

Los Altos - Mountain View

Children's Corner



PARENT HANDBOOK

August 2011



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Philosophy

OUR FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

We are open year round from 8:30 – 5:30, Monday – Friday, with 8:00 – 8:30 available by special arrangement. Contracts are available for M, W, F or Tu & Th mornings, afternoons, or full days. Families needing additional days at preschool are welcome to use our drop-in program with which time may be reserved up to a week in advance. Unused contract days may be bought, sold, or donated to any interested Children's Corner members on our Yahoo Group.

PURPOSE

Children's Corner is a non-profit corporation licensed by the State of California.

Children's Corner was founded by parents, who continue to play an important role in its management and operation.

PROGRAM

We enroll children from two years of age through kindergarten age.

We offer four distinct programs:

- Our twos and young threes classroom has 12-15 children and three teachers.
- Our three and young fours classroom 15-18 children with four teachers
- Our four and young fives classroom has 20-24 children with four teachers.
- A Young Fives Program (located at the Clark House, less than a mile from the Hillview site) for children who just miss the Kindergarten deadline or for those children whose parents want to give them an extra year before Kindergarten. This classroom has 12 children with two teachers.

We emphasize meeting the needs of each child, recognizing individual temperaments, and developmental levels.

The underlying premise of our program is that CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH DISCOVERY, EXPLORATION, AND HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES. At Children's Corner, we believe that the primary purpose of early childhood education is to develop each child's innate love of learning. We provide an environment that is safe, both physically and emotionally, and that encourages free exploration and discovery. We want to provide a relaxed and unhurried atmosphere that allows children to become deeply involved in the activities that interest them. David L. Kirp, professor of public policy, University of California Berkeley is quoted as saying: "From John Dewey to Jean Piaget, educators have agreed that...small children learn mainly from interacting and not passive listening, understanding and not memorizing, reading for fun and not simply decoding."

One of the most significant elements of our program is the interaction between adults and children. For this reason, staff are chosen for their qualities of warmth and empathy as well as for their experience, knowledge of early childhood development, and education.

We want Children's Corner to provide a sense of community for parents as well as for children. Please feel free to visit with your child in the classroom. We encourage parents to get to know one another and to exchange ideas with staff about policies and the program. We depend on your feedback so that we can continually adjust our program to meet the needs of our members. We offer several channels of communication: the directors, the teachers, and the office staff. We encourage parents to speak directly with teachers and staff. In addition, we have an anonymous suggestion box in the office. We are happy to arrange appointments for individual conferences.

Our well-trained and experienced staff plans a curriculum that balances structure and exploration. Supported by caring, knowledgeable teachers and surrounded by friends, children experiment with new skills and gain confidence and motivation from their emerging abilities.

For contract users, we require a minimum of one block of time on two different days per week. We find that less frequent attendance often makes it difficult for some children to feel really connected.

We are often asked whether a few long days per week at Children's Corner are better for children than several shorter ones. In general, we find that shorter days are better, if you have that option. The stimulation of being in a large group all day can be tiring for some young children. We do offer a nap/rest time for children who need it.

If you choose to enroll your child in other group programs in addition to Children's Corner, please let the teachers know. It is often difficult for young children to adjust to multiple sets of rules, teachers, and groups of children. You and we will need to watch carefully for signs of stress and confusion.

As an additional service to parents, we offer a drop-in option. Parents may extend contract time occasionally or use drop-in on days not in their contracts, but you should be aware that children who attend Children's Corner irregularly or infrequently may have difficulty feeling comfortable here. This is not usually a problem when drop-in is added to contract use, or when the child attends on a regular basis (two to three times a week), but some children do find it hard to come on days other than their regular ones.

Approach to Children

The informality of Children's Corner's program and environment is the result of careful planning and structuring to take into account the skills and needs of individual children as well as those of the group.

We try to create a homey environment in which warmth, caring, trust, respect, and love can grow. We want to be a haven from the high-stress world, a place where children's personalities and abilities can flower.

When children first come to Children's Corner, parents are encouraged to work with teachers to develop a plan to transition children into the program. Parents are welcome to stay with their children until they are comfortable with the separation. Teachers are always willing to help with the process and we encourage parents to ask teachers for help when they are ready to leave.

