

Los Altos - Mountain View

# Children's Corner



# PARENT HANDBOOK

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# Children's Corner Mission Statement

Children's Corner provides a developmentally appropriate preschool experience for children two years of age through Kindergarten with flexible scheduling for the families of Los Altos, Mountain View, and the surrounding communities.

We are committed to providing an inclusive experience for all children, with or without identified special needs, and their families, including opportunities for: developing a sense of belonging and membership; engaging in positive social relationships and friendships; and encouraging physical, social, and cognitive development so that each child is able to reach his or her full potential.

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

# 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 between 9:00am and 3:00pm.

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 between 8:30am and 4:00pm. In November of that year, in response to community demand, we opened the Infant Center in Room 6 to serve 3 to 24 month olds. The Infant Center closed in December 1984 due to our concerns about drop-in care for that age group, as well as the high costs of maintaining such a program.

As the demand for our services continued to grow, we acquired use of Room 5 and the office. At one point we reached a licensed capacity of 60 and still had waiting lists on many days. But with growth came challenges. Serving the children of about 300 families on a virtually infinite variety of schedules, our teachers were hard-pressed to provide the individual, personal interactions that have been our hallmark. Despite high attendance, it became increasingly difficult to make ends meet financially without relying heavily on fundraising.

In September 1985, we introduced a regular contract program in addition to our drop-in program. This change brought the program the stability and financial security that allows us to stay focused on providing excellent care and developing opportunities for the children.

Another example of how we've sought to provide further value to our community was adding a full-time schedule as well as a Young Fives Program off-site. The Young Fives Program was discontinued in 2016 once local public schools began offering Transitional Kindergarten.

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. *All donations to our school are tax-deductible.*

## Tax ID Number

Children's Corner is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation licensed by the State of California. 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 942529102.

# Philosophy & Approach

*“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.”*

--David L. Kirp, professor of public policy, University of California Berkeley

At Children’s Corner, we believe that the primary purpose of early childhood education is to develop each child’s innate love of learning. The underlying premise of our program is that CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH DISCOVERY, EXPLORATION, AND HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES. To this purpose, 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. We further focus on meeting the needs of each child by recognizing individual temperaments and developmental levels.

One of the most significant elements of our program is the interaction between adults and children. For this reason, staff are chosen for their warmth and empathy as well as for their education, experience, and knowledge of early childhood development. Our well-trained and experienced staff plans a curriculum that balances structure and exploration. Supported by caring, knowledgeable teachers and surrounded by friends, children can experiment with new skills and gain confidence and motivation from their emerging abilities.

Children’s Corner aims 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. We are always happy to arrange appointments for individual conferences.

## School Goals

Guided by the work of developmental psychologists Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson, we have set the following 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 awareness of, and concern for, 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, and openness to knowledge and to 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. Our primary rule is: *You may not hurt yourself, other people, or things, either physically or verbally.* We do as much as we can to prevent the need for discipline by careful environmental management, reasonable expectations, and appropriate scheduling.

With these developmental 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, 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, and/ or joint problem solving.

## Is Children's Corner Right for Your Family?

Making a care decision for your child and family can be a daunting experience, so in addition to the tours we offer, we are always happy to answer any questions you may have about our program. We offer a flexible schedule to best meet the different needs of our families. Below are some considerations to help you decide if Children's Corner is a good fit for your needs:

For contract users, we require a minimum of one block of time on two different days per week. We find that less frequent attendance 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.

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. For children in this situation, we need to watch carefully for signs of stress and confusion.

As an additional service to parents, we offer a drop-in option. Parents may also 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.

While we make every effort to help our families settle into the Children's Corner community, 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 help find a more suitable program, making use of outside resources as appropriate.

# School Management

## Board of Directors

Families become members of Children's Corner upon payment of the annual membership fee. Members annually elect a Board of Directors composed of six to 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 our Board, Staff, and member families. This enables us to bring unified energy to maintaining and improving our program.

The Board meets quarterly in the evening. Any member is welcome to attend these meetings. Board meeting times, dates, and locations are listed on the School Calendar you receive at the beginning of the school year.

## Executive Director & Site Director

The **Executive Director** is responsible for the day-to-day operation of Children's Corner by overseeing daily financial management, facility maintenance, and maintaining relationships with the Department of Social Services (licensing agent), the City of Los Altos, insurance agents, and early childhood education professional associations.

The **Site Director** supervises the office and program staff, manages staff schedules and training, and helps the staff plan the program for the children. The Executive Director and the Site Director share responsibility for hiring office and program staff.

