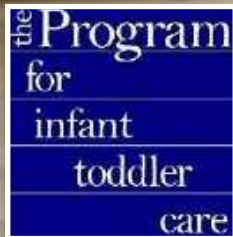




STORYBOOK
VILLAGE PRESCHOOL



FAMILY HANDBOOK

P/S: 49301069

August 2024

"Our goal is to build an amiable school, where children, teachers and families feel at home. Such a school requires careful thinking and planning concerning procedures, motivations and interests. It must embody ways of getting along together, of intensifying relationships."

– Loris Malaguzzi



LOCATION

Storybook Village Preschool

4295 Montgomery Drive,
Santa Rosa, CA 95405
PRESCHOOL LIC: 493010694



Vivian White and her friends scatter after a sprinkler is activated during beach day at Storybook Village Preschool in Santa Rosa, Friday, July 15, 2022. (Kent Porter / The Press Democrat) 2022

HANDBOOK WEBPAGE (LINK)

Relationships are at the very heart
of the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

Storybook Village Preschool's mission is to foster a caring community of learners that celebrates the gifts and strengths of every child and promotes a sense of belonging and purpose for them and their families.

HELLO! CIAO! NǏN HǎO! HOLA!

As stated in [NAEYC's Position Statement](#), educators should “uphold every family’s right to make decisions for and with their children,” which is why we have created a family handbook with relevant policies, procedures, resources, and family material. This family guide is our program’s promise to provide quality care, which highlights crucial Community Care Licensing Regulations while sharing all about our village where the adults and children experience a sense of connection and come together as co-learners to make the world a better place, ensuring children have a childhood full of love and joy.



www.storybookvillagepreschool.com



nicole@storybookvillagepreschool.com



Welcome to our preschool family!

Dear Storybook Village Family,

We're thrilled and grateful to be chosen to be part of your family's village as we welcome you to our preschool family! While getting to know your child, our primary goal is for you to get to know us, feel comfortable in your choice, and utilize this time to ask questions since this is the beginning of our trusted relationship and, hopefully, a lifelong bond. I know how much it means to you to find the right place for your child (and family!), and I do not take that trust lightly since they only get one childhood, and you only get one parenthood with them. Storybook Village Preschool is my second baby, so my heart is in my work, cherishing our preschool community as we provide high-quality early learning and loving care as a village.

As you share information in person and through preschool forms, we will learn how to care for your child, including keeping them safe and healthy. The enrollment packet with Licensing forms and this Family Handbook includes preschool and community resources for your family. We are excited to be part of this special milestone while strengthening your family through a positive partnership and sharing our strategies and support.

We create meaningful opportunities to connect as a relationship-driven program before your family's first day at Storybook Village Preschool to give your child a smooth transition. You will learn a lot about the Teaching Pyramid framework and how we teach children pro-social skills as a proud California Partner Site, which I share, so you know our passion is for relationship-driven learning through love. We will plan what happens before, during, and after your child transitions to preschool, setting the expectation that

we are in this together.

The following are ways your family will feel supported while establishing a home-school connection:

- Bring your child to visit, explore the learning environment, and connect with our educators, giving you talking points at home.
- If your child is a toddler, we will schedule a family meeting to complete an intake with your child's primary care educator.
- In August, we plan an annual Family Orientation for a shared experience for all enrolled families to provide information about our practices and policies and see how our program continues to reach goals while including and honoring each family.
 - If you're enrolling midyear, we will schedule a time to share the family orientation material.
- Share family pictures with us to make family books and bring family artifacts to keep on the classroom shelf so your child feels your presence in the learning environment.

This handbook is a guide to share how your family can work with Storybook Village Preschool to provide your child with a positive early learning experience for later school and life successes. We are honored to be part of your child's story, and your family, in return, will always be part of ours!

We are so excited to welcome and celebrate your family!

Nicole Monachello, Director & Owner





CHILD CARE LICENSING

Licensing in California

Licensing regulations are in place to protect the health and safety of children in child care by establishing health and safety standards for child care facilities. These standards are found in California's Health and Safety Code and in the California Code of Regulations Title 22, Division 12. The standards include requirements for: facility operations, buildings and grounds, staff training and education, criminal background clearances, and staff first aid and CPR requirements.