GOALS

Guided by the work of developmental psychologists Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson, we have set these goals:

1. To develop each child's sense of autonomy, self-awareness, and confidence in his or her own abilities.
2. To develop each child's ability to make choices and decisions, and to take responsibility for the consequences of those choices and decisions.
3. To develop each child's ability to work cooperatively with other children and adults in a group setting, and to share leadership.
4. To develop concern and awareness of other people's feelings.
5. To develop each child's self-discipline and ability to complete self-initiated goals.
6. To develop each child's knowledge of objects, skill in the arts, and comfort with physical movement.
7. To develop each child's ability to express thoughts, ideas and feelings and to speak about, dramatize and graphically represent experiences in order to communicate them to others.
8. To develop each child's ability to comprehend other's spoken, dramatic and simple graphic representations (not reading and writing).
9. To develop each child's creativity, initiative, spirit of inquiry, openness to knowledge, and other people's points of view.

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline as we see it is to help children learn to control themselves and balance their needs with those of other people. With these goals in mind, we handle broken rules, disruptive behavior, and lack of cooperation in a firm, direct, and non-judgmental manner. We never use corporal punishment and shaming, blaming, or labeling.

Depending on the age and temperament of the child, we may use restatement of the rules, ignoring the behavior, redirection, logical and natural consequences, problem solving with the child or, ultimately, restraint or time out with a teacher.

We do as much as we can to prevent the need for discipline by careful environmental management, reasonable expectations, and appropriate scheduling.

We really only have one rule:

You may not hurt yourself, other people, or things, either physically or verbally.

CONFERENCES

At the beginning of each school year, teachers ask parents to complete a Family Information Form about their child(ren), which addresses learning style, family culture and language(s) used in the home, and any other information that might be useful to teachers in helping your child succeed at school.

Individual parent-teacher conferences are offered twice a year (fall and spring). Other conferences may be scheduled upon parent or teacher request. The conferences serve these purposes:

1. To enhance the parent/teacher partnership.
2. To share information and observations about the child's developmental progress.

Teachers evaluate children's progress in terms of his/her social-emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Through observation in the classrooms and play yards, teachers identify areas of strength and areas requiring additional support. These observational assessments help teachers set goals for individual children and individualize curriculum. Each classroom also uses assessment tools prepared by the teachers that are developmentally appropriate for each classroom.

3. To plan together how best to encourage further development.

IS CHILDREN'S CORNER THE RIGHT PLACE?

Occasionally, we find that we are not able to provide the appropriate program for a particular child, and we must terminate enrollment. In these circumstances, we work closely with you to assess the child's needs and to find a more suitable program, making use of outside resources as appropriate.

Daily Schedule

Please regard this as an example of the flow of daily activities. The actual schedule varies from time to time and from room to room.

- 8:00 Room 6 opens, as needed
- 8:30 Rooms 5 and C open
- 9:00 Inside and outside choices
- 9:30 Snack
- 10:15 Inside and outside choices (*)
Table activities and art projects
- 12:00 Lunch (*)
- 12:30 Afternoon transition
- 1:00 Nap/rest time (optional- Room 5)
Inside and outside choices (*)
- 3:00 Group time, snack (Rooms 6 and C)
- 3:30 Inside and outside choices (*)
- 4:45 Clean up and snack
- 5:15 Stories
- 5:30 Afternoon ends

(*) Diapering and toileting are provided at these times and as needed throughout the day.

Choices may include self-initiated or teacher-directed activities. Children may play alone, in a small group, or with a large group. Areas of interest may include dramatic play, blocks, art, cooking, music, stories, carpentry, science, “large muscle” activities such as bike riding, climbing or obstacle courses and “quiet” activities, such as puzzles or other table activities, games, writing table, and books.

Management

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Parents become members of Children's Corner upon payment of the annual fee. Members annually elect a board of directors composed of six - twelve parents and community members who serve voluntarily for two-year terms. The Board oversees the entire operation of Children's Corner and is ultimately accountable to the membership on any issue. The Board is responsible for setting policy, financial oversight, and hiring the executive director.

We pride ourselves on the high level of cooperation and mutual respect among the Board, Staff and Members which enable us to bring unified energy to maintaining and improving our fine program.

