

Cultural Access Program

Early Childcare Center Enrollment Guide & FAQs

Eligibility & Application Process

How do I know if my center is eligible to participate in the program?

To be eligible, your center should offer one of the following programs:

- A Center-based Early Head Start, Head Start, Child Care, 3K or UPK Program
- A Home-based Early Head Start Program, a Family Child Care Program
- A Home Visiting Program

Additionally, your center should have at least:

- 60% of families pay tuition of less than \$700 per month, or
- Program fees for families are fully subsidized (program services is free of charge for families)

What is a Cultural Liaison, and how do I choose one?

The Cultural Liaison is integral in supporting Family Pass usage, serving as the primary contact between your center and Cool Culture.

Each center must identify a staff member to serve as their Cultural Liaison. They must be responsive to email correspondence, manage the administrative details of the enrollment and payment process, keep their colleagues and families at the center informed about Cool Culture happenings, and work with Cool Culture staff to troubleshoot any issues that may arise.

Choose someone who enjoys the arts and cultural events and wants to support your school and its families in increasing engagement with culturally enriching experiences. Ideally, they are in good standing within the community and have a positive relationship with both the children and their adult caregivers at your school. This leadership role also calls for someone who will enjoy leading family creative workshops and act as a voice for the community by conveying their needs, interests, and concerns.

Our Mission

To amplify the voices of families and strengthen the power of historically marginalized communities through engagement with art and culture, both within cultural institutions and beyond. Learn more at coolculture.org.

Have Questions?

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What are the specific responsibilities of a Cultural Liaison?

- Attending *Curators for Educators* professional development workshops.
- Coordinating registration and distribution of Family Passes
- Orienting families and school staff to the program, Family Pass guidelines, the benefits of learning through the arts and family visits to museums
- Conducting workshops for adult caregivers throughout the year
- Working with your respective center to support family learning through the arts, motivate families to visit museums and actively recommend places they can visit in person & online
- Promoting and distributing Cool Culture's family resources directly to adult caregivers. We've made distribution easy by designing emails, newsletters, text messages, and flyers that you can forward electronically and use to transform physical spaces within the school building to encourage use of the arts to support family learning and wellbeing.

Is there a fee for the Cultural Access Program?

The fee for the CityWide Cultural Access Program 2024-25 school year is based on the number of children in your center program.

Enrollment Capacity	2024-2025 Fee
1-124 Children	\$900
125-300 Children	\$1,300
301-500 Children	\$3,500
501- 1000 Children	\$4,000
1001+ Children	*Please Inquire with staff

Can you walk me through the application process?

1. Select a staff member to be your center's Cultural Liaison for your school (see above).
2. Look out for an email notification approximately two weeks after you apply to learn if your school is eligible and has been accepted.
3. After receiving enrollment confirmation, electronically sign the partnership agreement.
4. Submit the program fee.

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About Cool Culture Programs

Enrolling with Cool Culture will connect families to experience nearly 90 museums, zoos, and botanical gardens for free. Your center's educators will explore art and social justice based pedagogy during our seminars and dialogues.

- **Free General Admission to Museums**

- All enrolled families and center staff receive a personalized Family Pass. The Pass provides free, general admission for up to 5 people at [90 partner museums, gardens, historical societies, science centers and zoos](#) for one year. **Passes may not be used for group or field trips.**

- **Family Guide & Online Museum Database**

- Our multilingual [Family Guide](#) will get you inspired and ready to visit museums, with such features as *How to Use the Family Pass* and *Family Spotlights*. Updates will be made quarterly as we continue to identify great resources for families.
- Our database provides an easy-to-use resource for families to stay informed of updated museum openings and policies.

- **Bring the Cool Family Festivals**

- A series of family festivals are hosted around the city in partnership with museums, gardens and zoos.

- **Curators for Educators: Seminars & Dialogues**

- A series of workshops and dialogues help enhance Family Pass usage, design art-making experiences and nurture civic engagement.
- SEMINARS orient educators to the Family Pass and our network museums; offer family engagement strategies; connect them to other educators across the city to exchange ideas; and introduces them to our **We are All Curators** (a framework for harnessing the arts and cultural through non-hierarchical, anti-racist, asset-based approaches to help promote child and family wellbeing).
- DIALOGUES feature a diverse mix of panelists and are framed around salient current issues that ignite new thinking and practices for the holistic wellbeing of ourselves, our families and our communities

- **Enhanced Resources**

- Throughout the year we distribute toolkits with “Do It Yourself” activities, resources, and other information useful to families and educators. We are also updating our website to be a fully interactive platform. The platform will help you learn about activities taking place in museums, gardens, and zoos; help connect families through online forums; and offer downloadable resources (including toolkits and videos) to enhance your teaching and family engagement practices.

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Family Pass Registration FAQs

How do I register families in our center for the Family Pass?

After the enrollment application materials are processed, Cool Culture will send notifications to your school of their acceptance into the program.

