

# YWC Childcare Welcome Packet

Welcome to Yes We Can Childcare Center! It is a very exciting time for all of us! Before we get started, there is some important information we want to share about our school, classrooms, and about ourselves. Please look over all the provided information and complete the attached forms.

There are a few ways in which we can communicate. First, is the weekly Journal through our class Shutterfly accounts, that will be sent out on Friday of every week (or your child's last school day). Your child's teacher will be writing about classroom activities as well as your child's progress and questions and/or concerns that need to be addressed. Please feel free to write back with any of your questions, comments, or news of any exciting events over the weekend. Secondly, there are Daily Highlights that are posted every afternoon about what your child has done at school each day. Thirdly there will be ongoing Portfolios for every student. The portfolios are binders that contain a record of your child's assessments, accomplishments, and project work throughout the year.

Every Classroom will have a Parent Information Board where the classroom daily schedule, calendar, upcoming events, and other YWC/classroom information can be found. Each child will have a labeled cubby in which to put his or her belongings and your student will also have a "Mailbox" in their classroom for any important papers and occasional artwork that needs to go home that will need to be checked daily.

Please be sure to note that It is also important to bring extra weather-appropriate change of clothes for your student. This includes shorts, pants, shirts, socks, and underwear in a plastic bag with their name on it. Students are welcome to bring a small pillow (Please no full-size pillows), a twin size sheet & blanket, and one snuggle item for quiet/nap time (please label everything). These items will go home weekly to be washed. For the students who do not sleep, a quiet activity will be provided for them to do while on their cots after 30 minutes of rest, so the students who do take a nap have time to settle down without distractions, once the other students have either settled down or fallen asleep, we will give the students who do not sleep something to do on their cots. Please do not send in any extra books or toys unless it is a Show-N-Tell day which takes place on Friday's each week. We are also sending home instructions for a family tree project that will be completed by you and your student prior to the first day of school that will be displayed all school year throughout the classroom!

Circle time/lessons in each class begin promptly at 9:45AM so we would like to encourage all our families to arrive at school no later than 9:00AM. Our centers, small group work, project work, & Outside play will be between 9:30 AM and 11:30AM This will help your child get the most out of his or her preschool experience especially for those who only do half days.

Please remember we have a school wide policy of NO PEANUT BUTTER OR NUTS of any kind in the children's lunches. This is to help keep our school a safe place as we do have children with severe peanut and nut allergies. Please see the attached information about appropriate lunch items as well.

Please do not hesitate to call, email, or speak with us in person about any questions or concerns you may have throughout the year. Every classroom will have a classroom email, you will be given that email by the classroom teachers when your child is assigned a classroom. We can also be reached via phone at 513.822.4679.

We are so looking forward to a fantastic and productive school year!

Sincerely,

Anna Kelch & Fanta Gassama

YWC Administrators

# **PreK Daily Schedule**

6:00-9:30 AM: Arrival/Centers/Morning Snack (Parents provide snacks)  
9:30-9:45 AM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom  
9:45 –10:00 AM: Circle Time/Morning Meeting  
10-10:45 AM: Morning Project Work/Small Groups/Centers (Free Choice)  
10:45-10:50 AM: Transition/Clean Up/Bathroom  
10:50-11:20 AM: Outside Play (Weather Permitting)  
11:20 – 11:30 AM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash Up for lunch  
11:30-11:55 AM: Lunch  
11:55 AM-12:20 PM: Outside Play (Weather Permitting)  
12:20-12:30 PM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash up for Nap  
12:30-2:30 PM: Nap/Quiet Time  
2:30-2:45 PM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash up for Snack  
2:45-3:00 PM: Snack Time (Parents Provide Snack)  
3:00-3:50 PM: Afternoon Project Work/Centers/Music & Movement  
3:50 – 4:00 PM: Transition/Bathroom/Sunscreen  
4:00 – 4:50 PM: Outside Play (weather permitting)  
4:50 – 5:00 PM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash Hands  
5:00-5:40 PM: Table Toys/Books  
5:40-6:00 PM: Clean-up/Story Time/Transition to go home  
6:00 PM: YWC Closes