The Board meets once a month in the evening. Any member is welcome to attend. Please check with the office for the exact dates, times, and place.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND SITE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of Children's Corner. The Executive Director and the Site Director hire the office and program staff. The Site Director supervises the office and program staff, and helps the staff plan the program for the children. The Executive Director oversees daily financial management, facility maintenance, and maintains relationships with the Department of Social Services (licensing agent), the City of Los Altos, insurance agents, and early childhood education professional associations. Both directors are available to talk with parents about their children and the program and to receive feedback about the program.

PROGRAM STAFF

Our teachers have education, training, and experience in early childhood development. They and the teacher assistants are chosen for the ability to see children as individuals and to interact in a warm, positive, and nurturing manner. Teachers welcome the opportunity to talk with you at any time in order to develop and strengthen their partnership with you for the care of your child.

OFFICE STAFF

Our office is generally staffed all day for your convenience in making scheduling arrangements and payments. The office staff is thoroughly familiar with all the program and policies, and is happy to answer any questions you might have.

Parent Involvement

We encourage families to participate. We send a monthly e-News (sent via email) describing the happenings at Children's Corner. We also post information in classrooms, on gates, and the bulletin board outside the office. Watch for event posters, reminder emails, Facebook and Twitter.

PARENT WORKDAY

A \$300.00 deposit per family is due by September 1 annually. Families joining after January 31 will have this deposit pro-rated on a semi-annual basis. Deposit(s) will be refunded upon your participation in one/two five-hour workdays. At least one workday is required during the first six-month period. However, both workdays may be completed during the first six month period. Participation may be forfeited and the deposit transferred to a tax-deductible contribution.

We encourage families to participate at Children's Corner and welcome parents to share your skills, talents, interests, and traditions with the children and staff. Children love to have a parent participate at school.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

We have regular Family Dinner Nights for parents and children to visit with other families and staff. We have a Back to School Night in September each year, our annual Intergenerational Thanksgiving Celebration in November and "Spend Time in Your Child's Classroom Days" in April. Spring also brings our Concert and Auction Fundraiser.

FUNDRAISING

To finance our program adequately we must raise about \$20,000 per year through special events. The Board plans and executes these activities with the support of staff and the participation of members.

We count on two to three major fundraisers each year, including:

- The capital improvements solicitation
- Spring Fundraisers
- The e-Scrip program

We also raise additional amounts through the sale of products chosen for member interest and quality.

PARENT SERVICES

In addition to providing high-quality children's programming, we look for ways to serve parents.

We maintain a library of books and periodicals on child development and rearing for your use. Our

staff is prepared to make referrals to community resources that serve children and families. Several times throughout the year we arrange social events where parents and families can become better acquainted including family dinner nights.

We value your suggestions on parent services.

Parent's Rights

1. You have the right to review your child's file, request a conference with a Director (or his/her designee) regarding any action that is taken by the agency in regard to your child's services, or discuss any concerns you have with your child's teacher by asking for a parent/teacher conference.
2. Custodial parents/guardians, upon presentation of identification, have the right to enter and inspect the room(s) in which their child(ren) is attending without advance notice. Entry and inspection rights are limited to the normal operating hours while their child (ren) is (are) receiving care.
3. The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child or parent/guardian for exercising his/her right to inspect the center or for voicing any complaints or concerns.
4. The law requires that parents/guardians be notified of their right to enter and inspect, as described herein, and that a notice of this right be posted in the office.
5. The law authorizes the person in charge of Children's Corner to deny access to a parent/guardian under the following circumstances:
 - a. The parent/guardian is behaving in a way, which poses a risk to children in the facility, or denying children and staff of their personal rights.
 - b. The adult is a non-custodial parent and the facility has been requested in writing by the custodial parent to not permit access to the non-custodial parent. When the custodial parent does not list the non-custodial parent on the child's emergency card, we regard this as the custodial parent's written denial of the non-custodial parent's right to access.
 - c. If there is an active court order on file at Children's Corner prohibiting or limiting a non-custodial parent from visiting, Children's Corner will observe and enforce the court order using whatever means necessary, taking into consideration the safety of all parties involved.
 - d. Custodial parents/guardians or prospective parents have a right to inspect the agency's licensing file during normal operating hours with reasonable notification of request.

