

TODDLER

PARENT HANDBOOK



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Program Description and Goals

Welcome!! The Parent-Toddler classes are active learning classes for toddlers and parents. This will be a time for you and your toddler to share together and a chance for your child to interact with other toddlers and adults. We meet weekly for free exploratory play, circle time, creative art and parent discussion time. The goal of these classes is to have fun together and to aid in the interactive experiences of happy, “whole” children. This means that class activities are planned to encourage social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth. Each class includes individual and group projects. All activities are optional. Children have many opportunities for free choice so they can progress at their own pace and choose activities that they sincerely enjoy.

Children in this age group are still LEARNING how to do a multitude of things. They are learning to explore and interact with other children in their peer group. They are learning how to use different toys and materials, and they are growing and experimenting with social play and their expanding language skills.

The expectation of this program is that you will be able to bring your child to class on a regular basis. We want to provide a comfortable setting for you and your toddler to share together and interact with other toddlers and adults. We hope that this program will give you the pleasure of being with your child, and that you will be able to develop a support system with the other members of the class by encouraging the sharing of parenting experiences and concerns with each other.



Parent Responsibilities

Read and be familiar with all policies in the “Parent Handbook”.

Contribute fruit juice, a nutritious snack consisting of foods from the four basic food groups, and cups & napkins for the entire group at least once each session. Please do not bring any peanuts or food containing peanuts. Be sure to check the ingredients list on all food packages.

Any special problems should be discussed with your child’s teacher following class, or at a mutually convenient time.



Daily Schedule

Each toddler class may consist of some of the following activities:

Explore and Playtime: Children learn primarily through their own exploration, experimentation and discovery. A variety of materials will be available during this open playtime, allowing each child's activities to be uniquely suited to his/her own needs. (see "Developmental Activity Summary") Parents help by guiding the children's social interactions and their use of materials without becoming the focal point of play. Being alert and listening as well are keys to really understanding the children's needs and responding appropriately. (Work on anticipating problem situations and moving in quickly to help them become learning experiences.) Become a good observer; the children have much to teach us.

Gym and Outdoor Time: For most of the toddlers, this is the favorite part of the program, for it gives them the chance to exercise their large muscles and loud voices. Please do not wear shoes that will damage the gym floor.

Art Activities: The art activities will be designed to be a satisfying process for the child and give them opportunities to discover new capacities for expression. What the toddler achieves as he messes is a complex process of doing, learning, expressing and creating all intermingled. Creativity for the toddler is in the process, not in the product. It is the immediate cause and effect that appeals to toddlers. It is common for them to show no interest at all in the final product. Smocks are provided to wear during these messy art projects, but it is your decision as to whether your child must wear one. The manufacturers claim the paint is washable, but we cannot guarantee that. Please wear clothing that can get stained.

Circle Time: Parents and children meet together in the main room for songs, finger play or other group activities. Children gain experience in using their knowledge, and gain expertise in their use of language through songs and finger plays. Parents help their children learn to participate in these activities by sitting on the floor with them and joining in! Many children look forward to this time. Some children are not ready to sit and attend to this yet. We try to encourage each child to enjoy this time, but we don't force it.

Parent Discussions: A different topic of interest will be discussed each class meeting. Input from parents is encouraged concerning topic selection as well as during actual discussions. We have a terrific pool of parental experience to draw from, and any spur-of-the-moment questions reflecting current concerns are always welcome.

Snack: Sit down with the children and enjoy the break. This is a good time to quietly talk with the children and other parents while enjoying a nutritious snack of unsweetened juice and crackers, cheese or fruit. This is a chance for your child to learn to socialize in a 'snack' setting, and it helps them to learn to sit and share meal-time socialization skills. Parents who bring the snack should take the plates and pitchers to the kitchen/sink to wash up when our snack time is completed.

Clean-Up Time: This class is also a "self serve" format. We all try to "pitch in" and pick up the toys as we go along. We all help with the serving and clean up of snacks. The arts projects can be more fully enjoyed if we all work together to use the materials in the manner that they are offered, and assist with putting the supplies away where they belong when we are finished.