Licensing regulations are enforced by the Community Care Licensing Division of the California Department of Social Services, which works to ensure that licensed facilities maintain healthy and safe environments for all children in care. Community Care Licensing does this through inspecting each facility prior to licensure, reviewing of staff requirements, investigating of complaints against facilities, and inspecting facilities regularly after a license is issued. (*Parents' Guide to Choosing Child Care*, 2019)

Child Care Licensing Regulations include mandates, providing a safe place for children, educators, family members, and friends. Regulations are the minimum standards of care, so Storybook Village Preschool goes beyond the Regulations with a mission for quality care and strong partnerships. providing a respectful learning experience for all members.

PROGRAM & LICENSING CONTACTS

Storybook Village Preschool

Director & Owner: Nicole Monachello
Facility Number: 493010694

Community Care Licensing Division Child Care Office

SANTA ROSA REGIONAL OFFICE
1450 Neotomas Ave., Suite 100, MS 29-11
Santa Rosa, CA 95405
(707) 588-5026 FAX (707) 588-5099

PARENTS & GUARDIANS honoring our family members



We use the words *parent* and *family* to honor all adult caregivers who make a difference in a child's life. Parents refer to biological, adoptive, and step-parents as well as primary caregivers, such as grandparents, other adult family members, and foster parents. Families can be biological or nonbiological, chosen or circumstantial. Members of families are connected through cultures, languages, traditions, shared experiences, emotional commitment, and mutual support. We welcome all families as we discover the similarities between us as we celebrate each family that makes us uniquely one of a kind.

Please use this family handbook to familiarize yourself with our programs, what to expect for your child in a group care learning environment, and the policies and procedures which help us function at a high-quality level. You are responsible for reading and following the outlined policies and asking for help or explanation if needed, including checking emails for updates.

We love collaborating with families to find solutions for quality improvements and addressing concerns. This handbook is a working document created from research, teaching staff experience, and early childhood development training—helping families better understand our school's obligations, vision, and culture.

Let's build a community that allows hard questions and honest conversations so we can stir up transformation in one another.

– Germany Kent, American journalist



THE CODE

To ensure positive relationships with parents and educators that benefit each child’s learning, development, and sense of security, as well as to ensure mutual respect between educators and parents is maintained at all times, Storybook Village Preschool created policies. All policies align with the [NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct](#), a trusted framework for productive and healthy relationships and responsibilities among an early childhood program and all its members. Following the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct will result in a stronger community and families and, most of all, better care and education for children. When families, educators, or administration encounter an ethical issue, problem, or dilemma, Storybook Village Preschool follows the NAEYC decision-making process. Because our work is so important, it is essential that early childhood educators and family members have a moral commitment to children—and understand that a code of ethics can help us know and act on that commitment.



PLAY

"I tried to teach my child with books. He gave me only puzzled looks. I tried to teach my child with words. They passed him by often unheard. Despairingly I turned aside. "How shall I teach this child?" I cried. Into my hand, he put the key. "Come," he said, 'And play with me."

This is a verse by an unknown author at the entrance of the Louisiana Children's Museum in New Orleans.

"Most people agree that the world would be a better place if we all cared more for one another, but despite that initial agreement, we find it is hard to say exactly what we mean by caring."

—Nel Noddings, *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy*

Our Why

Policies set the expectations for the behavior of anyone associated with the program: Children, staff, administration, and parents. Effective policies are comprehensive and informative, letting the reader know the background, application, and sources used in its creation, as suggested by Brownfield-Dail, Garrett, and Quirk (2004). While this handbook is for our families, it is also an invaluable tool to guide educators on how to respond to incidents and communicate our program-wide expectations to families and visitors.

- ❑ **Policy Belief Statement:** SVP explains why the program believes a policy is necessary, sharing how the policy ensures our commitment to protect the rights of the children, families, and educators as a community. See the *Ethics in Care* section to learn more about our professional beliefs.
- ❑ **Background Statements:** Some of our policies will have a background statement to share why it was developed and the implementation plans, procedures, and practices.
- ❑ **Intention Statement:** Each policy in the Storybook Village Preschool Family Handbook has a *why* behind its existence and is required to meet a Licensing Regulation (state requirements as a licensed facility), allowing SVP to provide high-quality care through the implementation of the best practices, or a response to a particular incident.

Adjustment to child care is an ongoing process, beginning before enrollment.

We Protect Everyone's Rights

- Children's Personal Rights LIC 613A
- Parents' Rights LIC 995
- Parents' Rights Poster

Licensing Resources

- Parent Resources
- Child Care Licensing for Families
- Facility Search Welcome
- Disaster Resources





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Every child needs one person
who is crazy about him.