Children's Personal Rights

Each child receiving services from Children's Corner shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following under the law. "The right:

1. To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other persons.
2. To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his/her needs.
3. To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature including, but not limited to, interference with the daily living functions including eating, sleeping, or toileting, or withholding shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
4. To be informed and to have the authorized representative informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the licensing agency's complaint receiving unit, and of information regarding confidentiality.
5. Not to be locked up in any room, building, or facility premises by day or night.
6. Not to be placed in any restraining devices, except a supportive restraint approved in advanced by the licensing agency."

Section 80072, and 101223, Title 22, California Administrative Code.

Staff Rights

All staff has the right:

1. To be treated respectfully by other staff, parents, and children.
2. To work with healthy children and to be free from exposure to disease.
3. To be free to develop a curriculum based upon developmentally appropriate practices.
4. To be able to leave work at the scheduled hour (this means that children will be picked up at the scheduled time).
5. To feel safe and to work in a non-threatening environment.
6. To be talked to respectfully and professionally by staff, parents, and children.
7. To be listened to with respect and heard by staff and parents.
8. To be appreciated for the hard work of providing the best programs/services for your child.

Rights Of The Licensing Agency

General Licensing Requirements Section 101200

A. The Department of Social Services shall have the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or center records, without prior consent.

1. Children's Corner is required to make provisions for private interviews with any child (ren) or any staff member and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the Center to the Department of Social Services, the State Department of Education and other funding/regulatory sources.

B. The Department of Social Services shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child (ren), including conditions which could indicate, abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement.

The California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing licenses Children's Corner. The local licensing agency:

Santa Clara County
2580 N. First Street
Suite 300, MS 29-08
San Jose, CA 95131
(408)324-2148

Policies And Procedures

PRIVACY NOTICE/CONFIDENTIALITY

This Privacy Notice describes how we deal with personal information about children and families. We may change our practices in this area from time to time, and will let you know if this Privacy Notice is changed.

What Information Do We Collect?

We work to maintain accurate information about our families. We may collect personal information about your children from the following sources:

- Information we receive from you, such as information on applications or other forms.
- Information about your transactions with us or others.

What Information Do We Disclose And To Whom?

We do not discuss any personal information about families to anyone, except as required by law.

How Do We Protect Confidentiality?

We restrict access to personal information about children and families to those employees who need to know that information to provide care for your child(ren). We maintain physical, and procedural safeguards to guard your personal information, including keeping children's records in locked cabinets.

CONCERNS

Families who have concerns should discuss them with the appropriate Children's Corner employee. For many concerns, the first person you will contact is your child's teacher and then the Site Director or Executive Director. If you are not satisfied, you may send a written complaint to our Board of Directors. If initial discussion with the appropriate employee or Board representative does not result in satisfactory resolution, families may choose to follow the complaint procedure.

HOLIDAYS & HOURS

Hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. by contract only).

We are closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving, and the day after
- The last two weeks of December
- Usually 2 days in March or November for staff development
- Three days in late August for classroom preparation

The exact dates of closing are announced at least one month in advance.

CONTRACTS

We offer a variety of full time and part-time contracts.

When contracts are all taken, we keep a waiting list. Priority for additions or changes is given first to those currently holding contracts, then to siblings of contract holders and then to people on the waiting list.

You may place your child's name on the contract waiting list when your child is 12 months old.

NOTICE OF CHANGES

Your contract remains in effect until we receive one month's written notice of your intention to change or cancel your contract. This allows us time to sell the space to another family. We must charge for contracts for four weeks from the day you give us notice, although you can try to sell your unused time to other members, as described in the contract description under "Fees and Payment".

Drop-In

RESERVATIONS

For members only, reservations are available up to one week in advance, by phone at any hour or in person during office hours. In order to welcome children properly and to minimize disruptions to planned activities, drop-in care cannot begin or end in the windows 9:35-10:30 a.m. and 2:35-3:30 p.m. Therefore, if you make a reservation beginning at 9:30 or 2:30, you must arrive promptly or expect to wait until 10:30 or 3:30 respectively to leave your child.

CANCELLATIONS

There is no charge for cancellations made before 8:30 a.m. on the day preceding the reservation. Without a cancellation, you must pay for the time reserved, even if you do not use it at all.

HOURS

Reservations must begin and end on the hour or half hour.