# **Toddlers Daily Schedule**

6:00-9:30 AM: Arrival/Centers/Morning Snack (Parents provide snacks)  
9:30-9:45 AM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom  
9:45 –10:00 AM: Circle Time/Morning Meeting  
10-10:45 AM: Morning Project Work/Small Groups/Centers (Free Choice)  
10:45-10:50 AM: Transition/Clean Up/Bathroom  
10:50-11:20 AM: Outside Play (weather permitting)  
11:20 – 11:30 AM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash Up for lunch  
11:30-11:55 AM: Lunch  
11:55 AM-12:20 PM: Outside Play (weather permitting)  
12:20-12:30 PM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash up for Nap  
12:30-2:30 PM: Nap/Quiet Time  
2:30-2:45 PM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash up for Snack  
2:45-3:00 PM: Snack Time (Parents Provide Snack)  
3:00-3:50 PM: Afternoon Project Work/Centers/Music & Movement  
3:50 – 4:00 PM: Transition/Bathroom/Sunscreen  
4:00 – 4:50 PM: Outside Play (weather permitting)  
4:50 – 5:00 PM: Transition/Story Time/Bathroom/Wash Hands  
5:00-5:40 PM: Table Toys/Books  
5:40-6:00 PM: Clean-up/Story Time/Transition to go home  
6:00 PM: YWC Closes

## **Infant Daily Schedule**

6:00am - 9:00am Drop-off + bottles/breakfast  
9:00am - 9:30am Diapers  
9:30am - 10:00am Circle time (books + songs + puppets/finger plays)  
10:00am - 10:30am Bottles/morning snack  
10:30am - 11:00am Diapers/clean up  
11:00am - 11:30am Naptime  
11:30am - 12:00pm Bottles/lunch  
12:00pm - 12:30pm Story time (books + songs)  
12:30pm - 1:30pm Outside play/gross motor time  
1:30pm - 2:30pm Naptime  
2:30pm - 3:00pm Bottles/snack  
3:00pm - 4:00pm Sensory or art activity  
4:00pm - 5:00pm Free Play  
5:00pm-6:00pm. last Daiper Check/Pick up time

# *What to Bring the first day of School*

- ❖ 2inch white binder
- ❖ 50 clear sheet protectors
- ❖ Weather appropriate change of clothes for cubby
- ❖ Small Pillow, blanket, & one snuggle item (take home every night to clean)
- ❖ Water bottle with name
- ❖ Family Tree Project (See the Family Tree Project Instructions sheet attached)

## *About the Reggio-Emilia Approach*

The Reggio Approach has developed in the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, and has been adapted to some American schools including the Compass School. Below is a breakdown of the basics of the approach.

### ***Environment***

The design of the classroom environment is one of the most important characteristics of the Reggio Approach. The environment is considered as much a teacher as the educators are. In designing our classrooms, we take into account aesthetics as well as academics. The classroom should have a homelike feel that welcomes the children and their families. You will see:

- Natural objects (rocks, water, plants, shells, etc)
- Natural colors (browns, grays, etc) with other colors used as accents
- Furniture that is comfortable to both adults and children
- Natural light sources and incandescent lamps (as opposed to brighter, harsher, fluorescent lamps)
- Evidence of the children, teachers, and families that are a part of the classroom (children's art, and creations, photographs, family photos and other contributions, etc)
- A variety of art supplies and representational materials (crayons, paints, collage items, "beautiful junk", clay, etc.

Although Reggio environments are defined by their aesthetic qualities, academics can be successfully integrated into the environment. For example, an alphabet created by the children and posted on the wall can provide a connection between them and the environment. Likewise, letters or numbers carved from wood can support the aesthetic quality of the room while supporting the children's learning.

## **Phases of a Project and Classroom Documentation**

### **Phase 1 "Getting Started"**

This phase is the discussion period to select and develop a project.

1. Project Title
2. Discussion from children's quotes and/or teacher rationale (if teacher-chosen project)
3. Web- based on brainstorming ideas with children, including proposed questions from children that they'll seek through investigations.
4. List of materials and changes to classroom set-up "Classroom Enhancements and Supply List"
5. Anticipated learning standards to be covered (including an explanation of how these will be met) and Key words and phrases related to the project that the children should be familiar with.

### **Phase 2 "Field Work and Investigation"**

This phase is for investigation, including field trips/visits from field experts, and exploration of objects. Children should be drawing from observations, constructing models, recording findings, exploring, predicting, discussing, and/or dramatizing new understandings.

Documentation panels will include an explanation of experiences and a personalized section for each individual child that participated. Each panel will include 1-2 photos of children interacting, exploring, and/or investigating.

### **Phase 3 "Culminating & Debriefing Event"**

This phase is to review and present all learning and ideas from the project. This could be in the form of a display of findings and artifacts, dramatic presentations, or guided tours of their constructions.

Documentation will explain how the children will conclude their project and include 2-3 pictures of the event, display, and/or presentations for the event.

