. Fundraising activities shall be undertaken for the purpose of providing project-specific financial aid and support to the members of the chorus as determined by written plan approved by majority vote of the committee’s general membership.

C. Funds raised by the committee shall be maintained in a depository established under the direction of the BYC Treasurer with the BYC Treasurer or BYC Executive Director listed as a required signatory in addition to the Financial Secretary. Checks shall be signed by any two of these three individuals.

D. Unexpended funds at the end of the academic year shall be retained in the established depository and carried over to the next academic year.

VIII. Voting: All votes taken at Executive Subcommittee and/or general membership meetings shall be by oral ballot or a show of hands unless written ballot is specifically requested by a simple majority of the membership present.

IX. Reports: Reports of committee activity shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director at least five days prior to each meeting of the Board of Directors.

Approved by parents, April 19, 1999
Amended and approved June 20, 2006
**BYC Handbook**

Parents on Duty – PODs

Questions and Answers

1. **What is a POD?** A POD is a Parent On Duty at a rehearsal, concert, auditions, or at other times requested.

2. **Who serves as PODs?** All parents.

3. **How often?** Generally, three or four times per year.

4. **Why PODs?** PODs provide additional security, attend to the needs of the singers and staff, assist with administrative tasks, and help maintain discipline. Serving as a POD also gives a parent the chance to be involved and to learn about BYC from the inside.

5. **How can I help best?** PODs should make it a point to call singers by name if possible. They should help create a friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

6. **Do you need to be a musician to be a POD?** Absolutely not! Music study is not a prerequisite.

7. **Will I be busy all the time?** There may be some “down time,” so you may bring work, a book, or whatever. But remember that you still are on duty to help as needed, and are kindly asked not to keep your head buried in reading or work.

8. **What if I can’t do it?** If you are unable to serve due to an emergency, you must contact Dail Richie to find a substitute. Please understand that the security PODs provide is very important.

9. **How will I know what to do?** Please read the instructions below before reporting for duty.

Parents on Duty – PODs – Instructions

1. **Time** – Please be on duty ½ hour before any rehearsal or concert call time. For example:
   - 6 PM for 6:30 PM Monday rehearsals for Training Chorus and Chorale
   - 2:30 PM for 3:00 PM Sunday rehearsals for MasterSingers rehearsals

2. **POD Assignments**: At least one POD stays with each choir at all times. If choirs separate, at least one POD must accompany each choir.
   - TP/CL = Table/Chorale POD  Take attendance; stay with Chorale
   - TC = Training Chorus POD  Stay with Training Chorus
   - MS = MasterSingers POD  Stay with MasterSingers

3. **Areas at GoggleWorks** for BYC (rehearsal locations subject to change)
   - Room 420 – TC, CL
   - Room 411 – TC
   - Room 506B – BYC office

4. **Medical Emergency**: Before providing care to a singer, check his/her medical release form in the Medical Forms notebook. For minor cuts, headaches, etc., use the First Aid kit in the white box. For urgent care, call 911 and then the singer’s parents.

5. **Tissues, Pencils, Music**: PODs are primarily responsible for tending to the needs of the singers during rehearsal time. PODs should discretely assist any singer who needs a pencil or tissue, or needs help with music. BYC provides boxes of tissues and sharpened pencils.

6. **Bathroom**: PODs must accompany singers in Training Chorus and Chorale to the bathroom. Singers must go to the bathroom with at least one other singer or two PODs. MasterSingers do not need to be accompanied. Singers may go the bathroom during rehearsal provided that the director approves it.
7. **Singer Discipline**: PODs are expected to observe the behavior of the singers and to assist the director in the enforcement of discipline. Because the director needs to be earnestly engaged in the rehearsal, he should not have to take time from the rehearsal to discipline a singer. The POD should take the lead in handling a discipline problem, if necessary.

8. **Clean Up**: After each rehearsal, all PODs and their children (and others, if possible) should return supplies and equipment used during the rehearsal to the BYC office or another area designated by the staff.

**Table PODs and MS PODs Responsibilities**

1. **Take attendance** using the following markings:
   - **E** – Absences communicated to staff by phone, email, or note prior to rehearsal
   - **L** – Late arrival (anytime 5 minutes after rehearsal begins)
   - **LE** – Leaving early
   - **A** – Absences that have not been communicated to staff

2. **Retrieve phone messages** from BYC voicemail to determine if any singer has a left message regarding attendance.