General

FORMS

In accordance with State law, we must have the following forms completed for each child before the child can stay at Children's Corner:

- Identification and Emergency Form
- Medical authorization
- Physician's Report, including documentation of immunizations, signed by your child's physician
- Admission agreement (Contract)
- Signed receipt for information about personal and parent rights and other forms as required by licensing agency

Children's Corner also requires:

- Health History
- Membership List Form
- Parent Policy Agreement
- Photograph Permission
- Field Trip Permission

SIGNING IN AND OUT

State regulation requires that you sign your child in upon arrival and out upon departure. Sheets for signing in and out are available in each classroom.

It is important that you give accurate information when signing in so that we can reach a responsible adult quickly in the event of illness or emergency. Signing out is also important - the information on the sheets is used to account for children during fire drills and actual disasters.

MOVING TO THE NEXT ROOM

When children enroll at Children's Corner, they are assigned a room based on their birth year. Children move from their current room once a year to the next age appropriate room at the beginning of our new school year around the 19th of August. While the children typically move up to the next room based on their chronological age, teachers will also be assessing the developmental readiness of each child. The teachers and administration are glad to have a discussion with the parent(s) should there be any concerns about the transition.

Teachers have a discussion with each parent about their child's transition and the process before the change happens. The child along with a few of his/her peers and their teacher will visit the next room several times during the summer months for short periods of time. This gives them an opportunity to become familiar with the new teachers and environment. We have found that children who make the transition with their peers are much more comfortable and ready for the challenges of the next room in the new school year rather than moving children individually.

ILLNESS

State law prohibits us from accepting sick children. Please see "Health Policy" for specific guidelines. If your child becomes ill while at Children's Corner, you must pick up the child as soon as possible.

MEDICATION

We can give your child prescribed medicine only under strictly controlled conditions. Please refer to the "Medication Policy" before bringing medicine.

PARKING

So that emergency vehicles have access to the building, please do not park in the red zone in front of the Community Center. Park only in designated parking spaces.

MEMBERSHIP

Children's Corner provides services for all children regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or religion.

Fees and Payments

FEES

All fees are subject to change with one month's notice.

Contract and Drop-In Rates - See current fee schedule.

Annual Fee - \$25.00 per family (plus \$5.00 for non-residents of Los Altos.) For occasional users who do not wish to become members, there is a registration fee of \$5.00 per visit.

Work Day Deposit - \$300 annually, due by September 1st.

Late fee - \$15.00 per quarter hour or fraction thereof beyond your scheduled time or after 5:30 p.m.

Lunch Fee - \$7.00 for us to prepare a lunch for your child.

Diaper Fee - \$1.00 per diaper that we must provide.

PAYMENTS

Contracts

- Payments for contract time are due on the 25th of the month preceding the month for which the contract is in effect.
- Payments are due the twenty-fifth of the previous month and are delinquent after the first contract day in the new month. The penalty for delinquent payment is 10% of the payment due or \$10.00, whichever is greater. Contracts not paid for by the 15th may be cancelled by Children's Corner.
- Sorry, there are no refunds for unused contract time. However, you can try to sell contract time to other members through our Yahoo group. When you have sold time, you must let the office staff know who will be taking your child's place.

Drop-In

- Drop-in fees must be paid on the day incurred.
- We prefer that you pay by check. If you do pay in cash, please be prepared to provide exact change. Payments are made in the office.
- There is a \$5.00 charge for drop-in fees not paid on the day incurred.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Requests for financial assistance are reviewed on an individual basis by the Executive Director and a committee appointed by the Board of Directors. Usually, assistance is given only for a limited time.

You might also reduce your fees through:

- An exchange of in-kind services, through an explicit agreement worked out with the Executive Director

Please speak with an office staff member or the Executive Director for more information.

What to Bring

Lunch - Labeled with name. Please, no glass containers. Lunchtime is between 11:45 and 12:15.

Please do not bring chewing gum or lollipops. Grapes and hot dogs must be cut length-wise.

Children's Corner provides 3 snacks daily: 1 mid-morning and 2 in the afternoon. A snack list is posted in each classroom.

Clothing- 2 sets of clothing for all children who enjoy water play, messy activities, and who are not completely toilet-trained. Please label all clothing.

Diapers - disposable

Security Items - Blanket, pacifier, bottles, and other items that help the child make a smooth transition from home.