—Urie Bronfenbrenner





Storybook Village Preschool's Introduction & History

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

—Maya Angelou POET, DANCER, PRODUCER, PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR, AUTHOR

My name is Nicole Monachello, and I am the owner and director of Storybook Village Preschool. I am passionate about early childhood education with a strength-driven approach to providing quality care full of loving and responsive care. In addition, I am a board member for Sonoma County 4Cs. I am from Sonoma County and have lived most of my life in Rohnert Park. As a little girl taught to dream big by my Grandpa Rico and Great-Grandpa Jack, I knew I would work with children. I had played school most of my childhood, so my family and friends were not surprised when I opened a preschool. I have an amazing son, Frankie, who has made me want to be a great role model in work and life.

I learned the meaning of community care through my son's preschool experience in Millbrae, which strengthened our family. Through their existence with consistent support and connections, I balanced work, school, and raising a young child. We had moved to Millbrae when he was an infant and then returned to Sonoma County before he entered Kindergarten in 2011. As a single-working parent balancing work, parenting, and reaching goals, I know the challenges

that can place families at a disadvantage. I also know how much work it takes to succeed, including the power of what a strong early childhood program can do for a community. As a mom to my outgoing son, I am grateful for our experience with his preschool. I want to give back to our community through my abilities and expertise as an early childhood educator and family advocate. The only reason we have Storybook Village Preschool is that the members within our preschool community and my family's love, from educators to families to ECE colleagues and advocates, are just as enthusiastic as I am for our sweet preschool.

Nicole with her son at her daycare in Millbrae, 2010. Nicole with her son and nephew at her preschool in Santa Rosa, 2020.



My background consists of owning a family child care in Millbrae, California, which included being an independent contractor for Early Head Start. Through that experience, while continuing my education, I fostered a desire to do more for children, families, and communities. As I shared, I returned to Sonoma County to teach Pre-k students since I was ready to learn more from a larger workforce. Between returning to Sonoma County and opening Storybook Village Preschool in 2019, I worked for three types of early childhood education (ECE) programs: Corporate, school district, and private. I didn't like to feel wasted since I knew I could do more for our children and community. I was keeping relevant with ECE, and understanding today's society and how family dynamics change has been how I have held to my purpose.

I am all about social-emotional development to teach children how to be kind and capable. I'm thinking about their adult years, who we want them to be within our community while celebrating who they are as individuals, and what we need to teach them how to get there. While I invest in our children, my priority is to protect their childhoods by giving them a magical space and caring community to learn who they are and how to accept others. I hope to teach young children in our care that when their world feels scary or overwhelming, there are good people in their lives to keep them safe. As a community, we know Sonoma County has been experiencing traumatic events through wildfires and other natural disasters, so my purpose and practices include being trauma-informed to strengthen families and communities while raising strong and confident children.

I have learned that enrolling a child is enrolling a family, and we can only do our best through family partnerships. The need to do

more for children and their families is how Storybook Village Preschool came to be. I created a place where everyone did not just see quality care but felt the quality as a preschool family. I made a program that always put the children's needs before anything else, fostering a love and respectful preschool culture. Our school creates a positive climate learning environment to allow young children to play, grow, work, learn, and love within a supportive space that protects their early childhood experience and gives them what they need and deserve: Love. and respect.

Read the blog, "Hey! It's a Sign!" about how Storybook Village Preschool became more than a dream!

Professional photos were taken and donated by Enrico Spadoni, a previous parent who believed in our dream, vision, and purpose!





I love my role within our preschool because there will be moments when a child or family needs an advocate, and that is who we are. It takes a lot of work and vulnerability to establish healthy relationships while considering everyone's feelings (both children and adults!), so families trusting us to keep their children safe and putting in the effort to understand how to support each other makes it all worth it. Having a supportive program with policies to ensure that our mission and goals keep children physically and emotionally safe is why we have successful child outcomes. Families choose us for all of the quality we put within our care. Families, parenting, and child care look different today, so we always come from



Nicole's son, Frankie, helped unload furniture after installing the new floors in late January 2019. A skilled parent designed and made our school sign as a surprise!

a curiosity to learn how we can do better while facing differences.