3. **Dial** 610-898-7664; press #; dial password 201529.

4. **Call singers**, once rehearsal has started, who are absent (“A”) to find out why they are not at rehearsal. If able to reach and an explanation is given, change “A” to “E”.

5. **Distribute materials** and perform other duties, as requested by staff, such as preparing mailings, accepting payments for tickets and notes for staff, etc. Other PODs assist Table POD as needed.

**Additional Table POD Responsibilities**

1. **Call parents** who will serve as PODs next week to remind them.

2. **Call GoggleWorks Front Desk** (610-374-4600), if rehearsal is at GoggleWorks, after rehearsal has started to report how many singers are in attendance in each rehearsal room.

**Additional Instructions for PODs at Performances**

1. **No Ticket Purchase for Most Performances**. PODs who serve during the concerts need to be available to assist the singers in case of an emergency and to assist the staff to assure a smooth performance. In most cases, but not all, they should not purchase tickets to the concerts. When appropriate and possible, seats will be reserved for PODs in a location in the house near the singers both on and off-stage. If PODs need to purchase tickets, the BYC staff will notify them as soon as possible.

2. **After Performance** all PODs should assist in packing up everything, including the Display Table items, in the appropriate suitcases and boxes and loading into a staff member’s vehicle before leaving. Please make sure all children are taken care of before you leave. If anyone is left without a ride, contact families or wait until he/she is picked up.
Singers’ Responsibilities and Rehearsal Expectations

Before your leave home:
1. Check to see that you have your music, notebook, workbook, 2 sharpened pencils, water bottle, and other items you may need for rehearsal.
2. If given a nametag, put it on so that it is visible on top of your rehearsal uniform.

Before the rehearsal:
1. Arrive at least 10 minutes early to register with PODs.
2. Members of Training Chorus and Chorale must be escorted by an adult to the check in table, and should wear name tag when checking in.
3. Go immediately to your seat.
4. Have a pencil out ready to use.
5. If you have any electronic devices, turn them off. You may not use them before or during the rehearsal, unless given permission by a staff member.

During the rehearsal:
1. Always give your absolute best to the music and to the director.
2. Practice the Golden Rule. Respect yourself, your fellow singers, your directors, and the music you all make together.
   a. Raise your hand if you need to speak.
   b. Allow one person to speak at a time.
   c. Listen to the person who is speaking.
3. Be alert and listening at all times.
4. Use proper singing posture when standing or sitting.
5. Remember the “feeling” you had during the warm up, and aim to experience that same feeling in the singing of the repertoire.
6. When the director is working with a section of the music where you are not singing, follow along and see how your part works with the others.
7. Use good self-control at all times – no unnecessary talking, no hitting, pushing, or shoving.
8. Know the allowable boundaries at a rehearsal or performance site.

After the rehearsal:
1. Leave the rehearsal room in an orderly manner.
2. Help clean up.
3. If a member of Training Chorus or Chorale, remain in the rehearsal space until a family member or designated family friend picks you up.
4. If a member of MasterSingers, you may leave by yourself, drive yourself, and/or ride with another singer.
Singers’ Performance Site Rehearsal and Concert Expectations

Before your leave home:
1. Get a good night’s sleep.
2. Eat a good meal.
3. Drink plenty of water.
4. **DO NOT** drink carbonated beverages.
5. Avoid dairy products less than six hours before the performance.
6. Refrain from wearing perfumes, colognes, or scented hair sprays.
7. Check to see that you have your:
   - Music notebook
   - Two sharpened pencils
   - Water bottle
   - Other items you may need for rehearsal
8. If given a nametag, put it on so that it is visible on top of your rehearsal uniform.

At the performance site:
1. Arrive at least 10 minutes early to register with PODs.
2. Arrive dressed in full concert attire, if a concert.
3. Find out where you need to be and go there immediately.
4. Behave professionally. Your performance begins the moment you get out of the car.
5. Know the allowable boundaries at a performance site.
6. **Do not take water bottle and snacks into the performance space.** Take only to a designated room where water and snacks are allowed.
7. All rehearsal expectations are in effect at the performance site.
8. If a member of Training Chorus or Chorale, remain in the performance space with other singers, PODs, or staff members until a family member or designated family friend picks you up.
9. If a member of MasterSingers, you may drive yourself or ride with another singer.
10. Have fun sharing your best quality effort with the Chorus.