Toys - Personal toys may be brought only during sharing weeks, which differ from room to room. Although personal toys often create conflict with other children, we are willing to help your child learn how to deal with sharing. We cannot assume responsibility if toys are lost or broken.

Please do not bring guns, swords, or other weapons.

Arrival and Departure

We all agree that the safety of our children is the fundamental concern of both parents and teachers. Arrival and departure times can present many demands on our attention, which can mean additional risk for the children. To reduce the risk of accidents, we have established guidelines clarifying the roles of staff and parents at arrival and departure times.

Upon arrival, we want you to feel welcome to stay as long as you like to help your child settle in or to observe and visit. We will let you know if the presence of additional people is creating problems for the scheduled children and teachers. Please have your child wash hands as they enter the classroom. Thank you for helping our classes stay healthy.

You are responsible for your child as long as you remain on the premises, and at Children's Corner events. At the request of the City of Los Altos we have been asked to remind you to supervise your children while on the Community Center property as the center is shared by many groups and ages.

We ask that you keep a close eye on and assume totally responsibility at all times for the care and safety of other children (siblings, friends, etc) who may accompany you when dropping off and picking up your child.

Anyone picking up a child may be asked to show a valid photo ID. If you have a friend or relative pick up your child please remind them to bring a valid photo ID with them. We will only release a child to persons authorized and listed on the child's Emergency Card by the enrolling parent/guardian.

Health Policy

Children initially have a higher rate of illness when first enrolled in a group setting. However, research shows that children who attend preschool acquire a strengthened immune system and experience a lower incidence of illness throughout the elementary school years compared with children who did not attend preschool.

At Children's Corner we promote a healthy environment and discourage the spread of diseases in several ways:

- Staff and children wash hands when entering the classroom at the beginning of the day and throughout the day, but especially before handling food or eating and after using the bathroom and diapering.
- Staff are trained in Preventative Health Practices and implement Universal Precautions as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Classrooms, toys and equipment are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Children with communicable diseases or conditions are excluded from school as required by the Health Department.

We can greatly reduce the incidence and severity of illness at Children's Corner if we work cooperatively to prevent the rapid spread of communicable disease.

The California School Immunization Law requires that children be completely immunized before enrollment in Children's Corner. Children must have received three doses of polio vaccine, four doses of DPT vaccine and one dose each of measles, mumps, rubella vaccines, one Hib after the first birthday, three Hep B, and one Varicella. We must receive a written record provided by the physician or agency performing the immunizations. The law allows exemptions for medical reasons or for personal beliefs. The reasons for exemptions must be stated in writing. Because we believe strongly in the value of immunizations, we provide information about relative risks of disease versus immunization for those contemplating personal beliefs exemption.

If your child is under-immunized for a vaccine-preventable disease, and an outbreak should occur, your child must be excluded from school for the length of time determined by the California Department of Public Health.

A health assessment is made of each child upon arrival. Children showing any signs of illness according to our health policy are not accepted. We discuss health concerns directly with you. If your child becomes ill while at Children's Corner, the staff contacts you and asks you to pick the child up immediately. A child must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning.

Please let us know if your child contracts a communicable disease such as chicken pox, giardiasis, shigellosis, hepatitis, meningitis, or measles. You will be notified if your child is exposed to a communicable disease while here.

Criteria for Child's Staying Home- Symptom List

Fever - 101° orally, 102° rectally, 100° axillar.

Diarrhea and Colds - See next page for details.

Ear Infections - Fever or lethargy, nausea, vomiting, loose stools, drainage, irritability, tugging on ears. Child may return to center when on medication for 24 hours and after constitutional symptoms are gone.

Eye Infection - With yellow or green drainage. Child must be on medication 24 hours and have no drainage before returning to the center.

Cough - A wet, wheezy cough with mucus secretion

Vomiting - Recurring or with fever

Skin Infections or Rash - With drainage - Child with dried skin lesions may come to the center.

Lice, Scabies, and Other Parasites - Child may return to the center after appropriate treatment and shampoo.

Other Communicable Infections - A child may return when infectious symptoms have subsided and child is feeling better. In some instances, a physician's release may be required.

HEALTH POLICIES FOR DIARRHEA AND COLDS

Diarrhea - Frequent watery, loose or mucousy bowel movements.