We have a lot of work to inform our community and policymakers about what's needed to address the crises within child care, including why quality care in these early years is crucial to promoting healthy brain development. Opening Storybook Village Preschool had been overwhelming and incredible with the response and love we continuously received within the short time we began operating. As a new preschool in 2019 impacted by the pandemic, we have made many changes to remain open and sustain operations, including not losing focus on our children. Good thing we love and embrace challenges and change – it makes us grow through a resilient community while

reaching our goals to provide a high-quality preschool. The magic is within our relationships, and the good stuff is knowing we are raising children who will grow to be kind and capable adults as they learn from our behaviors and through our love. Our future society has a great shot because of early childhood educators and families' work today in Sonoma County. We are grateful to be part of a loving preschool community.

Sincerely,
Nicole Monachello

Storybook Village Preschool

Timeline of Operational Successes & Growth



Page One





Purpose, Methods, Goals & Our Why

Relationships are at the very heart of the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

Storybook Village Preschools' mission is to foster a caring community of learners who celebrates every child's gifts and strengths and promotes a sense of belonging and purpose. Our goal is to know each child as a unique learner while partnering with families to foster a love for learning. Our preschool community consists of program-wide and strength-based values. We are grateful to be part of a fantastic community with many resources and tools to implement a high-quality preschool experience and education for young children in Sonoma County, California.

Storybook Village Preschool's primary purpose is to provide high-quality early childhood care and education for young children in our community. We believe in providing a supportive, culturally relevant learning environment that fosters young children feeling that they and their families belong, feel accepted for who they are, and are valued as compassionate members of our preschool community.

Our teaching team recognizes and embraces the families as children's first and most important teachers, giving us a unique role as everyday family advocates. Our vision is to foster a classroom culture

of friendship through teaching love and modeling peace with a friendship-driven purpose. Our program encourages family engagement in our children's early care and learning environment, including partnering with each family to guide their child's behaviors and education.

Our school supports learning through positive relationships, a child-guided curriculum, culturally relevant, and a flexible environment, including encouraging family engagement with a Reggio Emilia-inspired approach. Additionally, our toddler and preschool programs include the "best practice" through developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) from multiple early childhood education philosophies, such as Resources for Infant Educator (RIE), The Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC), and CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid (Pyramid Model).

Storybook embraces a "pedagogy of relationships" within a community that believes in children's rights to grow and learn in a way that focuses on learning processes

Our Guided Principles are inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach and Magda Gerber's "Educaring" approach through her RIE (Resources for Infant Educators) philosophy for infant and toddler care, including the principles guiding California's Preschool Curriculum Framework, which emphasizes offering young children individually, culturally, and linguistically responsive learning experiences and environments:

- Relationships are central.
- Play is a primary context for learning.
- Learning is integrated.
- Intentional teaching enhances children's learning experiences.
- Family and community partnerships create meaningful connections.
- Individualization of learning includes are children.
- Responsiveness to culture and language supports children's learning.
- Time for reflection and planning enhances teaching.

(From CA Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1, p.5)

FAMILY EDUCATION & RESOURCES

- NAEYC has set standards for early childhood programs to help families make the right choice when looking for a preschool program or kindergarten.
- What Does a High-Quality Preschool Look Like?

Urie Bronfenbrenner expressed, "Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her." We know that to help meet a child's needs, the primary caregiver should also have support from another adult, such as a spouse or grandparent. We hope our preschool community gives the gift of support and a sense of belonging.



We find these joys to be self-evident: That all children are created whole, endowed with innate intelligence, with dignity and wonder, worthy of respect. The embodiment of life, liberty, and happiness, children are original blessings, here to learn their own song. Every girl and boy is entitled to love, to dream, and belong to a loving 'village.' And to pursue a life of purpose.

—Raffi, "A Covenant for Honouring Children"

