

## **Family Handbook Addendum for Infants/Young Toddlers**

Infants enter the world eager and prepared to learn. Everything is interesting, and learning is strongly supported through responsive materials and staff. Teachers in this classroom focus on nurturing and building trust with the children. Relationships between the infant and teachers are emphasized through adult-child interactions that are respectful, reciprocal, and responsive. The young infant curriculum includes reading, singing, music, conversation, various sensory and gross motor experiences, and interactions with adults during floor time. Young infants follow individual, natural patterns for eating and sleeping. The children are exposed to language through stories, songs, chants and conversations. Toys are easily manipulated and mouthed, and disinfected after each use.

The curriculum, therefore, centers on caring for the infant's needs balanced with providing an environment that encourages and challenges social, physical and cognitive growth. Daily challenges are viewed as important learning opportunities and infants receive the encouragement and support they need to solve these on their own and with their peers as much as possible.

Young toddlers build upon the rapidly changing developmental milestones which took place in young infancy. The close relationships with teachers continue to be cultivated and further nurtured. As their physical strength increases, young toddlers develop confidence in their abilities and feel comfortable exploring more freely. Teachers continue to support and encourage developing physical abilities while providing an environment that is safe and comfortable for exploring children. Teachers provide support for each child's level of physical and cognitive development and children are encouraged to practice their emerging skills. Young toddlers experiment with different sensory and art materials such as paint, playdough, and ooblick. They begin to interact more with peers socially. Language continues to be emphasized through songs, music, books, stories and conversation exchanges with adults. Individual routines such as eating and sleeping may be modified to meet each child's changing developmental needs.

### **Saying goodbye**

Separation can be a difficult process for both children and parents. When babies are somewhere between 8 and 10 months old they may become distressed when they are separated from their family. This anxiety may last into the second year of life, and might typically include crying, clinging and trying to follow. When a toddler becomes more verbal, this may include words of protest: "Don't go" "Stay" or "I go".

Every child is unique and all respond differently. You should always remember that children take their cues from you. When you feel good and respond positively at drop off time, the child will sense this. Following are some helpful hints that may be useful:

- Talk to your child ahead of time about what is going to happen, such as "Today is a school day!"
- Talk with your child's teacher daily and establish a friendly relationship. You can help your child begin to settle by offering to read a couple of books or play with a toy.

- Say your goodbyes to your child and then leave. Hanging around too long, or turning away and then coming back can give mixed signals. It is important to always say goodbye and say you will see them later.
- It is never easy to walk away from a crying child. If you are having trouble parting with your child, please ask for help. We can take your child to a waving window to allow you to leave.

### **Napping**

Infants and young toddlers will sleep according to their own schedules.

You should send in 1-2 crib sheets, a blanket and a snuggle item if you desire.

### **Safe Sleep Practices**

The following safe sleep practices will be followed with all children under 12 months of age:

- Infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep;
- If an infant falls asleep in a swing, car seat, chair, or on the floor, they will be moved to their crib;
- Soft objects, toys, or loose bedding shall not be used in infants' sleep areas. Soft or loose bedding includes: bumper pads, pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, blankets, flat sheets, cloth diapers, and bibs;
- Infants shall not be swaddled for sleep;
- Clothing sacks or similar clothing designed for safe sleep may be used;
- Bibs, necklaces, and garments with ties or hoods shall be removed from the child prior to placing the child in the crib;
- No positioning devices shall be used unless required by the child's health care provider;
- Pacifiers are permitted in cribs with written parental permission.

From 12 months of age:

- Children may sleep with blankets, pillows and soft toys
- Children may sleep in a crib, a port-a-crib or on a mat.

### **Diapering**

You are responsible for providing diapers and any other diapering items such as creams or wipes. If you use disposable diapers we recommend dropping off a full package in the classroom.

If you choose to use cloth diapers, you must use both an absorbent inner lining as well as an outer waterproof covering and bags for disposal. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled are immediately placed in a plastic bag that you supply (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

Our ordinary cleaning procedure during diapering is to wash the child's bottom with clear water, and soap if needed, and a paper towel. We will use wipes to clean your child's diaper area if you prefer, and if you provide wipes to the center. For diaper rash or redness, we will apply whatever you suggest and supply.