Developmental Activity Summary

In any good “open” setting such as this one at Kruger House, there is always underlying organization and structure. The materials available to the children are there for a purpose. Parents and teachers are responsible for helping the children learn to use materials in all areas to enhance their growth and development. Children develop at different paces in different areas. An open setting allows us to accommodate these individual differences and enables the children to learn from watching and joining one another. Here is a brief look at how class activities are related to important areas of development:

Social-Emotional

Everything the children do influences their social and emotional growth. Relating to parents in a new setting, responding to other adults and to the teacher, and learning to interact with other children are valuable learning experiences. Every new task undertaken and mastered adds to their good feeling about themselves and thus is a further plus in their emotional growth. We can help by observing closely, understanding, respecting the children’s own efforts, and using positive reinforcement, genuine and specific praise.

Language

Language learning also accompanies all that children do. As they become able to express their needs and desires, life becomes much easier for all concerned. Older toddlers can begin to deal with each other verbally rather than physically, opening the way for true cooperative play in the future. Special events, a walk in the park, class visitors, songs and stories, and the social time and juice are important opportunities to build language. Our role is to LISTEN and RESPOND. (Remember: Not always agree, but respond.) As we take their language seriously, the children will begin to realize its potential.

Physical

Learning to control their own bodies is one of the greatest challenges children face during the toddler years. The slide, push bikes, tricycles, climbers, swings, posts, balls and all of that running, walking, falling, and recovering require large muscle control. Materials such as blocks, ring sorter, pegboards and nesting toys develop small muscles and eye-hand coordination.

Creative

Creativity is more than art and enters into all play. Using materials in a variety of ways, playing with cars, dolls, blocks, puppets, and later on dressing up and getting into role-play, are all examples of creative play. In the area of art, this is an age primarily of sensory experience. The children are involved in the process of creating, and are more interested in immediate control of the materials than the end product. Finger paint, shaving cream, sand and water (MESS in our eyes) are rich in learning opportunities. Exploring these materials freely, making changes “by myself” adds to the children’s feelings of strength and competence, building a positive self-image.

Cognitive

Children learn through exploration and discovery; once again, we cannot separate this area from the others. Examining the class pets, talking about them, remembering to look for them, asking to feed them and becoming aware of their needs — what a full experience. It combines all the areas above and adds to the children’s storehouse of knowledge.

Some specific activities invite comparisons of size, shape and color, and thus increase visual discrimination as well as problem-solving skills. Puzzles are a good example of these, as are shape sorters, blocks, felt pieces and peg boards. Watch for older toddlers to begin to notice and sort objects by color. Play dough, sand and water provide opportunities for hands-on experience in mass and volume, texture, and a host of other physical properties endlessly fascinating to children.



Classroom Communication Guidelines

Move near and bend down to child's level when talking. Listen carefully, asking "Can you tell me a different way?" may help if you're having difficulty understanding.

Give positive directions. Tell children what you want them to do rather than what you want them not to do. ("Keep the glue on the paper," not "Don't put the glue on the table.")

Give clear messages. Give children a choice only when you can respect their answer. ("It's time to put the play dough away," not "Will you put the play dough away now?")

Learn to accept and reflect feelings. Though his/her behavior may not be acceptable, what a child is feeling is always okay. Take the child's point of view, then put what he/she is feeling into words that let him/her know you understand. If necessary, help them find a better way to express their feelings. ("You were angry when he knocked your blocks down, but you'll need to tell him that instead of hitting him. Say 'Stop! Those are mine.' I'll help him listen to you.")



Redirect children according to their needs. Children need your guidance or redirection if:

1. What they're doing is all right but they're using the wrong materials. ("Blocks are for building, If you feel like throwing, there are lots of balls outside.")
2. The materials are all right but they are being used in the wrong place. (To a child painting on the wall: "You'll need to keep your brush on the paper. Do you need another piece?")
3. They don't know how to use the materials appropriately. ("Paste is for sticking things together, like this...")