# *Project Work*

We love to investigate in our room, and I have found that the best way to thoroughly explore the world around us is through the project approach, which involves children's studies of things relevant to their interests and which they find intrinsic value in exploring more closely. Our projects will be primarily generated through teacher observation of children's interests as a whole and will involve the entire class, small groups, and possibly individual children. Project work will continue for as long as children maintain interest, find additional relevant material which they would like to include in the course of our investigation and opt to further explore the topic and material at hand. As mentioned before, our projects have several parts:

1. An idea: Ideas come during observation of children's play, discussions, or from a teacher's curiosity.
2. Discussion: During discussion, we will discuss the ideas that the children have. Teachers will formulate a web based on the interests and use this to forecast where the project may go.
3. Exploration: Children will be exposed to real world materials relevant to the topic at hand. During the course of these investigations, new ideas and thoughts will arise. Sometimes these ideas will be teacher directed, but can also be driven by the children.
4. Field Experience: Exploration of the real world surrounding the questions and ideas about the project. This is where we will invite parents to bring in real-world objects for us to explore.
5. Visiting Experts: These may include people in the community, parents, or others that have knowledge about specific aspects of our project.
6. Culminating Event: The children demonstrate what they have learned; for example the children may create their own family recipe or plan a potluck dinner.

During our project we will be using several documentation methods including project boards, daily highlights, and written anecdotal evidence to communicate with families. In addition, I will also prepare a take-home journal in which we record individual entries based on events that each child attended and in which he or she may have participated including methods of investigation, specific contributions to classroom discussions and personal results of each investigation. I also record each child's individual and group work in a personalized portfolio which may include artwork, photographs, and written transcripts of classroom conversations.

Our goal is to present a world of wonder in which your child will be presented with a variety of intriguing projects to explore from which they might glean knowledge of the world around us. I hope to stimulate young minds and teach them that learning is a journey, that all questions have answers and give them the ability to discern information for themselves through materials that are presented to them. I strive to incorporate in them a sense of autonomy and an appreciation of their own unique and wonderful insights.

## **Lunch Check!**

We want to assure that each of our students comes with a healthy lunch. Good food not only keeps our kids' bodies healthy, but helps the mind be ready to learn. We want to make sure that all the students' lunches include the following things. Please remember we are a nut-free school. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Packed Lunch- Please be certain each lunch includes:**

- 1 beverage
- 1 meat or meat equivalent group (A protein)
- 1 bread or bread-alternative group
- 1 milk or dairy equivalent group
- 1 fruit
- 1 vegetable

**Instead of 1 fruit and 1 vegetable you may choose to provide ●  
2 fruits or 2 vegetables**

# **YWC School Communication & Documentation**

**Individual Portfolios** – Compilation of pictures, quotes, artwork, writing samples, and information regarding developmental milestones.

**Weekly Journals** – A weekly personalized journal entry will be written that allows for ongoing written dialogue between teachers and parents that is sent home weekly.

**Daily Highlights** – Daily Shutterfly Classroom updates that include information about the classroom's day. Updates include information on different areas of the curriculum such as music/drama, creative arts, language, literacy and culture, large motor and fine motor development, science, math, sensory, and nature.

**Phases of a Project**– Reggio-inspired curriculum updated on a continuous basis and posted on the classroom documentation board.

**Classroom Documentation/Documentation Panels** – These panels provide visual evidence of the learning process using photographs, data, transcriptions, and samples of children's work.

**Shutterfly Classroom Share site** – As mentioned above, this is a website in which you will find information regarding upcoming events. Also included on this website you will have access to pictures from all of our project work, field trips, parties, etc. You will be sent an email invitation to our Shutterfly class site.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

***How is Pre-Kindergarten different from preschool? What can I expect from this school year?***

There are many ways that Pre-K is the same as preschool. Our philosophy, project work, and daily schedule is very similar to what your child experienced during their preschool year(s). There are a few ways that Pre-K is different:

A focus on "Kindergarten Readiness", which is a catchphrase meaning that your child will be exposed to things that will most likely take place in their kindergarten classroom. Some of these include:



- Literacy centers (centers designed around reading/writing. Your child will be expected to work independently, in small groups, and with the teacher for a variety of literacy activities).
  - Participation in whole group class projects
  - Focus on (developmentally appropriate) independence in daily tasks.
  - Everyone is on a school year calendar. There will probably not be any children transitioning into our classroom (except new enrollments) throughout the school year.

### ***How will project work get my child ready for Kindergarten?***

We tie all our project work back to the Content Standards for preschool and kindergarten. Although it may look different than traditional schooling, we will hit all the standards over the course of our academic year.

