

# Family Connections at the YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester

*A Comprehensive Overview for Stakeholders*

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## Introduction

The YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester proudly operates **Family Connections**, a portfolio of essential programs designed to support families navigating the judicial system. This includes our **Safe Exchange/Supervised Visitation (SESV)** and **Children's Centers**, which together provide safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environments for children and families involved in family court proceedings.

As the **sole nonprofit operator of all Children's Centers in Westchester County**—including **White Plains, Yonkers, and New Rochelle Courthouses**—and approved affiliate of the **National Supervised Visitation Network (SVN)**, the YWCA WPCW stands at the forefront of trauma-informed, family-centered service delivery across the county. These programs align directly with the YWCA's mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

## Program Overview

### Safe Exchange and Supervised Visitation (SESV)

The **Safe Exchange and Supervised Visitation (SESV)** program serves families with active court orders authorizing supervised visitation or monitored exchanges. Operating at our Family Court sites, SESV ensures that children can maintain meaningful relationships with both parents in a safe, neutral, and structured environment.

**Annual Reach:** Up to **80 families** served through court-ordered visitation and exchanges.

#### **Program Structure:**

- Visits and exchanges are court-referred and judge-monitored.
- Staff maintain timely reporting to judges and law guardians to support judicial decision-making.
- Visits occur in a safe, neutral environment to minimize trauma and risk of conflict.

#### **National Affiliation:**

The YWCA WPCW is an active member of the **National Supervised Visitation Network (SVN)**—a leading professional association dedicated to advancing safe parent-child contact in situations involving domestic violence, child abuse, or family conflict.

Through SVN, our staff receive:

- Ongoing professional development in trauma-informed and evidence-based practices.
- Access to national standards for safety, documentation, and family engagement.
- Technical assistance and peer learning opportunities with agencies nationwide.

This affiliation reinforces our commitment to service excellence, professional ethics, and family healing within complex legal and emotional circumstances.

## Children's Centers

The **Children's Centers** located in **White Plains, Yonkers, and New Rochelle Family Courts** serve as drop-in childhood spaces for children whose parents or guardians are attending court proceedings. This free service removes barriers for caregivers while providing a nurturing, enriching environment for children.

### Scope and Reach:

- Serving **450+ families per month** across the three sites.
- Ages served: **6 weeks through 12 years**.
- Operated in partnership with the **New York State Unified Court System (OCA)**, under the **Children's Centers Program**, a statewide initiative ensuring that parents have a safe place for their children while engaging with the court system.

### Intention of the Model:

The OCA Children's Centers model is intentionally designed to:

- Provide developmentally appropriate care while parents address legal matters.
- Reduce stress and anxiety for children exposed to the court environment.
- Enhance family access to justice by eliminating childcare as a barrier.
- Connect families to community resources and referrals, promoting long-term stability.

As the sole nonprofit provider of these centers in Westchester County, the YWCA WPCW fulfills a critical gap in the system, offering consistency, quality, and compassion at a moment when families need it most.

### Program Quality and Standards:

- All staff are trained in **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** best practices.
- Child-centered curriculum encourages play-based learning, social-emotional development, and literacy.
- Staff uphold the YWCA's safety protocols, background checks, and mandated reporting requirements consistent with state regulations.

### Impact Highlights

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Program	Families Served	Key Outcomes
Safe Exchange / Supervised Visitation (SESV)	~80 families annually	Safe, neutral, and structured parent-child contact; trauma-informed staff interventions; consistent, timely judicial reporting
Children's Centers (3 locations)	450+ families monthly (5,000+ annually)	Reduced parental stress during court proceedings; high-quality early childhood engagement; resource referrals and family support

### Additional Highlights:

- **Staff trained** in trauma-informed and de-escalation techniques.
- **100% of SESV visits documented and reported** to Family Court in compliance with state requirements.
- **Children's Centers** provide over **12,000 hours of care annually**, reducing barriers for parents navigating custody, support, and domestic violence cases.