Both directors are available to talk with parents about their children and the program and to receive feedback about the program. You can reach them at: [office@lamvchildrenscorner.org](mailto:office@lamvchildrenscorner.org).

## Program Staff

All our teachers have education, training, and experience in early childhood development. Both teachers and teacher assistants are chosen for their ability to see children as individuals and to interact with them 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 our program and policies, and is happy to answer any questions you might have.

# Parent Involvement

In addition to volunteering on the Board of Directors (see School Management section of this handbook for more information), there are many ways in which we encourage families to participate. We email parents a monthly e-newsletter describing the happenings at Children's Corner to keep you abreast of what is happening in the classroom and include a list of items each classroom may need. We also post information relevant to parents in classrooms, on gates, and on the bulletin board outside the office.

## Parent-Teacher 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). 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 a child's 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 class.
3. To plan together how best to encourage further development.

Other conferences may be scheduled upon parent or teacher request.

## Parent Service Day

When signing a contract with Children's Corner, families commit to working two five-hour service days per academic year and pay a refundable service day deposit. Deposits are refunded once parents complete their service days. Parents are offered several opportunities during the year to fulfill this commitment by signing up for school work days or special events (please note that *not all volunteering opportunities count towards fulfilling the service days*, so ask the office if you aren't sure).

At least one service day is required during the first six-month period of the academic year. If you know in advance that you cannot meet the service day commitment, you can reach out to the directors to inquire on other ways to fulfill the service commitment. If parents fail to meet this commitment, their deposit is forfeited and

becomes a tax-deductible contribution to Children's Corner. Families joining after January 31 will have this deposit pro-rated on a semi-annual basis.

## Fundraising & Donations

In addition to working on service days, parents can volunteer to help us organize our fundraising events. To finance our program adequately we must raise about \$30,000 per year through special events. We count on two to three major fundraisers each year, including:

- An annual fundraising campaign for program improvements, and
- A Spring Fundraising event, including a Children's Concert and Auction

In addition to our fundraising events and drives, we accept donations year-round and are very appreciative of employer-matched donations. There is also another easy way for parents to donate to Children's Corner at no cost to themselves:

- Amazon Smile - next time you are shopping on amazon.com, use the url **www.smile.amazon.com** instead and choose "Los Altos-Mountain View Children's Corner" as your preferred non-profit. A percentage of your purchases is donated quarterly by amazon. And it's completely free for you!

## Family Events at Children's Corner

Children's Corner has regular Family Dinner Nights for parents and children to visit with other families and staff, as well as Pizza in the Park nights during the summer and fall. Among the other events we plan are a Back to School Night in September, an Intergenerational Thanksgiving Celebration in November, and Family Days in April.

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

## 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. We value your suggestions on parent services.

# Our Programs

## Classrooms

Children's Corner has three classrooms, divided by age and developmental stage:

- Our twos and young threes classroom has 12-15 children and three teachers.
- Our threes and young fours classroom has 15-18 children with four teachers
- Our fours and young fives classroom has 20-24 children with four teachers.

## Student Placement

Placement is based on the child's age on September 1st of the contract year. **Children's Corner reserves the right to make the final decision on appropriate placement of a child when offering an enrollment space.**

When your child is 20+ months old you may schedule a Parent-Child visit, where you will spend time together in your child's future classroom. You may schedule three of these visits at no charge. A minimum of one visit is required.

## Moving to the Next Classroom

Classroom changes at Children's Corner follow an academic calendar format. Once a year in mid-August, children move as a cohort to the next age-appropriate room. While children typically move up to the next room based on their chronological age and developmental readiness, our teachers and the administration are glad to have a discussion with the parent(s) should there be any concerns about their child's transition.

To facilitate the transition, small groups of students, along with a teacher, will visit the next room several times during August. This gives them an opportunity to become better acquainted with the new teachers and class environment while having the support of a familiar teacher and friends.

We have found that transitioning children as a group once a year, rather than individually as they have their birthdays, makes it much easier for them to feel comfortable and ready for the challenges of the next room.

## Daily Schedule

Children's Corner classrooms are open year-round from 8:30am-5:30pm Monday-Friday. Care from 8:00-8:30 am is available by special arrangement.

Below is as an example of the flow of daily activities. The actual schedule can vary from time to time and from room to room, based on the needs of the children.

8:00	Office and early-care room open (as needed)
8:30	All rooms open
9:00	Inside and outside choices
10:00	Snack
10:15	Inside and outsides choices *
	Table activities and art projects
12:00	Lunch
12:30	Afternoon transition
1:00	Nap/rest time **
	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

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.