Establish trust by following through. Any necessary limit should be clearly stated and consistently maintained. Reasonable limits are necessary for children to feel safe enough to explore and grow. Expect some testing to occur — that's a part of the process, too. Reflect their feelings, and then help them accept the limit. ("It's hard to stop when you're having fun, isn't it? But it's time to clean up now. There will be more time for painting after we have some juice.")

Help children communicate with each other. Turn problem situations into learning experiences by helping children express their feelings to each other and work out solutions with words. "Tell him how you feel..." "Listen to her..." and to a child reporting a problem to you, "What did you say when he did that?" All will be heard many times as children learn to solve their own problems.

Keep adult discussions to a minimum. Save questions that don't pertain to immediate class activities for after class.

Note: Keep in mind that your role is to help children interact together more effectively. Avoid becoming an entertainer or "social director".

GUIDING SKILL DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE

Do not lift children onto or off of climbing equipment. Safety demands that children be capable of using equipment themselves. Stay close and help them find places to put their hands and feet, if necessary, or help them find an easier place to climb. Children need to use both hands to climb, **NO TOYS IN HAND.**

Teach children to pump themselves in the swing. Give them one push or so to get them started, then help them learn to keep the momentum going. Help other children **WALK ALL THE WAY AROUND** the swings.

Sand toys stay in the sand area. Remind children to **KEEP THE SAND LOW.** "Balls are for throwing." Redirect if necessary.

Pour water carefully into buckets, sandbox or garden. Mix sand and water in containers, not directly in water table.

Tools stay at the workbench. Hammers must be used only on wood provided. Wood must be clamped before sawing.

SHARING: GROWTH IN COOPERATION

Sharing is a natural part of cooperative play, which begins during the preschool years. It follows an equally important period during which children develop a sense of autonomy. Ownership is a vital part of this. In class, children often need help maintaining possession of toys they are really using. Since some toys are for all, we may tell children that they need to give someone else some play dough or a turn on the swing, but this should not be labeled sharing. Sharing is really only sharing if it is voluntary. Watch for opportunities to reinforce true sharing when it occurs by commenting on it, "I like the way you shared the cars with Brian. Now you're both having fun."



GROWTH IN INDEPENDENCE

A strong self-concept means feeling good about yourself and feeling capable. When a child asks for help, responding in a good way encourages feelings of independence by:

1. Involving the child in the task. ("I'll get it started, then you can zip your jacket up.")
2. Reflecting the question and helping children come up with their own solution. ("That kite does need a tail. What could you use?")
3. Reinforcing independent efforts with specific and genuine praise. ("What a good idea!" or "You're swinging high now, all by yourself!")

CHILD CENTERED ART: GROWTH IN CREATIVITY

Creative expression means communication. We encourage children to practice techniques, freely explore with form and color, and combine materials in new and different ways. To help children learn to communicate their own ideas and feelings through art remember to:

1. Demonstrate the correct use of materials without making models for the children to copy.
2. Avoid saying "Can you draw me a house?" "Is that a house?" or "What are you making?" These are all limiting. Instead, you may comment on what you see (without any interpretation), e.g. "You're using lots of blue today" or on how the child is working, e.g. "You're really doing a careful job."
3. You may ask, "Would you like to tell me about your picture?" And sometimes follow with "Would you like me to write that here (on the picture)?" Ask "Would you like me to put your name on this picture?" or "Where shall I put your name?" Print name, capitalizing first letter only.
4. Enjoy watching what develops naturally. Comments like "That looks like fun!" may be the most reinforcing of all.

General Information

SNACKS

Every parent is responsible for providing juice and a snack for the class once each session, including napkins and 5 oz. cups. All snacks provided should be nutritious and low in sugar. We enjoy trying chunks of cheese, fresh fruit or vegetables on occasion, as well as the standard crackers and juice. Please bring **100% real fruit juice only**. If you bring juice, we recommend watering it down a bit. We will need about one gallon for a class of 12. Unless children are to be involved in preparation, any cutting, mixing or assembling should be done before class begins. The parent who brings snacks is also responsible for washing, drying and putting away pitchers, etc. and leaving the kitchen/counter area in good order.

