**For Immediate Release**

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**YWCA Tri-County Area Early Education Center Awarded Gold Level as**

**Pennsylvania’s Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion**

YWCA Tri-County Area Early Education Center has been awarded the Gold level as a Pennsylvania’s Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion. More than 50 submissions were received as part of the 2022 recognition of the work being done around equity in early childhood education programs across the state.

“We are thrilled to be selected as a 2022 Pennsylvania’s Equity in Early Education Champion Award,” said Kathleen Seeley, Senior Early Education Director. “Our mission is to eliminate racism, empower woman and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. Our community, like so many across the country, has been impacted by poverty, violence, homelessness, social injustice, and food insecurity. Children and families, struggling with the concerns related to these environmental inequities, need non-judgmental, loving adults surrounding them with love and respect.”

The award, issued by the state’s Office of Child Development and Early Learning, recognizes the equity work being done within Pennsylvania’s early childhood education and after-school settings.

“Conscious Discipline, our social-emotional curriculum, provides the self-regulation resources for teacher to maintain their composure in daily situations resulting from a child’s lack of a felt sense of safety. Every day, this work begins anew and provides numerous celebrations as we witness children using these strategies to face insurmountable obstacles,” Seeley said.

YW early education teachers participate in frequent professional development, giving teachers learning opportunities to understand equity issues in the classroom. Staff participates in trainings for trauma-informed and trauma-responsive care, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and anti-bias, and uses a variety of curricula to promote equity.

The mission of YWCA Tri-County Area is to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. The Early Education Center provides comprehensive, age-appropriate early childhood education for infants and toddlers and preschoolers, including Pre-K Counts, and offers after-school programming for children in grades K-6.

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