Consequences for unacceptable behavior will result in the following:
1. Warning – Following a first offense, the singer might be given a warning.
2. Contacting parents – Following further disruption, the Executive Director will call parents to inform them of the infraction.
3. Termination as member – Further problems will result in termination of the singer as a member of BYC; tuition will not be returned.
CHILD WELFARE AND
ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

Berks Youth Chorus
201 Washington Street, Suite 506B
Reading, PA 19601

Adopted: September 10, 2015
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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE
This policy is established to specifically protect the children served by the Berks Youth Chorus (hereafter referred to as BYC) and its programs from child abuse and to provide guidance to facilitate compliance with Pennsylvania’s Child Protective Services Law, as it now exists and as it may be amended in the future (CPSL) by BYC. This policy is applicable to BYC employees, board members, volunteers, and contractors and is meant to apply and be followed at any BYC sponsored activity, event, or program. Except as expressly stated, this policy applies only to activities related to BYC. Anyone with specific questions concerning the CPSL should consult with an attorney.

Child abuse is damage to a child for which there is no reasonable explanation. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual molestation, emotional abuse, and child-on-child sexual abuse and “bullying.” It has become a critical national concern, as the reported incidents of both physical and sexual abuse is on the rise. A list of indicators for each of these types of abuse is provided in this policy to assist staff and volunteers in recognizing signs of child abuse.

DEFINITIONS

Child Any person under 18 years of age who is participating in, or attending any BYC sponsored activity, event, or program.

Employee A Person hired by BYC on a full, part time or seasonal employment basis

Contractor A Person who is engaged by BYC to provide services and/or goods under contract but is not an employee

Volunteer A Person who donates his/her time and/or expertise without compensation by BYC.

Direct Contact The direct and immediate care, supervision, guidance or control of children and routine interaction with children

Routine Interaction Regular and repeated contact that is integral to a person’s employment or volunteer responsibilities

STAFF AND VOLUNTEER RECRUITING
Reference checks on all prospective employees, contractors and volunteers will be conducted in accordance with legal requirements of CPSL, documented, and filed prior to employment or engagement in volunteer activities.

All required clearances must be obtained or, as applicable, renewed every 3 years (36 months). Clearances and certifications obtained by a person for employment and/or volunteer purposes with some other organization may be used for BYC, unless prohibited by law, if recent enough.
BACKGROUND CLEARANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Required Clearances and Certifications

Employees
All BYC employees require the following clearances to be obtained by the employee and maintained, at BYC expense, as a condition of employment:
   1. PA State Police Criminal History Report
   2. PA Department of Human Services Child Abuse History Certification
   3. FBI Criminal History Report

Contractors
All contractors who have direct contact and/or routine interaction with children in the course of their service to BYC must obtain, at their expense, the following clearances as required by CPSL before being allowed to work for BYC:
   1. PA State Police Criminal History Report
   2. PA Department of Human Services Child Abuse History Certification
   3. FBI Criminal History Report

Volunteers
Board members and volunteers, age 18 and older, who have direct contact and/or routine interaction with children in the course of their service to BYC must obtain the following clearances as required by CPSL before being allowed to volunteer:
   1. PA State Police Criminal History Report
   2. PA Department of Human Services Child Abuse History Certification
   3. FBI Criminal History Report OR completed Disclosure Statement Application for Volunteers (Appendix A)
Obtaining Clearances

PA State Police Criminal History Report
1. Go to https://epatch.state.pa.us/ and follow the instructions on the website.
2. Follow the instructions on the website
3. Print and save a copy of the clearance.
4. Clearance certification must be reviewed by BYC for verification of authenticity, and a copy made, initialed and dated by the Executive Director and the original given back to the individual.

PA Department of Human Services Child Abuse History Clearance
1. Go to Child Welfare Portal and follow the instructions on the website.
2. Print and save a copy of the clearance (A copy can be obtained through the mail also.)
3. Clearance certification must be reviewed by BYC for verification of authenticity, and a copy made, initialed and dated by the Executive Director and the original given back to the individual.