IDEAS TO "SPICE" UP SNACK TIME

Please check with your teacher to make sure there are no food allergies in your class. Due to so many children with nut allergies, our classroom is a nut-free environment. Please read labels carefully to make sure that there are no nut products in foods brought to school.

- Bagel halves with cream cheese (the children can spread the cheese, etc.)
- Fruit and cheese kabobs
- Pancakes (Make at home & warm in the oven)
- Muffins
- Mini-pizzas made with English Muffin halves
- Quesadillas or burritos (use kid-size tortillas)
- Juice Popsicle's made in paper cups
- Apple slices with honey
- Celery with cheese spread
- Pigs-in-a-blanket
- Graham Crackers
- Raw vegetables and dip
- Crackers with cheese spread
- Soft pretzels
- Trail mix, snack mix or granola
- Pieces of quiche
- Fruit salad
- Bean dip and crackers
- Macaroni and cheese or other pastas (make at home and warm up)
- Frozen banana bites
- Fish sticks or chicken nuggets
- Biscuits with jelly or honey
- Dry cereals
- Yogurt Popsicle – place any flavor yogurt in 3 oz. cups – place Popsicle stick in middle and freeze overnight.

HELPER GUIDELINES

Our toddler locations are multipurpose rooms, and may be used right after the ending of our class. The rooms are totally emptied and prepared for the next activity. It is very helpful if a couple of the adults hang back about 10 minutes and help tidy up. Therefore, it is nice if the snack parent and the following week's snack parent stay a few minutes at the end of class. This ten minutes may be spent doing any of the following:

- Art clean up
(brushes, easel, paint containers, etc.)
- Stack chairs
- Wipe off tables
- Inside/outside toy pickup

CLOTHING

The children should feel free to explore the classroom environment, art materials as well as the outside play area, without too much concern about keeping clean.

NOTE: Our paints are water based tempera and should wash out. Apply a spray stain-remover and soak difficult spots in cold water before washing.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are fun to share at school! Let your child's teacher know if you'd like to bring a special treat for your child's birthday. Cupcakes are traditional, but there are many other more nutritional alternatives that are fun too!



SIBLINGS

It is the intent of this class that you and your toddler have some special, concentrated, one-on-one time away from the distractions of jobs, errands, household chores, phone calls and competing siblings. For that reason, siblings and other non-registered children are not permitted to attend class.

HEALTH POLICY

Please bring your child only if he/she is feeling well enough to really enjoy the whole program. As a general rule, your child should remain at home if he/she has a temperature of 99° Fahrenheit, an upset stomach or diarrhea within the last 24 hours, an undiagnosed rash or sore or discharging eyes, ears, or a profuse nasal discharge. We love to have you join us for each class, but ask you to “take a break” from class if your child may be ill. We will all try to show the same illness sensitive courtesy for each other. In past semesters, people have been really great about staying home if their child is ill. This health policy makes a big difference in reducing the number of colds and illnesses that your child could possibly contract in class full of Toddlers. We encourage all parents to keep their child’s immunizations up to date.



GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTION OF THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

These mandated precautions are to be used in all state and federal programs to reduce the spread of serious infections through body fluids or wastes. These recommendations, also known as the “OSHA Regulations on Bloodborne Pathogens”, require simple procedures to be followed at all times.

1. Hand washing
 - After diapering or toileting
 - After handling body fluids of any kind
 - After cleaning the environment or objects
 - After removing latex gloves
 - Before and after working with food items
2. Latex Gloves should be worn by all people
 - When they come in contact with blood or body fluids containing (e.g. blood, feces or vomit)
 - When individuals have cuts, scratches or other breaks in the skin such as dermatitis
 - If body fluids do not contain visible blood, gloves are not required. Hands should be washed regardless of whether gloves are worn or not.
3. Environmental disinfection should be done on a regular basis or as needed. Special care to surfaces of objects contaminated with blood should be done using disposable products followed by a disinfectant spray.
4. Proper disposal of materials contaminated with blood that are liquid, semi-liquid or caked should be done in plastic bags that are securely tied. Ideally these plastic bags should be marked with the words or symbol for “bio-hazardous waste.” Non-disposable or cloth items contaminated with blood should be washed separately from other laundry. Plastic bags are found in the kitchen.
5. Exposure reporting procedure. When an incident occurs involving anyone who comes in direct contact with blood or blood containing fluids on the eye, mouth, non-intact skin (cut or chapped) or punctured skin, the occurrence must be documented and reported to the Director.

