

CHILDREN & YOUTH

In nearly every North American city, the prime drivers of the downtown housing market have been young professionals and empty nesters. A 2006 CCD survey of 3,000 Center City households confirmed that 40% were ages 25–34, while 22% were over 55, percentages that mirrored the 2000 Census. But among the 27% of downtown residents who were between ages 35 and 54, 22% responded that they had school-age children living at home.

Center City's walkability, the intimate scale of many of its residential communities, its diversity and cosmopolitan lifestyle with proximity to art schools, museums and other cultural institutions has become increasingly attractive to young families raising children. On average, since 2000, nearly 1,900 children have been born each year to Center City parents, for a cumulative total of 15,159 infants born between 2000 and 2007. While not every family with children has remained downtown, 3.2% of Center City's population is now under age five, as far more strollers are visible in downtown parks and playgrounds.

Center City has seen a corresponding jump in the number of pre-school and day care centers, now totaling 31, many with waiting lists. More than ever, Center City public schools are attracting early kindergarten enrollment from families within their immediate neighborhood and independent schools are drawing upwards of 70% of their enrollment from downtown communities. All three of Center City's independent schools are also in various stages of planned expansion.

How the needs of these young families are addressed in the coming years will determine how successful Philadelphia will be in sustaining population growth, expanding downtown's boundaries and underwriting its housing markets. While outdoor cafes, bars, health-clubs and dog walks are primary draws for young professionals, clean, safe and attractive parks and playgrounds are essential for young families, as is the expansion of affordable, quality school choice.

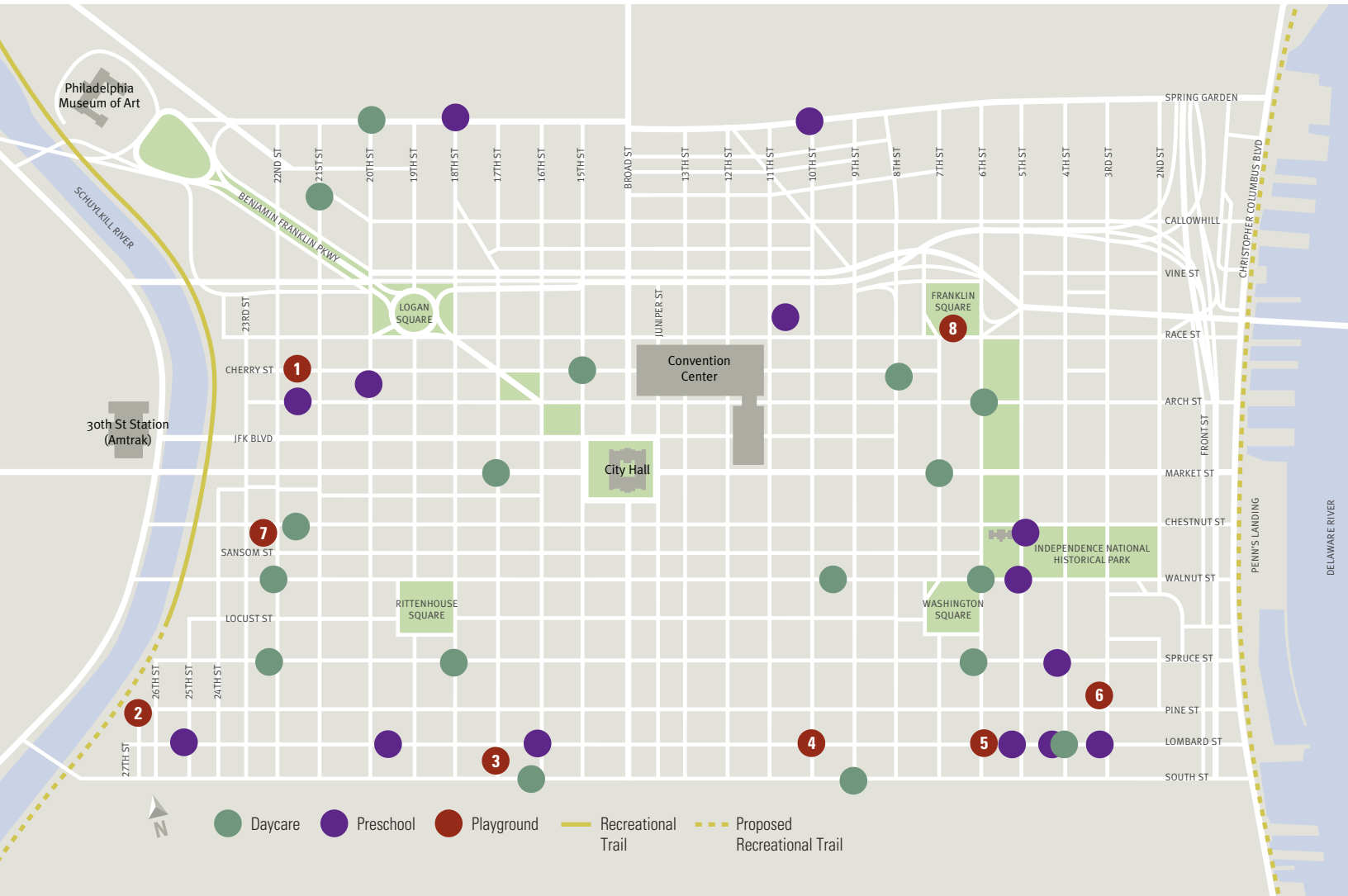
Amenities for children have clearly improved in Center City as eight public playgrounds totaling nearly 18 acres offer soccer and baseball fields, basketball and tennis courts, swimming pools and miniature golf. After school activities and sports leagues for children are growing in popularity. A secure bicycle trail along the Schuylkill River will soon be joined by one along the Delaware. Still, in a 2009 CCD survey, Center City parents identified inadequate outdoor space and the lack of activities for children as one of the biggest challenges to raising a family downtown.