FBI Criminal History Report or Affidavit
1. Go to www.cogentid.com to find fingerprint locations.
   • Enter through the PA Dept. of Human Services option – not Department of Education.
   • Note: Check “What to Bring” page.
2. Complete FBI Fingerprinting services, which are available at these locations in Berks County:
   • Berks County Intermediate Unit (Walk-ins welcome although appointments are accepted), 1111 Commons Boulevard, Reading PA 19605; 610-987-8264; www.berksiu.org (for directions and/or to make an appointment).
   • Mail N Ship 4 U (Walk-ins welcome; no appointment necessary), 96 Commerce Drive, Wyomissing PA 19610; 610-376-3805.
   • Business Link Print Pack and Ship Center (Walk-ins welcome; no appointment necessary), 314 West Main Street, Kutztown, PA 19530; 610-682-9575.

   Clearance certification will be sent in the mail. Certificate must be reviewed by BYC for verification of authenticity, and a copy made, initialed and dated by the Executive Director and the original given back to the individual.

NOTE: The FBI Criminal History Report is not required for incumbent or prospective volunteers who have resided in Pennsylvania continuously for a period of 10 years prior to becoming a volunteer or applying for volunteer status and who sign a Disclosure Statement Application for Volunteers affidavit affirming that they have not committed certain crimes that otherwise would prohibit them from being a volunteer responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children.
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WELFARE OF CHILDREN

1. A child shall never be abused by an employee, volunteer, board member or contractor (hereafter collectively referred to as BYC Representatives). BYC has a zero tolerance policy and abuse of any kind may be cause for immediate termination or removal from their position. Abuse may include:
   a) Physical abuse – strike, spank, shake, slap;
   b) Verbal abuse – humiliate, degrade, threaten;
   c) Sexual abuse – inappropriate touch or verbal exchange;
   d) Mental abuse – shaming, withholding love, cruelty;
   e) Neglect – withholding food, water, basic care, etc.

2. While in the employ of, serving as a contractor to, or volunteering for BYC in connection with a BYC activity, BYC Representatives should whenever feasible avoid being alone with an individual child to whom they are not biologically or otherwise legally related. Whenever feasible, there should always be two adults in the presence of children and that both are clearly visible to the other at all times.

3. BYC Representatives should preferably conduct or supervise private activities in pairs. When this is not feasible, one BYC Representative must be able to be observed by another BYC Representative.

4. BYC Representatives shall never leave a child unsupervised in an inappropriate or risky situation.

5. Physical restraint is allowed only in emergency situations where it is necessary to protect a person or property from harm. Any restraint will only be administered in an appropriate manner and must be documented in writing as soon as possible.

6. Restroom supervision: An BYC Representative shall ensure the restroom is not occupied by unknown individuals prior to allowing children to use the facilities. BYC Representative will stand outside the door while children are using the restroom to provide for both the child’s privacy and the protection of BYC Representative (not being alone with a child).

7. BYC Representatives shall not release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian or other authorized adult. Except in emergencies, written authorization should be on file at BYC by the parent or guardian. Children shall only be released after BYC Representative has been presented with appropriate identification (such as a valid Driver’s License) or the adult picking up the child is personally known to BYC Representative to be authorized.

8. BYC Representatives will respect each child’s right to not be touched in ways that make a child feel uncomfortable, and the child’s right to say no.
INDICATORS FOR CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

**Neglect**

**Behavioral Indicators**
- Is truant or tardy to school often or arrives early and stays late
- Begs or steals food
- Attempts suicide
- Uses or abuses alcohol or other drugs
- Is extremely dependent or detached
- Engages in delinquent behavior, such as prostitution or stealing
- Appears to be exhausted
- States frequent or continual absence of parent or guardian

**Physical Indicators**
- Is frequently dirty, unwashed, hungry, or inappropriately dressed
- Engages in dangerous activities (possibly because he or she generally is unsupervised)
- Is tired and listless
- Has unattended physical problems
- May appear overworked or exploited
Physical Abuse

Behavioral Indicators

- Is wary of adults
- Is either extremely aggressive or withdrawn
- Is dependent and indiscriminate in his or her attachments.
- Is uncomfortable when other children cry
- Generally controls his or her own crying
- Exhibits a drastic behavior change when not with parents or caregiver
- Is manipulative
- Has poor self-concept
- Exhibits delinquent behavior, such as running away from home
- Uses or abuses alcohol or other drugs
- Is self-mutilating
- Is frightened of parents, going home
- Is overprotective of or responsible for parents
- Exhibits suicidal gestures or attempts suicide
- Has behavior problems at school