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

*\*\* Naps are offered to our full-time or full-day children in any room.*

## Holidays & Closures

Exact dates of closing are announced at least one month in advance. We are closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving, and the day after
- Two weeks at the end of December/ beginning of January
- Usually 2 days in March or November for staff development (You will receive a minimum of 30 days notice)
- Three days in mid to late August for classroom change preparations

For the current calendar, please visit our website. Hard copies of the calendar are available at the office.

## Arrivals & Departures

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.

**State regulation requires that a parent or guardian sign a child in upon arrival and out upon departure.** State regulations also require full signatures when signing a child in and out of the program. 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.

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 adults or children is creating problems for the scheduled children and teachers. Please have your child wash hands as soon as they enter the classroom. Thank you for helping our children and staff stay healthy!

You are responsible for your child as long as you remain on the premises, and for the duration of all Children's Corner events involving parents. At the request of the City of Los Altos, we remind you to supervise your children while on the Community Center property as the center is shared by many groups and ages. We also ask that you keep a close eye on and assume total 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. We ask that adults be the only ones opening and closing gates and doors to ensure that they are securely closed. **Please be sure that all gates are securely closed and latched after entering and exiting our campus.**

**Signing out is also important -- the information on the sheets is used to account for children during emergency drills and actual disasters.**

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 a parent/guardian and in possession of a valid photo ID.**

### **If you know you are going to be late...**

If you are stuck in traffic, stuck in a meeting, or are in another situation that will prevent you from picking up your child on time, call the office and let us know. We can extend your time by half an hour at a charge of \$10, instead of charging a late fee (\$15 per 15 minutes). This does not apply to time after 5:30pm.

## **What to Bring to School**

### **Lunch and beverages:**

- Lunch and beverages must be labeled with your child's name.
- No glass containers, please.
- Please do not bring chewing gum, lollipops or hard candy. Grapes, carrots, sausage, and hot dogs must be cut lengthwise.
- Please pack food that you know your child will eat--if they will not eat it at home, they probably will not eat it at school.
- Children's Corner provides 3 snacks daily: 1 mid-morning and 2 in the afternoon. A snack list is posted in each classroom.
- **Please note: Children's Corner is NOT a nut-free school.** We do not have any food restrictions. If your child has diagnosed food allergies, they will be placed at a designated table reserved for children with allergies for their safety. A teacher will be sitting at each table with the children.
- **Please inform the teachers if your child's meal has ingredients that you know may cause other children to have an allergic reaction** (e.g., peanuts, tree nuts, etc.). This allows teachers to be strategic when sitting children down for lunch.

**Clothing** - 3 sets of clothing for all children who enjoy water play, messy activities, and for toileting accidents. Please label all clothing and shoes.

**Diapers** - disposable diapers. In cases of emergency, Children's Corner will assess a fee per diaper provided by the school.

**Security Items** - Blanket, pacifier, bottles, and other items that help the child make a smooth transition from home. Please label any personal items your child brings.

**Toys** - Please check with your child's classroom teacher about bringing personal toys to school. We cannot assume responsibility for lost or broken toys. **Please do not bring balloons, toy guns, swords, or other toy weapons.**

## Field Trips

Children's Corner plans field trips throughout the year. Well chosen, age-appropriate field trips both stimulate social interaction and reinforce concepts presented in the monthly themes. Field trips also provide sensory experiences that we will not be able to 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 restroom and drinking water availability. We try to avoid scheduling field trips that conflict with nap times.

We distinguish between three kinds field trips, explained below.

### Walking Field Trips (All Rooms)

Spontaneous walking field trips are 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 by the Senior Center and 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)

These field trips are 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)

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 all 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.

# Enrollment, Contracts, & Drop-ins

## Our Flexible Scheduling

In addition to full-time contracts, we offer part-time schedules for MWF or TTh mornings, afternoons, or full days. Families needing additional days at preschool are welcome to use our drop-in program as available, which may be reserved up to a week and a day in advance.

## Enrollment

After taking a Parent Tour of Children's Corner, families have the option of filling out a wait list form. This gives our office your contact information and schedule preferences, which we use to offer spaces as they become available.

## New Students

After completing an initial Child Visit, families are given an **Enrollment Packet** to complete, which contains the following forms:

- Identification and Emergency Form
- Medical authorization
- Signed Physician's Report, including documentation of immunizations
- Signed receipt for information about personal and parent rights
- Health History
- Membership List Form
- Parent Policy Agreement
- Photograph Permission
- Field Trip Permission

Upon receipt of a complete **Enrollment Packet**, families sign a Contract and Membership Agreement. A child may begin attending Children's Corner on the start date specified on the Contract.