While resources exist for families to learn about youth-related activities, 95% of the 314 respondents to the CCD's survey of parents pointed to the need for a comprehensive Web site that provides easy access to information about recreational activities, summer camps, parent groups, child-friendly stores and places to hold birthday parties. As a result, this summer the CCD will expand its existing school-choice website, www.centercityschools.com, to include a broad array of information helpful to raising children in the city.

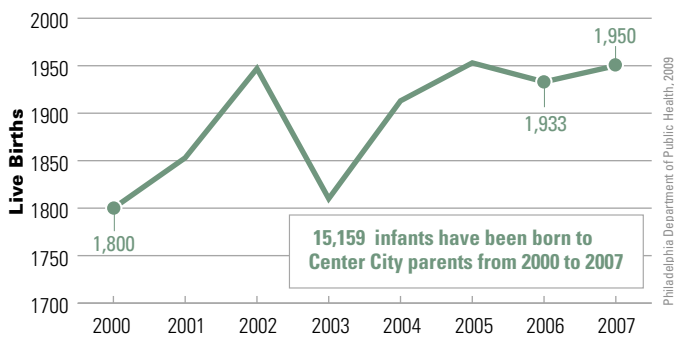


Franklin Square Playground

Daycares, Preschools and Playgrounds in Center City



Births to Center City* Residents 2000-2007



*Birth data by ZIP code is not available prior to 2003. For consistency over time, Census tracts are used to approximate the Center City eight ZIP code area.

Playgrounds

Playground	Acres
1 Coxe Park	0.1
2 Markward Park	7.3
3 17th & Rodman	0.1
4 Seger Playground	1.7
5 Starr Garden Playground	1.8
6 Delancey Park (Three Bears)	0.3
7 Albert M. Greenfield School Playground	0.5
8 Franklin Square Playground	6.1
Total Acres	17.9