All cases of diarrhea must be reported to the center and the cause explained. Diarrhea has more serious consequences than catching a cold. Severe dehydration can lead to hospitalization. The risks of spreading serious intestinal illness associated with diarrhea are more serious than the risk of spreading colds.

A child with diarrhea can come to the center if

- Child has had one loose movement without other physical symptoms before coming to the center.

A child with diarrhea must stay home if

- Diarrhea is accompanied by additional signs of illness (fever, runny nose, vomiting, irritability, lack of appetite, lethargy).

Colds and Runny Nose

A child can come to the center with

- Clear runny nose with no other symptoms.
- Clear runny nose caused by teething or allergy.

A child must stay home with

- Runny nose with fever, lack of appetite, lethargy or irritability.
- Runny nose that is yellow or green unless there is documentation by a physician that the child is not contagious.
- Runny nose plus vomiting.
- Runny nose plus other signs of illness.

Any symptoms that persist for one or more weeks usually require medical attention.

Medication Policy

We can administer prescription drugs with your explicit authorization, according to these procedures:

1. Parents must:
 - a. Read and sign acknowledgement of the medication policy.
 - b. Bring only the exact dose we are to give, in the original container or medication must be measured out in front of lead teacher, a Director or designee. Travel bottles are available from the pharmacist.
 - c. Fill out a Parent Request Form, which includes explicit instructions for administration, emergency instructions and a signature.
 - d. Give the container to the lead teacher only who is responsible for seeing that the medication policy is followed.
2. The lead teachers designate a safe place in each room or office, out of reach of children, for “medications storage”.
3. The lead teacher personally administers medication. The director administers medication in the lead teacher’s absence.
4. Upon receipt of medication and before administering medication, the teacher
 - a. Verifies that the information on the container matches the information on the Parent Request Form.
 - b. Verifies that the prescription is for the intended child
 - c. Double-checks to make sure that he or she is giving the correct medication to the right child.
 - d. Wash hands before administering medication.

It is against the law to give a prescription medication to someone other than the intended patient. Never put any medications in children’s lunches or cubbies.

5. After administering the medication, the teacher or director completes the appropriate section on the Parent Request Form.
6. In the event of an adverse reaction to the medication, the lead teacher notifies a director immediately for assistance in following the parent’s emergency instructions.

Health and Safety

MINOR INJURIES AT SCHOOL

During active play, especially outdoors, children typically experience some bumps and bruises.

If your child is injured at school, a staff member will let you know. You will also receive an accident report at pick up time. The accident report will cover the details of the injury - how it happened and what first aid or care the teacher provided. All staff are certified in CPR and First Aid and every classroom has a first aid kit. If you have any questions about the injury or the accident report, please speak to your child's teacher or director as soon as possible.

Please let your child's teacher know when you drop your child off if your child was injured at home.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If your child should need medical attention beyond first aid, a staff member will contact you immediately and call for emergency medical help (911) if appropriate.

If we are unable to reach you, we will contact those people you have listed on your child's emergency card as authorized to pick up your child. Current contact information for you and your authorized representatives is critical. Please update this information as needed.

If your child must be transported to a hospital, a Children's Corner staff person will accompany your child and will stay with your child until you arrive.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

According to California State Law, Children's Corner staff is required to contact Child Protective Services if there are reasons to believe or suspect that a child is being neglected or abused.

Should you have difficulty in providing for your child's emotional or physical needs or safety, you are encouraged to ask for help. Please talk to either our Executive Director or Site Director who can help you to locate community resources that can offer assistance.

MEGAN'S LAW

The State of California passed legislation that allows you to check with local law enforcement agencies to see if there are people residing near your home or your childcare center who are registered sex offenders. Registered sex offenders include people convicted of crimes ranging from indecent exposure to rape or molestation.

CAR SEAT LAW

California Vehicle Code states that children must be in an approved car seat until they are 6 years of age or older; OR weigh 60 pounds or more. Children's Corner is required by law to notify Child Protective Services and our local police authorities of non-compliance with this regulation.

Field Trip Policy

Children's Corner plans field trips for Room C and Young 5's children throughout the year. Well-chosen, age-appropriate field trips both stimulate social interaction and reinforce concepts presented in the monthly themes. Field trips can provide sensory experiences that we cannot duplicate within the classroom and play areas. Our field trips might take us to nearby nature centers or museums, police or fire stations, small businesses, farms and other places in the community.