## Current Students

In November, we begin the Priority Enrollment process for current families who wish to enroll their child at Children's Corner for the following school year. At that time, families are able to let us know whether they would like to keep their current schedule or change to a new one.

If there is more interest than available space for a particular schedule, we keep an internal wait list based on date of notification. Available spaces are offered to current families before moving on to the external wait list.

## Contract

It is your responsibility as a member of Children's Corner to read and understand all parts of your contract.

### Notice of Contract Change or Cancellation

Should members terminate their contract or any portion of the student's schedule before it expires, the cancellation date shall be the last day of the calendar month which *follows* the month of Notice of Cancellation, or the last day of the current contract, whichever comes first. All prepaid tuition, fees, deposits, and rights to other considerations are forfeited upon cancellation.

### Buying, Selling, & Donating Time

All contract holders have the option to donate their time back to Children's Corner if they know in advance that their child will not be attending. In addition, if your child is sick and you know they will not be attending, you can **call or email the office before 8:30am that day to donate the time**. This donation must be made PRIOR to 8:30am in order to qualify for a donation receipt (this allows us to sell the spot to a drop-in family). Because we are a non-profit organization, your donation is tax-deductible and eligible for matching from employers that offer that benefit. Donation receipts are available from the office upon request. Please allow two weeks for receipt processing during tax season.

**Part-time contract holders** have the option to sell blocks of time to each other. The negotiation of price and payment is to be handled entirely between the parents, but *both parties must notify the office in writing/ by email of the sale before the day when the time has been sold.*

**Full-time contract holders** CANNOT buy or sell time to other families.

## Waitlist

When classrooms are full, we keep a waitlist. Priority for additions or changes to a contract are given first to current contract holders, then to siblings of contract holders, and then to people on the external wait list. You may place your child's name on the waiting list once they are one year old.

Due to the large number of potential schedules we offer and the tiered nature of priority on our wait list, we are unable to give information about a child's exact rank, or estimates for how long the wait will be. Thank you in advance for your patience.

We reach out to families on the waitlist on a quarterly basis to ensure that they wish to remain on it. This ensures that we can quickly offer a spot to a waiting family.

## Drop-Ins

### Reservations

Drop-in hours may be added to your child's regular schedule (extending or adding time) as needed, if we have space available. These spots are also available to non-member families when available. Reservation requests become available by phone or email at 5:30pm, one week and a night in advance of the requested date. After this time, a request may be made by phone/email at any hour or in person during office hours.

**Drop-in time is not guaranteed until confirmed by the office.** Drop-in reservations must begin and end on the hour or half hour.

### Payments

Contract holders can add drop-in fees to their monthly tuition payments. Non-members must pay drop-in fees on the day incurred.

- If you are paying the fee separately from tuition, we prefer that you pay by check. If you pay in cash, please bring exact change. Payments are made in the office.

### Cancellations

If you need to cancel or change a scheduled drop-in, you must notify the office by **8:30am the day before the reservation. Reservations not cancelled by this deadline must be paid in full.**

# Tuition, Fees, & Payments

We accept payments by cash or check at this time. You may set up automatic checks through your bank, similar to automatic bill pay. We do not currently accept ACH or credit card payments.

## Contract Tuition

- **Tuition payments are due on the 1st of the month.**
- Payments are delinquent on the 7th of the 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 of the month may be cancelled at Children's Corner's discretion.
- Members will be charged any fees incurred as the result of a returned check.

There are no refunds for unused contract time.

## Fees

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

- **Tuition Deposit** - Paid upon signing of contract to cover the first partial or full month of enrollment and the partial second August of the school year.
- **Membership Fee** - \$195.00 per family annually. For occasional users who do not wish to become members, there is a registration fee of \$5.00 per visit in addition to the hourly tuition.
- **School Service Deposit** - \$600.00 annually, due at signing of contract. This deposit is refundable upon completion of 3 school work days (15 hours.)
- **Late fee** - \$15.00 per quarter hour or fraction thereof beyond your scheduled time.
- **Emergency Lunch Fee** - \$7.00 for us to prepare a lunch for your child.
- **Diaper Fee** - \$1.00 per diaper that we must provide.

## 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.

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 the Executive Director for more information.

# Health & Safety

## Health Policy

Children 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 diseases.

## Immunization Requirements

Before starting at Children's Corner, children must have received:

- three (3) doses of the polio vaccine,
- four (4) doses of the DPT vaccine,
- Three (3) doses of Hep B, and
- one (1) dose each of: measles, mumps, rubella vaccines, Hib (after the first birthday), and varicella.

We must receive a written record provided by the physician or agency performing the immunizations. The law allows medical exemptions, the reasons for which must be stated in writing by a physician.

