

October 1, 2009

Hello, Toddler Parents!

It is mind boggling that we are entering the month of October and that we have been back to school for almost two full months already! The children all seem to have claimed the environment as their own and it has been such fun watching each of their individual personalities blossom and unfold. We have such a dynamic group. Each and every child brings his/her own unique quality to our program.

Through several weeks of experimentation coupled with trial and error, we have discovered a daily schedule which seems to work beautifully for the entire group. We are spending the first hour in the classroom together until after morning Circle, at which point we split the children into two groups to alternate Outside Time/Walk and an indoor Work Period. This system has been quite effective at offering the children the benefit of quiet, uninterrupted work time.

The work choices available to the children throughout the day are vast, but in true Toddler fashion, many of them return to the same activities over and over again. They work to perfect what attracts their interest and once mastered, move on to something else. As many of you have probably noticed in your comings and goings, these children are busy!

As always, your support and cooperation help us better help your children. Please review the following information and reminders carefully:

**ILLNESS:** We are certainly seeing our share of it already and while regular disinfecting and hand-washing helps keep some of it at bay, a certain degree of illness is both inevitable and unfortunate. This seems to be a particularly bad season. Please continue to communicate with us about any illness your child experiences and keep contagious children at home. Toddlers are not yet as aware of germ transmission as older children and close physical contact between them is common. The result is that anything contagious can spread like wild fire. We want to ensure that the children, their families and staff stay as healthy as possible.

**CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS:** Please label EVERYTHING your child brings to school. This includes food containers, diapers, shoes, socks, jackets, clothing, bedding, etc. Did I mention SOCKS? (Anyone noticed our sock collection on the window sill of the cubby room?) It is not possible for staff to remember which items belong to which children and trying to figure this out takes time away from the far more important business of being with the children. An official Lost and Found basket will be placed in the cubby room starting next week and unclaimed items will be donated periodically, with prior notice. Additionally, please allow your child to bring only necessary items to school. As we've stated in the past, the cubby room is small and becomes cluttered easily. External order = internal order.

**HOME VISITS** (new, full day children only): Home visits are scheduled for October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. A sign-up sheet with available time slots will be posted in the cubby room next week. These visits are an important part of the program and allow us to better know what we can add to our environment to truly resemble an "extension of the home". They are an opportunity for us to get to know your child on a different level and for us to discuss the specifics of your child's school experience so far. Home visits are pressure free (don't worry if the house is messy!) and usually last about a half hour. Please be aware that your child will not attend school on the day of his/her home visit. Half day and returning full day children will attend school as usual on both home visit dates.

**SCHOOL HOURS:** Please remember that we open at 7:45am for the full day program and close at 5:00pm sharp. The half day program is from 8:15-11:00am. We request that all children arrive no later than 8:30am. We understand that on occasion, circumstances beyond your control interfere, but please do everything within your power to stay within these time frames.

In closing, we would like to thank all of you for your support, as well as the opportunity to be a part of your children's lives. We have such wonderful families in the Toddler Program!

Regards,  
Siobain, Jennifer, Carolyn and Molly