Physical Indicators

- Has unexplained * bruises or welts, often clustered or in a pattern
- Has unexplained * or unusual burns
- (cigarettes, doughnut shaped, immersion lines, object patterned)
- Has unexplained * bite marks
- Has unexplained * fractures or dislocations
- Has unexplained * abrasions or lacerations
- Wets the bed

(* or explanation is inconsistent or improbable)
Sexual Abuse

Behavioral Indicators

• Is reluctant to change clothes in front of others
• Is withdrawn
• Exhibits unusual sexual behavior or knowledge beyond what is common for his or her developmental stage
• Has poor peer relationships
• Either avoids or seeks out adults
• Is pseudo-mature
• Is manipulative
• Is self-conscious
• Has problems with authority and rules
• Exhibits eating disorders
• Is self-mutilating
• Is obsessively clean
• Uses or abuses alcohol or other drugs
• Exhibits delinquent behavior, such as running away from home
• Exhibits extreme compliance or defiance
• Is fearful or anxious
• Exhibits suicidal gestures or attempts suicide
• Is promiscuous
• Engages in fantasy or infantile behavior
• Is unwilling to participate in sports activities
• Has school difficulties

Physical Indicators

• Has pain or itching in the genital area
• Has bruises or bleeding in the genital area
• Has venereal disease
• Has swollen private parts
• Has difficulty walking or sitting
• Has torn, bloody, or stained underclothing
• Experiences pain when urinating
• Is pregnant
• Has vaginal or penile discharge
• Wets the bed
### Emotional Abuse

**Behavioral Indicators**
- Is overeager to please
- Seeks out adult contact
- Views abuse as being warranted
- Exhibits changes in behavior
- Is excessively anxious
- Is depressed
- Is unwilling to discuss problems
- Exhibits aggressive or bizarre behavior
- Is withdrawn
- Is apathetic
- Is passive
- Has unprovoked fits of yelling or screaming
- Exhibits inconsistent behavior at home and school
- Feels responsible for the abuser
- Runs away from home
- Attempts suicide
- Has low self-esteem
- Exhibits a gradual impairment of health or personality
- Has difficulty sustaining relationships
- Has unrealistic goal setting
- Is impatient
- Is unable to communicate or express his or her feelings, needs, or desires
- Sabotages his or her chances for success
- Lacks self-confidence
- Is self-deprecating and has a negative self-image

**Physical Indicators**
- Has a sleep disorder (nightmares or restlessness)
- Wets the bed
- Exhibits developmental lags (stunting his or her physical, emotional or mental growth)
- Is hyperactive
- Exhibits eating disorders
Family Characteristics

- Extreme paternal dominance, restrictiveness, or over-protectiveness
- Family isolated from community and support system
- Marked role reversal between mother and child
- History of sexual abuse for either parent
- Substance abuse by either parent or by children
- Other types of violence in the home
- Absent spouse (through chronic illness, depression, divorce, or separation)
- Severe overcrowding
- Complaints about a “seductive” child
- Extreme objection to implementation of child sexual abuse curriculum

TRAINING

All new and existing staff and volunteers who may be expected to have routine contact with children in the course of their BYC activities must participate in an orientation program including written materials explaining BYC policies, procedures and regulations. New and existing staff will be made aware of legal requirements and by their signature acknowledge having received appropriate policies, standards and code of conduct.

Staff and volunteers working directly with children will attend required training and be provided information regularly about the signs of possible child abuse. Staff and volunteer training will include approved procedures for responding to the suspicion of abuse.
REPORTING OF ABUSE

A child shall never be abused by an employee, volunteer, board member or contractor (hereafter collectively referred to as BYC Representatives). BYC has a zero tolerance policy and abuse of any kind may be cause for immediate termination or removal from their position. [See Code of Conduct, no. 1]

Any BYC Representative shall make a report whenever he or she has reasonable cause to suspect a child is a victim of abuse. See Indicators for Child Abuse and Neglect section for reference. This applies regardless whether the law determines BYC Representative to be a mandated or permissive reporter.