If your child follows a delayed immunization schedule, parents need to update the office as your child receives new immunizations. **If your child is not able to follow a delayed immunization schedule and you do not file a Temporary or Permanent Medical Exemption, your child may not attend Children's Corner.**

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 daily 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 will contact you and ask you to pick the child up immediately. A child must be free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning.

Please keep your child at home and let us know if your child contracts a communicable disease such as chickenpox, giardiasis, shigellosis, hepatitis, meningitis, or measles. You will be notified if your child is exposed to a communicable disease while at Children's Corner.

## Criteria for Keeping a Sick Child at Home

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please let us know and keep them at home:

- **Fever** - 101° orally, 102° rectally, 100° axillar.
- **Diarrhea and colds** - see next section for details.
- **Ear infections** - with fever or lethargy, nausea, vomiting, loose stools, drainage, irritability, tugging on ears. Child may return to center when on medication for 24 hours and/or after constitutional symptoms are gone.
- **Eye infection with yellow or green drainage** - child must be on medication for 24 hours and have no drainage before returning to the center.
- **Cough** - a wet, wheezy cough with mucus secretion.
- **Vomiting** - recurring or accompanied by fever.
- **Skin infections or rash with drainage** - child with dried skin lesions may come to school.
- **Lice, scabies, and other parasites** - child may return to the center after appropriate treatment and shampoo.

A child may return when infectious symptoms have subsided and child is feeling better. In some instances, a physician's release may be required at the school's discretion.

## Health Policies for Diarrhea & Colds

### Diarrhea

All cases of diarrhea (frequent watery, loose, or mucus-like bowel movements) must be reported to the school and the cause explained. Diarrhea can have more serious consequences than 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, and must be treated accordingly.

A child with diarrhea can come to the school if:

- Child has had one (1) loose movement without other physical symptoms before coming to school.

A child with diarrhea must stay home if:

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

## Colds and Runny Nose

A child can come to school with:

- Clear runny nose with no other symptoms, and the child is able to fully participate in the program.
- 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 more than one week usually require medical attention.

## Medication Policy

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

1. Parents must:
  - a. Read and sign **Acknowledgement of the Medication Policy**.
  - b. Fill out a **Parent Request Form**, which includes explicit instructions for administration, emergency instructions, and a signature.
  - c. 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.
  - d. Give the container to the lead teacher, who is responsible for seeing that the medication policy is followed. **Never put a medication in a child's backpack, lunch box, or cubby.**
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. ***It is against the law to give a prescription medication to someone other than the intended patient.***
  - c. Double-checks to make sure that he or she is giving the correct medication to the child.
  - d. Washes hands before and after administering medication.
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.

## Sunscreen

Licensing considers sunscreen equivalent to over-the-counter medication, and as such we are required to have a **Request for Sunscreen Application** form on file in order to apply sunscreen to your child at school. In addition, we ask that you apply sunscreen before you arrive, and we will reapply as needed. Please clearly label the bottle you bring with your child's name.

## Minor Injuries

During active play, especially outdoors, children typically experience some bumps and bruises. If your child is injured at school and there is any question about its severity, a staff member will notify you. 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 member will accompany your child and will stay with your child until you arrive.

## Mandated Reporter Law

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 child care 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 8 years of age or older OR are at least 4'9" in height. Children's Corner is required by law to notify Child Protective Services and our local police authorities if we become aware of non-compliance with this regulation.

## Transportation

No Transportation is provided by Children's Corner.

## Consultants

Children's Corner will work with outside professionals at parent's request, but we do not provide or pay for consultants.

# Policies & Procedures

## Child's Personal Rights

Each child receiving services from Children's Corner shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following under Section 80072, and 101223, Title 22, California Administrative Code. The right to:

1. Be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other persons.
2. Be accorded safe, healthful, and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his/her needs.
3. 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. 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 be locked up in any room, building, or facility premises by day or night.
6. Not be placed in any restraining devices, except a supportive restraint approved in advance by the licensing agency.

## 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 Children's Corner 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 and any required legal documentation, have the right to enter and inspect the room(s) in which their child(ren) is (are) 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 their personal rights.

- b. 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.
- c. 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.

## Staff’s Rights

All staff has the right to:

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

## Licensing Agency's Rights

### 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:

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

## 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.

### Questions and Concerns

Families who have concerns should discuss them with the appropriate Children's Corner employee. For many concerns, the first person you should contact is your child's teacher and then the Site Director or Executive Director. If you are not satisfied, you may write to the Board of Directors in care of the Board President at: [office@lamvchildrenscorner.org](mailto:office@lamvchildrenscorner.org).