GENERAL NOTES

The main objective of the toddler class is for each child to have a positive, successful experience. Enthusiasm, joy and giggles are the best part of this program, but hitting, biting, yanking, temper tantrums and tears are also part of toddler class – not a large part—but to be expected in a group where most of the participants have primitive social skills. Such negative outbursts generally bother parents more and longer than the children. Scolding and punishment are not particularly effective teaching methods with this age group. Toddlers do not respond well to words. Toddlers require action. So, if your child gets embroiled in a conflict, what usually works the best is if you redirect the child to another activity by picking him up and moving him there, and staying with him until he is involved. It is also helpful if you, the parent, say you are sorry to the victim on behalf of your child, rather than forcing your child to say something he or she may not mean or understand. Each time you can get a child out of a conflict situation by being calm, firm and respectful, you have given him a positive, constructive lesson.

We recognize that children have varied approaches to new situations, and that is why all activities are optional and each child is encouraged to go at his own pace. If you have a child who wanders during circle time, is just warming up to the toys while the rest are moving on to art, and savoring his snack while the others are in the gym, be assured that this is not unusual and such flexibility is allowed in this setting.

WORKSHOPS "FOR PARENTS ONLY"

Topics of special interest to parents will be presented during the school year by guest speakers and/or staff. Dates and topics will be announced well in advance of each meeting. Guests may attend.



ONE FINAL WORD

The best thing the children in our group have going for them is YOU. As parents, you are giving your children experiences they can grow from and opportunities to be with warm and caring people of all ages. Your willingness to participate, discuss and grow yourselves is a wonderful gift to your child. Children are hearty, and when they have love, acceptance and opportunities to grow, they endure and thrive despite our occasional missteps. Enjoy yourself and your child, both as an individual and as a member of your family. Trust your intuition and judgment; no one knows your child as well as you do.

“Am I a Good Enough Parent?”

“All of us are vulnerable to the feeling, “Am I a good enough parent?” All of us have done things we regret or failed to do things we wish we had. None of us is the “perfect parent” who always does all the “right things” described in books. I certainly am not. Fortunately, our children can grow up to be fine people with less-than-perfect parents. I think we need to be comfortable doing the best we can, under often-difficult circumstances, and operating on the basis of what we know at any point in time. When we know more, we can do a little better, but we shouldn’t put ourselves down for past mistakes. Kids aren’t the only ones who need to feel good about themselves. Parents need to feel good about their selves just as much.

As parents, I think we also need to be very careful not to want our children to be perfect, not to be furious or feel like failures when they turn out to be human, with faults and foibles like the rest of us. We also need to remind ourselves that they are developing and that many of the foolish or irresponsible things they do is the product of their developmental immaturity.

Finally, we need to recognize a point made very well by Dr. John White, associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Manitoba and author of the compassionate book, *Parents in Pain*. Our children, he says, do not belong to us. Rather, they are a temporary trust. We’re obligated to watch over their development and give them love, discipline, and moral direction. We can hope and pray that they’ll be strong and lead a good life. But we need to remember that no matter what we do, our children remain their own persons, free to choose, for good or ill.

THE STAIN REMOVAL RECIPE

1/4 cup Clorox 2

1/4 cup Cascade dishwasher detergent

Fill dishpan with the hottest water from the tap. Dissolve detergents.

Soak clothing overnight. Wash as usual.