Instances when a report must be made include situations where BYC Representative:

- Comes into contact with a child that BYC Representative suspects has been abused.
- Is the recipient of a specific and apparently reliable disclosure from another person that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse.
- Is the recipient of specific disclosure from an individual 14 years of age or older that he/she has committed child abuse.

To make the report:

1. Immediately call Childline at 800-932-0313 to make the required report. The individual with specific, reasonable cause to suspect abuse must personally make the report; they can no longer rely on someone else to make the report.

2. In addition, a written report on CY-47 Form must be made to the county Children and Youth Agency within 48 hours of the oral report to Childline.

The law provides protection from civil liability for good-faith reporting of suspected child abuse. However, be cautious of making any public statements about the report, as this may give rise to a defamation claim.

In the event the reported incident involves an employed BYC staff person, contractor or volunteer, the responsible BYC Executive shall, without exception, suspend the person from all activities involving the supervision of children. Reassignment to administrative functions may be appropriate. Suspension of employed staff will be with pay until the person is cleared or allegations are proven. In these cases the parent of the affected child will always be notified by BYC Executive Director.

Regardless of where or under what circumstances the alleged incident takes place, on duty or off, if a staff person is involved in the abuse, it will be considered as job related and affecting job performance.

Reinstatement of staff person or program volunteer will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of BYC Executive Director and/or the investigating agency.

All staff and volunteers will be sensitive to the need for confidentiality in the handling of information in this area and will be instructed to discuss matters pertaining to abuse or suspected abuse only with BYC Executive Director.

Staff and volunteers may not contact children or parents involved in an alleged child abuse incident without the permission of BYC Executive Director.
APPENDIX A – DISCLOSURE STATEMENT APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Required by the Child Protective Service Law
23 Pa.C.S. Section 6344.2 (relating to volunteers having contact with children)

I swear/affirm that I am seeking a volunteer position and □ AM □ AM NOT required to obtain a clearance through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as:
- the position I am applying for is unpaid; and
- I have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the most recent ten (10) year period.

I swear/affirm that I have not been named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years as defined by the Child Protective Services Law.

I swear/affirm that I have not been convicted of any of the following crimes under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania consolidated statues or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)
- Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses)
- Section 5903(c) (d) (relating to obscene & other sexual material & performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children); or

An equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state.

I have not been convicted of a felony offense under Act 64-1972 (relating to the controlled substance, drug device and cosmetic act) committed within the past five years.
I understand that I shall not be approved for service if I am named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years or have been convicted of any of the crimes listed above or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

I understand that if I am arrested for or convicted of an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law as listed above, or am named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, I must provide the administrator or designee with written notice not later than 72 hours after the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator in the Statewide database.

I understand that if the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service has a reasonable belief that I was arrested or convicted for an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law, or was named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or I have provided notice as required under this section, the person responsible for employment decisions or administrator of a program, activity or service shall immediately require me to submit current clearances obtained through the Department of Human Services, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as appropriate. The cost of clearances shall be borne by the employing entity or program, activity or service.

I understand that if I willfully fail to disclose information required above, I commit a misdemeanor of the third degree and shall be subject to discipline up to and including denial of a volunteer position.

I understand that the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service is required to maintain a copy of my clearances.

I hereby swear/affirm that the information as set forth above is true and correct. I understand that false swearing is a misdemeanor pursuant to Section 4903 of the Crimes Code.

Name: __________________________ Signature: __________________________

Witness: ______________________ Signature: __________________________

Date: __________________________
APPENDIX B - REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE
(CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE LAW - TITLE 23 PA CSA CHAPTER 63)

PLEASE REFER TO INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE SIDE. EXCEPT FOR SIGNATURE, PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. NAME OF CHILD (Last, First, Initial)</th>
<th>SSN</th>
<th>BIRTHDATE</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS (State, City, State &amp; ZIP Code)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