We have formal policies to ensure the safety of all children on field trips. The policies vary with the kind of field trip, as described below.

On all field trips, teachers carry a list of participating children with medical release forms, a first aid kit, and a cell phone. A collection of signed permissions is left with the office staff, along with a statement of the exact destination, an emergency phone number if possible, and an expected time of return.

When planning field trips, we always consider children's physical needs, such as restrooms and drinking water. We try to avoid scheduling field trips that conflict with nap times.

WALKING FIELD TRIPS

We distinguish between two kinds of walking field trips.

Spontaneous walking field trips (Rooms 5, 6, and C) - Brief trips within the boundaries of the Hillview Community Center. Spontaneous walking field trips allow us to take nature walks, play motor development games on the grass, and enjoy events planned in other Community Center classrooms. When you enroll your child in Children's Corner, you sign a general permission form that covers these trips. On the day of a spontaneous walking field trip, a notice is posted near the sign-in sheet.

Scheduled walking field trips (Room C) - Trips within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile radius of the Hillview Community Center grounds. From Children's Corner we can walk to History House, the police or fire station, the Los Altos Nursery, and a number of small businesses. We notify you in advance of all scheduled walking field trips. We require written permission for any trips off the Hillview Community Center property. Watch for field trip enrollment lists near the sign-in sheets.

On all walking field trips, we maintain a ratio of at least one adult to six children. If we must cross San Antonio Road, we maintain a ratio of at least one adult to four children.

MAJOR FIELD TRIPS (ROOM C AND YOUNG 5'S)

We consider field trips that require transportation to be major field trips. Major field trips are always scheduled in advance, with notification to parents. We require written permission slips. We post sign-up sheets for major field trips near the sign-in area several days ahead of time.

We try to plan major field trips so that Room C children have some field-trip opportunities during their contract time. We vary the days on which we schedule field trips, and we plan duplicate trips on different days whenever possible. We also offer drop in spaces for some of our trips. We make provisions within the regular program for children unable or unwilling to attend. We rent a bus from a certified transportation service for major field trips.

When your child participates in a major field trip, you are asked to pay any costs of admission, transportation or other special expenses. Children's Corner pays such costs for parents whose presence is necessary to maintain the required adult-to-child ratio.

Transportation for Young 5's monthly field trips is determined by the destination and parent participation. See teacher for details.

History of Children's Corner

Children's Corner was founded in 1979 as a non-profit, drop-in center by the Los Altos -Mountain View Branch of the American Association of University Women. It was first located in the Los Altos Lutheran Church, where a staff of three cared for up to 15 two-to five-year-olds at any one time between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. In 1981, after growing to a capacity of 24, we moved to Hillview Community Center on contract with the City of Los Altos Recreation Department, where we occupied Room C only, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

In November 1981, in response to community demand, we opened the Infant Center in Room 6 to serve 3 to 24 month olds. The Infant Center was phased out, closing completely in December 1984 due to a combination of factors: concern about the appropriateness of drop-in care for this age group, difficulty in finding qualified staff, and financial security.

The demand for our service continued to grow. We acquired use of Room 5 (shared with the Recreation Department evenings and weekends) and the office. At one point we reached a licensed capacity of 60 and still had waiting lists on many days.

With our growth came problems. Serving the children of about 300 families on a virtually infinite variety of schedules, the teachers were hard pressed to provide the individual, personal interactions that have been our hallmark. Despite the numbers, it became increasingly difficult to make ends meet financially without an unreasonable amount of fundraising.

So, in September 1985, we instituted a regular contract program to our drop-in program. We are pleased with the stability the change has brought to our program and our finances. We continue to refine our service and to look for new ways to improve our offerings to children and parents, which is why we added full time care in Children's Corner and a Young Fives Program off-site.

Children's Corner continues to enjoy an amiable relationship with the City of Los Altos, from whom we lease our space. We are, however, legally an independent non-profit corporation. Our funding is completely dependent on fees for service and monies we raise through grants and special events. Donations are tax-deductible.

TAX ID NUMBER

Our Tax Identification Number is provided for those who wish to use the childcare credit on their personal income tax returns. The IRS requires us, and all other tax-exempt organizations, to permit any individual to review our tax returns upon request at our office. Our Federal Tax ID number is 94-2529102.