PLAY DOUGH RECIPE

2 cups flour

1 cup salt

4 tsp. cream of tartar

3 tbs. salad oil

2 cups water

food coloring



Mix all ingredients well (except coloring). Cook at medium/ high heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat as soon as a ball forms and can be touched without sticking to your hand. Knead well. Invite your children to help mix in food coloring. Store in zip lock bag or an other air tight container.

PATTERNS

Too soon
The patterns
Tell us how
To move

Too soon

Leave your dreams
Outside the door
All sit!
All stand!
Listen now!

The sky is blue
Cut the line
Make a star
Stop!
Story time

Too soon
And soon
The patterns
Tell us how
To think
To feel

Too soon
The originals are gone
And in their place
The pattern of a single face



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Recommended Reading

Between Parent and Child, Dr. Haim G. Ginott

Copyright 1965 by Dr. Haim Ginott; the MacMillan Company, New York.

Child Behavior, Frances L. Ilg, M.D., & Louse Bates Ames, Ph.D.,

Copyright 1951 by Gesell Institute of Child Development;

Barnes & Noble Books, New York.

Children: The Challenge, Rudolf Dreikurs

1964, Hawthorn Books, Inc., New York.

How To Talk So Kids Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk,

Adele Faber and Elain Mazlish

Copyright 1980 by Rawson, Wade Publishers, Inc.

“The Growing Child”, A monthly publication

with information and activities keyed to your child’s age.

Order from: The Growing Child

22 North 2nd Street, P.O. Box 620, Lafayette, IN 47902.

The Preschool Years, Ellen Galinsky & Judy David

1998, Times Books.

Without Spanking or Spoiling, Elizabeth Crary

Copyright 1979; Parenting Press, Seattle Washington.

Your Child’s Self Esteem, Dorothy Corkille Briggs

Copyright 1975 by Doubleday.

Also.....

Anything written by T. Berry Brazelton

Temperament: books by Stella Chase or Stanley Turecki, M.D.

Development: books by Ames & Ilg

Discipline: books by Faber & Mazlish or Thomas Gordorn or Driekers

Toilet teaching: Alison Mack or the Parents Magazine book on Toileting

Sleep problems: Richard Ferber or Dr. Sears

Humor: books by Dave Barry, Lynn Johnston or the Baby Blues

Self-Esteem: Dorothy Briggs

Moral Development: Dr. Thomas Lickona

General: Selma Fraiberg, *The Magic Years*; Do Jasinek, *House of Hearts*



City of Carlsbad Parks & Recreation Department
Preschool/Toddler Parent Participation Program
Code of Conduct

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for the children participating in the City of Carlsbad Recreation Department's Preschool and/or Toddler Parent Participation program by following this Parent's Code of Conduct below. Besides the Code of Conduct, I understand and support the Preschool and Toddler Programs values and endeavors to develop the 5 "C's", creating a fair, secure and friendly place to learn through:

1. CARE

- Caring for self.
- Caring for others.
- Caring for the environment.

4. COOPERATION

- Contributing to a positive school tone/image.
- Accepting consequences when rules are broken.
- Working, studying, playing cooperatively

2. COURTESY

- Speaking and behaving politely.
- Speaking and behaving kindly.
- Showing excellence in manners.

5. COMMON SENSE

- Use common sense by stopping and thinking carefully before doing anything.

3. CONSIDERATION

- Showing respect.
- Tolerating others.
- Thinking of the feelings/circumstances of others.

PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all children, parent and instructors participating in the program.
- I will support parents and teachers working with my child in order to encourage a positive, safe, and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will help maintain a school environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and intimidation and will refrain from their use while at the school.
- I will remember the activities are for children—not adults.
- I will do my best to make attending the program a fun experience for my child and all who participate in it.
- I will treat and encourage my child to treat other children, parents and staff with respect regardless of race, gender, creed or ability.
- I will refrain from using my cell phone while participating in class with my child.

I acknowledge that failure to abide by the code of conduct or the 5 "c's" may result in the cancellation of my child's and my participation in this program, and the inability of my child and me to participate in other recreation department programs.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS CODE OF CONDUCT, AND FULLY UNDERSTAND IT'S CONTENTS

Signature

Date