1A. PRESENT LOCATION IF DIFFERENT THAN ABOVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. BIOLOGICAL/ADOPTIVE MOTHER (Last, First, Initial)</th>
<th>SSN</th>
<th>BIRTHDATE</th>
<th>TELEPHONE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS (City, State &amp; ZIP Code)</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. BIOLOGICAL/ADOPTIVE FATHER (Last, First, Initial)</th>
<th>SSN</th>
<th>BIRTHDATE</th>
<th>TELEPHONE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS (City, State &amp; ZIP Code)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD</th>
<th>SSN</th>
<th>BIRTHDATE</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD</th>
<th>SEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS (City, State &amp; ZIP Code)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. ALLEGED PERPETRATOR (Last, First, Initial)</th>
<th>SSN</th>
<th>BIRTHDATE</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD</th>
<th>SEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS (City, State &amp; ZIP Code)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NAME OF ALLEGED PERPETRATOR'S EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. FAMILY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (Excluding Above Names)</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD</th>
<th>NAME (Last, First, Initial)</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>D.</td>
<td>E.</td>
<td>F.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADDRESS WHERE THE SUSPECTED ABUSE OCCURRED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. DESCRIPTION OF SUSPECTED ABUSE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

DESCRIBE THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE, INCLUDING ANY EVIDENCE OF PRIOR ABUSE TO THE CHILD OR ANY SIBLING OF THE CHILD, ALSO INCLUDE ANY EVIDENCE OF PRIOR ABUSE BY THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR(S) TO OTHER CHILDREN. PLEASE NOTE EXACT LOCATION OF THE INJURY(S) ON MODEL BELOW.

DATE OF INCIDENT

| CY 47 | 12/14 |
### 7. Actions Taken or About to Be Taken by the Person Making the Report:

- [ ] Notification of Coroner or Medical Examiner
- [ ] X-Rays
- [ ] Photographs
- [ ] Hospitalization
- [ ] Police Notified
- [ ] Medical Test(s)
- [ ] Taken into Protective Custody
- [ ] Other (Specify)

### B. Safety Concerns and Risk Factors:

A. Describe the children's physical and behavioral health, good mood and temperament. Describe children's intellectual functioning, communication and social skills, school performance, and peer relations. Include whether the child(ren) has expressed any suicidal, homicidal ideation or plans.

- [ ] Information Unknown

B. Describe how the adult caregivers function cognitively, emotionally, behaviorally, physically and socially. Include whether the adult(s) have any mental health, substance use, or criminal history. Document any past or present domestic violence. Record the employment status, source of income, and whether there are any financial stresses in the home. Include any safety or sanitary concerns regarding the conditions of the home and whether there are working utilities. What is the primary language of the household?

- [ ] Information Unknown

C. Describe whether the caregivers have the appropriate knowledge, expectations, and skills to parent the children? Are the caregivers adequately supervising the children? Are they willing and able to protect the children? Describe the ability of the caregiver to empathize, nurture, and advocate for the children.

- [ ] Information Unknown

D. Describe the caregivers' approach/method of disciplining the children. Describe when discipline occurred and whether disciplinary methods are age appropriate? Are there any cultural practices in the home that would influence the disciplinary methods used?

- [ ] Information Unknown

E. Please provide any additional information relevant to the investigation process that has not already been entered in this referral. This may include additional addresses to locate the child or perpetrator. Additional resources for the child, email addresses, information about any weapons in the home or concerning you may have for the caseworker's safety.

- [ ] Information Unknown

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**INSTRUCTIONS TO MANDATED PERSONS:**

A mandated reporter making an oral report of suspected child abuse to the department via the Statewide toll-free telephone number (800-832-0313) must also make a written report, which may be submitted electronically, within 48 hours to the department or county agency assigned to the case by using this form. If needed, attach additional sheet(s) of paper to provide all of the requested information on this form.

**NOTE:**

If the child has been taken into custody, you must immediately contact the county children and youth agency where the abuse occurred.

### Reporting Source:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE:</th>
<th>DATE OF REPORT:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE OR RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:</td>
<td>FACILITY OR ORGANIZATION:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TELEPHONE NUMBER:</td>
<td>EMAIL ADDRESS:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CY 47 12/14
I have received a copy of BYC Child Abuse Identification and Prevention Policy, including its Code of Conduct for Welfare of Children. I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions I might have on BYC policies and procedures, and advised to seek the advice of an attorney for any specific questions I have regarding Pennsylvania’s Child Protective Services Law. I understand and acknowledge that I am responsible to follow all of the policies and procedures described therein.

Name:________________________________________ Signature:________________________________________

Date: ________________________________