



February 2026

Dear Friend of Children,

In conjunction with the National Month of the Young Child, which is celebrated each April, programs serving young children in Frederick County are cordially invited to participate in the **36th Annual Children's Festival** to be held **Saturday, April 25, 2026**, from 10 am to 3 pm, in Baker Park – downtown Frederick. The Festival provides a day of free, hands-on activities for children and families. Since attendance at the festival is typically around 3,000 individuals, participation is an excellent opportunity to present your program or service to a large group of parents.

Early childhood programs and groups serving children are the focus of the Children's Festival. There is no charge for your group to participate ***if you register before April 2nd***. However, **participation requires a program booth that makes available a free, hands-on activity for children and is open and staffed from 10 to 3pm**. During the festival we will focus on school readiness and the role played by parents and the early childhood community in preparing children to enter school ready to learn.

Activities should be hands-on, creative (no coloring sheets) and non-competitive. Inexpensive, homemade, or recyclable materials are suggested. Activities do not need to generate a product— young children enjoy participating in an activity just for the fun of it. Participants should be prepared to serve approximately 1,000 children, ages 2 to 8 years. The committee welcomes activity booths from all types of organizations, and asks that organizations respect the different beliefs and values of the families in our community. The committee reserves the right to deny application to activities deemed unsafe or inappropriate in any manner. Please refer to the Participant Guidelines on the back of this letter for further information.

If you would like to participate this year, please complete and return the enclosed registration form. If you participated last year and wish to repeat an activity, you will be given preference for that choice, or you may consider alternate activities.

You can rent a table and chair package for your booth—or, you may bring your own. The cost to rent tables is \$25.00 for a table and two chairs. Tables and chairs **must** be reserved on the registration form. Payment for tables and chairs should accompany the registration form.

All registration forms and payments are due by April 10, 2026. We will provide notification of assigned booth activities prior to the festival. **All correspondence will be by email if you provide an email address.** Enclosed you will find both English and Spanish posters that can be used as advertisement for the festival.

If you have any questions, need further information, or would like to participate on the Children's Festival committee, please contact me. Thank you for supporting the children and families of Frederick County!

Sincerely,

Children's Festival
Committee

Children's Festival Committee

226 South Jefferson Street

Frederick, MD 21701

Phone: 301.662.4549

Fax: 301.695.4826

Email: childrensfestival@fcmha.org



Children's Festival 2026 Participant Guidelines

Eligibility: Any entity providing services to children or families in Frederick County is eligible to participate. All booths **must involve children in a "hands-on," age-appropriate activity or entertainment at no cost** to the participants. You may have a display sign and/or distribute literature about your organization, but the **focus of the festival is on non-commercial activities for young children.**

The Children's Festival Committee determines eligibility for exhibits and activities and **may request removal of any exhibit or activity that is not following these guidelines.**

Activity Guidelines: Participants should set up activities in a manner that allows children and adults to remain together. Children **must not** be separated from their parents.

Please remember that activity booths need to be prepared to serve approximately 1,000 children, ages 2 to 8 years. Activities should be **hands-on and age appropriate**. **No balloons or shredded paper** are allowed. The Organizer may contact you to select an alternate choice at the Committee's discretion. The committee reserves the right to deny application to activities deemed unsafe or inappropriate in any manner.

In the event of inclement weather, the Festival will be held in the gym of the Wm. Talley Recreation Center. Participants will be limited to the space assigned by the committee. The Committee will ask participants to find an alternate activity or provide additional supplies that would make the activity appropriate for the gym.

Exhibit Space and Assignment: The committee designates exhibit space on a first-come, first-served basis. Assignments are made upon receipt of application and payment (if applicable). Special requests will be considered, **but are not guaranteed.**

Exhibit space is approximately 15' x 15'. If the Festival is held inside due to weather conditions, the Committee will determine allotted participant space. Please take this into consideration when planning your activity. Displays must fit within the space allowed, and be child safe. **Displays may not include items that present a safety hazard to young children.**

Participants may rent tables from the Festival Committee. We will not reserve tables until payment is received.

Exhibit Set-up and Removal: Set-up for exhibits will take place on Saturday morning anytime after 8:30 a.m. No parking is available for exhibitor unloading after 9:30 a.m. This allows us to have space for the fire trucks, bookmobiles, etc. **The City regulates access to the park by vehicle and has severely limited the number of vehicles allowed. Volunteers will be available curbside to help exhibitors unload and load.**

A company representative must be at the exhibit during Festival hours. Responsibility for the dismantling of exhibits and activities rests solely with the exhibitor. All contents not removed from an unoccupied exhibit by 4:00 p.m. on Saturday will be discarded.

Electrical: Due to the location of this event, no electrical outlets are available.