### ***In Pre-K, do you still expect the children to nap?***

We have a two hour nap every day from 12:30-2:30, similar to preschool. During this time, we encourage the children to rest quietly and if they do not fall asleep, we will provide coloring materials and books in the second hour for children who have tried to rest but cannot. A Nap Time Go Bag will be provided by us for your child should they not be able to sleep.

### ***What is your policy for field work?***

We try to go on at least one field trip per project in Pre-K or have a visitor related to our project come into our classroom. Most of the children are mature enough to handle staying with the group and following instructions. They certainly enjoy field experiences! All parents are welcome to attend field trips.

### ***How will you meet my child's academic needs in the classroom?***

We meet needs by having flexibly grouped literacy centers, working individually with children, and focusing on deeper thinking skills rather than progressing through more content. Our hope is that we send children to kindergarten with not only the tools to read, write, and count, but to ask questions, observe closely, think creatively, and problem solve!

### ***How will you be communicating with parents?***

We will be using Shutterfly Share Sites as our main source of whole class parent communication. Once we have your email address, we will send you an invitation for our Seesaw classroom site. We will post the daily highlights, pictures and videos, upcoming events and other important information. For individual parent communication we can also email through Shutterfly. We will also meet twice a year to go over your child's development and progress.

## ***What behaviors are expected in Pre-Kindergarten?***

We expect that going into Pre-Kindergarten your child is mostly potty trained, your child can use their words to express wants/needs, and that your child can adapt to and follow our daily schedule. Please don't worry if your child needs help in these areas because this is something we will continue to work on throughout the year. Behaviors I will work on for the growth and development of your child include:

- Dressing skills (zipping coats, tying shoes, etc.)
  
- Understanding strong emotions and strategies to cope (walking away, taking deep breaths, etc.)
- Conflict resolution with peers - "School" behaviors (sitting on the carpet, walking in line, following three step directions, etc.)

## ***YWC's Hopes for the Beginning of the School Year***

The beginning of the school year is an exciting time! It's a great time to think about what we hope and dream for our classroom community. Here are some of our hopes for the start of our academic year:

1. A familiarity with following rules and routines, and transitioning to our classroom schedule, expectations, and dynamics.
2. An exposure to a variety of academic experiences (reading, writing, counting, sorting, etc.).
3. A curiosity and eagerness to explore the world around us.
4. A willingness to use our words (with the help of an adult) to express our feelings, solve conflicts, and communicate needs.
5. Attempt independence in age-appropriate daily tasks.

# **YWC's Hopes for the End of the School Year**

1. Our classmates will be able to follow our schedule/rules and display a variety of "school behaviors" (i.e., walking in line, sitting on carpet, raising hand before speaking, etc.) in appropriate settings.
2. A solid foundation of phonics and reading (children should be beginning to read simple, predictable text/sight words), math (counting to 20 forward and backward, beginning addition and subtraction, identifying shapes), basic science and social studies concepts (i.e., living things are different than non-living things).
3. A curiosity and eagerness to explore the world around us, and the observation and creativity necessary to create a better world.
4. Resolve conflicts, healthily express our feelings (through art, physical activity, understanding when we need a break, etc.), and communicate our needs without prompting from a teacher.
5. Achieve independence in daily tasks that are common for their age.

# ***Family and Child Introduction Information***

Help us get to know you and your family better! At YWC we feel it is important to incorporate your family traditions and ideas into our daily curriculum plans. Please take a few minutes to complete this form and return it with your other information. You can either email it to me or send it to the school. Thanks!

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent #1 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent #2 Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sibling(s) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Pet(s) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Names of other important people in your family's life : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any family traditions you would like to share? What makes your family unique?

\_\_\_\_\_

How does your family history and/or culture influence your family and child?

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe your child's personality. What does your child like/not like doing?

What comforts your child? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What activities does your child enjoy the most? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are your child's strengths? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any special concerns for your child? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you or your spouse have any special interests or talents to share with the class?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What language does your child speak at home? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have any health problems or allergies? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your child's current schedule like? (Wake up, breakfast, snack, nap times, ect.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What other social/play experiences has your child had other than preschool?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are your expectations for this preschool year? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please include any other information that you believe would be helpful for us to know about your

child. \_\_\_\_\_

# **Emergency Contacts**

Please complete the following information in case we would ever need to reach you.

Child's Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Parent #1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Work Name and Telephone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Parent #2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Work Name and Telephone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list how you can best be reached (example 1. Mom-work 2. Dad-cell)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the name of an emergency contact we could call in case no other contacts could be reached. Please make sure this person lives in the Cincinnati area!

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Work Name and Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_