

CHILDCARE PROGRAM

7:00am -6:00pm

This program is a year-round program for children 2-10 years of age. It is not drop-in childcare. Your child must be registered in advance. We limit the number of children per day to correspond with our staffing. If your child will not be attending childcare for a particular day due to illness or vacation, please let us know so that we can temporarily offer your space to someone else. If your child is not signed up as a regular childcare student and you want to use the service, please submit your request 48 hours in advance and we will try to accommodate you.

We offer a relaxed and casual setting geared to the needs and interests of each child. Our childcare program is the nucleus of the school. The children flow in and out through the day. We do a variety of both indoor and outdoor activities. We are able through our childcare program to enrich the Montessori experience with activities such as; dramatic play, art projects, painting, reading books, flannel board stories, circle time, songs, games and free play. Our Childcare program provides bountiful opportunities for social interaction, which is a key element to the developing child.

Each child will be assigned a cubby for his/her belongings. We discourage children from bringing valuable/cherished items to school. No toys allowed. Please send your child to school in appropriate clothing. The children take part in a variety of activities and their clothes may get dirty. Please choose clothing that is durable, loose fitting and easy for the child to pull on/off by himself for bathroom purposes. Also, choose easy fasteners for jackets, sweaters, etc. Belts are not encouraged.

Please help your child select shoes that are good for running, jumping and climbing. Flip-flops and slide shoes are not allowed at school, as they can be dangerous on the playground. All of these suggestions will help your child become more independent. All children **must** have a change of clothes to be left at school in their cubbies. **Please put your child's name on all clothing and belongings.**

Lunches: Children bring their own lunches. We recommend nutritious food, please NO CANDY, GUM, ETC... Please see the enclosed lunch & snack policy for details. If you pack some food that needs refrigeration, please put your child's name on the container and put it in the fridge. Please do not put the entire lunch box in the refrigerator. Lunch boxes may be left in the child's cubby. If food needs to be warmed, please label it and leave it on top of the stove in the kitchen so that we can have it ready at your child's lunch time.

Snacks: We provide a morning snack. If your child will be staying after 3pm, please provide a nutritious afternoon snack; for example, half a sandwich, fruit, celery/carrot sticks, cheese and crackers, hard boiled egg, or nuts. Large boxes of goldfish, crackers, granola bars, etc... may be left in the pantry. Label snacks clearly with your child's name.

Nappers: Naptime is between 12:00 and 2:00pm. Children may get up when they are through resting. If your child has a special blanket or stuffed animal that they sleep with, they may bring it to school and leave it in their cubby until nap time. Please remember to take items home to wash when appropriate.

Sick Children: We do not have the space or staff to care for ill children. Please keep them home to aid in their recovery and to prevent the spread of illness to other children and staff.

KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME:

- If s/he has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hours.
- If s/he has a heavy nasal discharge.
- If s/he has a consistent cough.
- If s/he is fussy, cranky, and generally not oneself.
- If s/he is tired. Rest at such times may prevent the development of serious illness.
- If s/he has symptoms of a possible communicable disease.

Please notify the school at once if your child does have a communicable disease.

PLEASE: *No toys, candy, gum, glass containers, unauthorized children, or late pick-up of children. Please note that the school closing time is 6:00pm!*

DAILY CHILDCARE SCHEDULE

AM

7:00 – 8:30	Inside free play
8:30 - 9:30	Outside time (weather permitting)
9:30 - 10:00	Circle time, stories and songs.
10:00	Snack, free playtime, art or cooking activity
10:45	Clean-up
11:00	Wash-up for lunch
11:00	Lunch

PM

12:00	Nappers go down Outside free play for others
12:30 - 1:30	Childcare goes in for story and quiet play time
1:30 – 2:30	Inside play, main yard play, sandbox play
2:30	Snack, Outside
3:00	Outside play
3:30	Outside play, split group. 2-4 yr. olds on preschool playground 5-10 yr. Olds on main playground
4:30	All remaining children on main playground
5:00	Clean-up yard and go inside for quiet time. Books, puzzles, games and movies
6:00	School Closed

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Lunch & Snack Policy

Our lunch/snack policy is designed to ensure that all of our students have a productive day by eating healthy foods.

Lunchtime begins at 11:00 AM for morning childcare students, 11:30 AM for Infant and Toddler students and 11:45 for AM Primary students.

The best nutrition advice to keep your child healthy includes encouraging him/her to:

- Eat a **variety** of foods
- Balance the food you eat with **physical activity**
- Choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables and fruits
- Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol
- Choose a diet moderate in sugars and salt
- Choose a diet that provides enough calcium and iron to meet their growing body's requirements.

Listed below are the lunch/snack guidelines. These foods are not allowed at lunch and/or for snack foods. These foods only serve as an obstacle and provide no nutritional value for your children.