1. Once enrolled, all Cultural Liaisons will receive a link to an online orientation to guide them through the family and staff registration process.
2. Once the orientation is complete, family registration materials will be forwarded to the Cultural Liaison.
3. The registration form is a quick online form where families can register using a phone, laptop, or computer. We will provide you with as much assistance and tools needed to get families to register quickly.
4. Many of our veteran Cultural Liaisons have created exciting ways to register families easily.

PLEASE NOTE: Families will be asked for demographic and contact information for each registrant and information about language access needs. If you are registering on behalf of someone else, please make sure you have accurate information available.

Is the Registration form in multiple languages?

Yes, the Registration Form is in English, Spanish and Chinese.

When does family registration open?

Family registration opens on **September 9th**, and there will be two other opportunities to register families during the year. Please check the [website](#) for more details.

Are center staff eligible to receive the Cool Culture Family Pass?

Yes, all center staff are eligible to receive family passes.

What are the Cool Culture Family Pass guidelines?

Family Pass guidelines were established in partnership with participating museums. We ask that each enrolled center help us ensure families and staff adhere to the Family Pass guidelines. This allows us to ensure strong relationships with our partners and to secure their participation in the CityWide Cultural Access Program for years to come.

- Passes give each registered family free general admission for up to 5 people to our 90 cultural institution partners - others should be prepared to pay for admission.

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- **Each family will receive ONE Family Pass**, personalized with their last name. The pass is not transferable. Family Passes are not intended for group or class trips. Up to 3 families can enter a museum with their Passes at one time.
- Family Passes do not provide free admission to special events or exhibitions that have an additional fee.
- Museum, garden and zoo staff may ask for a personal ID to ensure the last name of the parent matches the last name printed on their Family Pass.

Can we take field trips using our Cool Culture Family Passes?

No. Passes are for use by families. No more than 3 families can enter a museum together at the same time. Cultural institutions view larger groups as they would a class trip, which is not covered by the Cool Culture Family Pass and requires separate arrangements with the museum's group services department.

Which museums, gardens, and zoos partner with Cool Culture?

To name a few, our Family Pass provides free admission to the American Museum of Natural History, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Museum, Bronx Museum of Arts, Children's Museum of Manhattan, El Museo del Barrio, Museum of Chinese in America, New York Hall of Science, Staten Island Zoo and more!...

To view the full list of our 90 museum, garden and zoo partners, [click here](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

Cool Culture is aligned with National, State and Local Learning Standards

- The Citywide Cultural Access Program is aligned with DOE Early Learn requirements for community partnerships and family engagement, NYS Pre-K Foundation for the Common Core in social-emotional development, approaches to learning, and literacy, and Blueprint for the Arts.
- Further, our programs, pedagogical frameworks, and practices are rooted in our social justice values and situates families at the center of our work.

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Timeline

School/Center Enrollment: Your school or child care center enrolls with Cool Culture by November 22nd, 2024.

Family Registration: Families at enrolled schools and centers will be able to register for the Family Pass from September 9, 2024 to January 31, 2025.

Family Pass: Family Passes are distributed to your school or center from the end of October through February, depending on when you filled out the registration form. The pass is valid at nearly 90 cultural partners through October 31, 2025.

2024

July 31st 2024 – November 2024	Centers and Schools apply to enroll with Cool Culture
September 9	Family Registration Opens The family Registration Period is on a rolling basis and passes are printed based on application submission date. <i>Each Family must complete the Family Registration Form in order to receive a family pass. Each pass is printed and customized based on the information received on the Family Registration Form.</i>
September 9 – October 4	1st Round of Family Registration at Your Center or School (ONLY centers and schools enrolled by August 31 can sign up families; Family Passes will be distributed by late October)
Late October	Family Passes are distributed to your center or school from the 1st Registration Round <i>Family Passes from the 1st Registration round are printed and distributed to partners through mailing. Only applications submitted and approved between Sept 9th - Oct 4th will be distributed.</i>
October 5 -	2nd Round of Family Registration

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November 4	(All enrolled centers and schools can sign up families; Family Passes will be distributed in Late November)
Late November	Family Passes are distributed to your center or school from the 2nd Registration Round <i>Family Passes from the 2nd Registration round are printed and distributed to partners through mailing. Only applications submitted and approved between Oct 5th - Nov 4th will be distributed.</i>
November 5 – January 3	3rd Round of Family Registration (All enrolled centers and schools can sign up their families; Family Passes will be distributed in Late January)

2025

Late January	Family Passes are distributed to your center or school from the 3rd Registration Round <i>Family Passes from the 3rd Registration round are printed and distributed to partners through mailing. Only applications submitted and approved between Nov 5th - Jan 3rd will be distributed.</i>
January 4 - 31	4th (FINAL) Round of Family Registration (All enrolled centers and schools can sign up their families; Family Passes will be distributed in Late February)
Late February	Family Passes are distributed to your center or school from the 4th Registration Round <i>Family Passes from the 4th and FINAL Registration round are printed and distributed to partners through mailing. Only applications submitted and approved between Jan 4th - Jan 31st will be distributed.</i>
June 2025	Early enrollment for centers and schools open to secure their place in the next academic year
October 31, 2025	Current Family Passes expire

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