Cancellation: Please inform the Children's Festival Committee of cancellations no later than 48 hours before the event. **Refunds will not be given on rental tables or late registration fees.**

Giveaways: All giveaways (excluding program literature) must be submitted on your original application and approved by the Children's Festival Committee. **Due to safety concerns, no food, gum, balloons, or candy, will be permitted.**



Children's Festival Activity Booth Registration Form

Contact Name: _____

Organization Name: (as it will appear in program) _____

Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Daytime Phone: _____ Email: _____
All confirmation correspondence will be sent by email if you provide your address.

Registration

- ☐ Early Bird Registration (*must be postmarked on or before April 3, 2026*)—**FREE**
- ☐ Late Registration (*postmarked or received after April 3, 2026*)—**\$25**

Activity Name: (as it will appear in program) _____

Activity Description: (Please provide as much detail as possible.) _____

Giveaways: Please indicate any giveaway you are planning other than program literature. Committee pre-approval is required. **No food or balloons allowed.** Providing giveaways is **not** a requirement.

Inside Activity (in the event of rain and limited to the first 60): ☐ I **will** attend ☐ I **will not** attend

Activity Tables: Please note—if the event is held indoors due to inclement weather, you may be limited to **one** table due to space limitations. There will be **no refunds** on tables.

- ☐ We would like to rent _____ **adult sized** table and chair package(s) at \$25 each. Each package includes a table (8'L x 30"W) and two chairs.
- ☐ We would like to rent _____ **child size** table and chair package(s) at \$25 each. Each package includes a child size table (6'L x 30"W x 22"H) and two **child** size chairs.
- ☐ We would like to rent _____ additional **adult sized** chairs at \$5 each.
- ☐ We would like to rent _____ additional **child sized** chairs at \$3 each.
- ☐ We will be bringing _____ tables.

Outdoor booth size is approximately 12' x 12'. If you need more space, please let us know your space requirements below. We will make every effort to accommodate your request.

More on next page

Children's Festival 2026 Registration Continued

Contributions—We would like to **contribute** the following to support Frederick's premier children's event and keep it **FREE** for children and families in the area.

Financial Donation Levels:

_____ Children's Champion	\$1,000+	_____ Benefactor	\$600 - \$999
_____ Patron	\$200 - \$599	_____ Supporter	\$150 - \$199
_____ Contributor	\$100 - \$149	_____ Friend	\$50 - \$99

In-kind Donation:

_____ printing/purchase of school readiness materials selected by the committee for distribution to families

_____ copying of Festival program

_____ volunteers to work the day of the Festival in positions assigned by the committee

_____ other (please specify) _____

Payment Information

Method: _____ Check -(enclosed) payable to MHA _____ Credit Card (Visa or MC only. Complete info below).

Payment Amount: Activity Booth Total \$ _____

Contribution Total \$ _____

Total Amount of Payment \$ _____

Cardholder Name _____

Billing Address _____

Card Number _____ - _____ - _____

Exp. Date ____/____ Card Identification Number ____ (Last 3 digits on back of card)

Signature _____

The Children's Festival Committee, the Mental Health Association of Frederick County/Child Care Choices and the hosting facility shall not be responsible for any loss, damage, or injury that may occur to exhibitor's employees or property from any cause whatsoever, prior, during or subsequent to the period covered by the exhibit application. The exhibitor, in signing this Registration Form, expressly releases the Children's Festival Committee and/or the hosting facility from, and agrees to indemnify same, against any and all claims for such loss, damages, or injury.

By submitting this application a program's representatives agree to follow the guidelines set forth in the Participant Guidelines, and understand that failure to comply can lead to exclusion from the Children's Festival.

Authorized Signature

Date

Please return this form and any applicable payment to
Child Care Choices, Mental Health Association of Frederick County
Tax ID #52-0968521
226 South Jefferson Street, Frederick, MD 21701
Fax: 301-695-4826 Email: childrensfestival@fcmha.org



36th Annual Children's Festival

This year we have made arrangements with ***The Renaissance Chef***, a local catering business, to provide a bag lunch which will be delivered to Baker Park at noon. This will allow you to pre-order a lunch which we will deliver to your booth, thereby avoiding the long lines at the food vendors.

The cost for the box lunch which includes a sandwich, fruit, chips, and a cookie will be **\$10.00**. No substitutions or changes available for the contents **of the lunch. If you do not receive confirmation, please contact us immediately.**

If you wish to order a box lunch, please complete the form below and return it **with payment by Monday, April 6th.**

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Organization _____

Box Lunch	Number	Cost
Roast Beef & cheese w/lettuce and tomato		\$
Turkey & cheese w/lettuce and tomato		\$
Ham & cheese w/lettuce and tomato		\$
Vegetarian		\$
Total		\$

Payment By: _____ Check payable to MHA (enclosed)
 _____ Credit Card (Visa or Master Card only)

Cardholder Name _____

Cardholder Billing Address _____

Card Number _____ - _____ - _____

Exp. Date ____/____ Card Identification Number _____ (Last 3 digits on back of card)

Signature _____
 (Credit Card statements will indicate Frederick County Mental Health as the merchant.)