- Cookies or candy (candy must be removed from Lunchable lunches)
- Any form of chocolate
- Chips
- Power drinks/Gatorade/Soda

If any of these items are brought to school, we will remove them from the child's lunch box and place them in a basket on the counter at the front desk, for the parents to take home.

We as a staff would like to work with you and your families in instilling healthy habits and a better opportunity for your child to eat more of their lunch. We feel this policy will help us to achieve this goal. We ask for your support in this policy, as it will help us ensure that your child is not only eating their entire lunch but also a healthy lunch that will attribute to their success throughout the day.

** Remember to put foods that need warming up on the stove.*

SEPARATION ANXIETY IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Normal anxiety and fear tends to follow a developmental sequence. These tendencies seem to be hard-wired and seem to have a developmental purpose. Infants commonly show a fearful response to loud noise or the sudden loss of physical support. Reluctance to be separated from one's caregiver is a normal, healthy response in young children and indicated the development of healthy attachment. When a child starts to walk on its own, fear of strange animals is an adaptive response.

Some degree of separation anxiety is a sign that the preschooler has developed healthy attachments to loved ones. In many cases, it stops within 3-4 minutes after the parent leaves.

Temperament

Some children seem more irritable and clingy as infants, have more trouble establishing a regular daily schedule, and have more difficulty with transitions. (This is more enduring than a couple of months of colic) Such children may be more vulnerable to separation anxiety. Such a child may require more work and attention. However, having a more difficult temperament, does not invariably lead to problems in later childhood.

Normal Development of Separation:

Most common times for separation fears: eight months, twelve months and anywhere between 18 months to three years. Separation anxiety generally emerges around nine months of age and peaks around 12-24 months. The child's crying and clinging can express two different messages. First, the child may cry when the parent leaves because they fear that the parent will be gone forever. The second situation is when the child, often after a fairly good day, begins to cry when the parent returns. This is because the parent's return reminds the child of how he or she felt when the parent left. Sometimes, children between one and two years of age may walk or crawl away themselves, and then become anxious at the separation they themselves have created. Separation anxiety generally decreases between 2 and 3 years of age. The child often tends to be shy with strangers, but morning separations become easier. The degree of separation difficulty may vary from day to day. One day, the child may be anxious to go and another day, clingy and sad. Many two-year-olds go through a phase when they prefer a particular parent. This can exhaust the desired parent and make the other parent feel unloved. The child has more of a drive toward independence. Still transition times can be difficult, and lead to temper tantrums.

For toddlers, those who have had either very few or very frequent separations from loved ones experience the most separation anxiety. Factors that may contribute to separation anxiety

- Tiredness
- Minor or major illness
- Changes in the household routine
- Family changes such as birth of a sibling, divorce, death or illness.
- Change in caregiver or routine at day care center.
- Parents usually are not the cause of the separation anxiety, but they can make things worse or better.

Factors that may reduce the chances of developing separation anxiety:

Start occasionally using a babysitter by six months of age. This helps the child tolerate short periods away from the parent and encourages him or her to build trust in other adults.

Even though children of this age do not engage in cooperative play, start contact with peers by 12 months. By age three, the child should be experiencing play groups.

Some form of preschool may be helpful by age 3 or 4. This is especially important for children who seem overly dependent on their parents.

Supporting a child through periods of separation anxiety.

- Positive experiences with caregivers, short times at first.
- Help child become familiar with new surroundings and people before actually leaving the child there.
- Rituals (bedtime and morning)
- "Lovie" or "Cuddly" represents closeness to parents. If possible, allow the child to take the "Lovie" along.
- Do not give in. Let the child know that he or she will be all right.
- Remind the child of previous brave things he or she has done. Talk about how a fictional character might handle it.
- Let child know, in words he or she can understand that you appreciate how distressing it must be to be separated from loved ones. Understanding and acceptance, but not excessive sympathy.
- Never make fun of a child's separation distress. Do not scold child for it.
- Do not bribe child to mask the distress. If you plan a special activity after you pick the child up, let it be unconditional.
- Focus on the positive things that happened in school. Don't let them dwell on fears or imagination of what might happen.
- Minimize fears by limiting scary TV shows
- If it is an older child, consider introducing him or her to some of the children who are to be in the class and arranging play dates in advance.
- Preparing the child--reading books about going to preschool, pretending about going on voyages or quests.
- Expect a child to be more tired and possibly more irritable than usual when he or she starts school for the first few weeks.
- When leaving, give a quick kiss and hug and cheerfully say goodbye.
- Don't prolong your departure or come back several times.
- Don't sneak out of the room.
- Even if you feel that a strict teacher or a bully might be part of the problem, keep your child going to school while these problems are being handled.
- If your child does stay home, do not make it an extra fun, gratifying day.