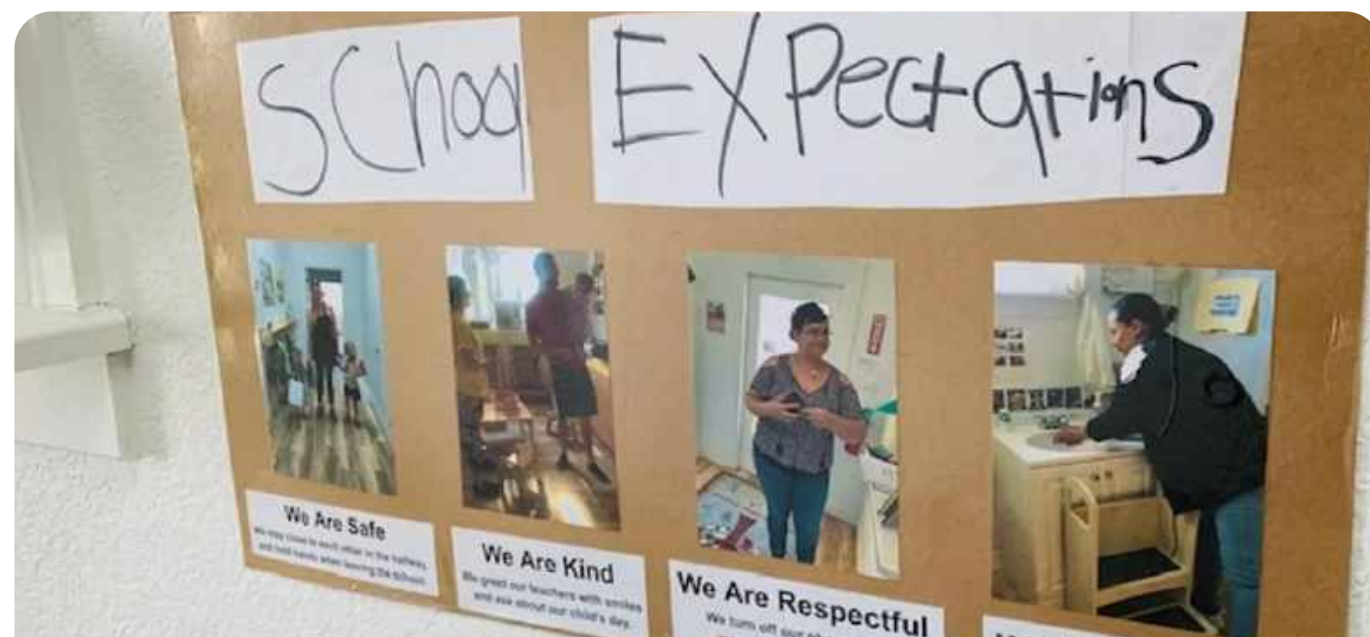


PROGRAM-WIDE EXPECTATIONS

Connections between home and Storybook Village Preschool help children succeed in our program and throughout their years in life. Sharing the program-wide expectations for pro-social behavior between home and school is one way that we can establish powerful partnerships for positive child outcomes. Expectations are a framework for the behaviors expected of everyone in our program, including children, educators, and families, while at school. Expectations are best when implemented with fidelity, and examples are created for specific settings, such as in the classrooms, outside yards, bathroom, hallway, and so forth. Expectations are the why behind the rules! (CA CSEFEL *Teaching Pyramid*)

OUR PROGRAM-WIDE EXPECTATIONS WITH EXAMPLES FOR FAMILIES:

1. **We Are Safe** - We hold hands when out front of the school.
2. **We Are Kind** - We greet the educators and ask about our child's day.
3. **We Are Respectful** - We put our phones on silent when we are inside and outside of the school.
4. **We Are Healthy** - We wash our hands with our child upon arrival.



Welcome to our TEACHING PYRAMID Preschool!

In your child's classroom, you will **hear** teachers...

- ♥ Comment positively on what children and adults are doing well to teach what the classroom expectations are and how we learn new skills.
- ♥ Speak kindly about each other and our families.

You will **see** teachers...

- ♥ Have conversations with children, help them have conversations with each other to learn friendship skills, build community, and increase engagement.
- ♥ Use tools to help children solve social problems together and help each other with all classroom responsibilities.

You will **know**...

- ♥ What is happening that day - look for our visual schedule!
- ♥ What our expectations are and the positive behaviors we use to meet them - look for the posters!

You will **feel**...

- ♥ Welcome when we greet you with verbal affection when you enter the classroom.
- ♥ A sense of belonging and community because we focus on building nurturing relationships between and among children, team members, and families.

All these things help teach social-emotional skills and prevent challenging behaviors!
♥ Our classroom is a great place to be both as a child and an adult! ♥





Dear Storybook Village Families,

EXPECTATIONS

We would like to share our Program-Wide Expectations with you. Expectations help everyone know how to behave at Storybook Village Preschool and treat each other, children and adults. These Expectations are part of a special project we have at Storybook Village Preschool. This project is called the *Teaching Pyramid*. The purpose of the *Teaching Pyramid* is to promote healthy social-emotional development and to teach children the skills that will help them be ready to succeed in school.

Learning the skills to meet these Program-Wide Expectations is important for success in school and life. They are an important part of what your child is learning this year at Storybook Village Preschool. The Expectations are for EVERYONE in our program! This means you can use similar Expectations with your child at home and communicate progress with your child's educators.

What can you do?

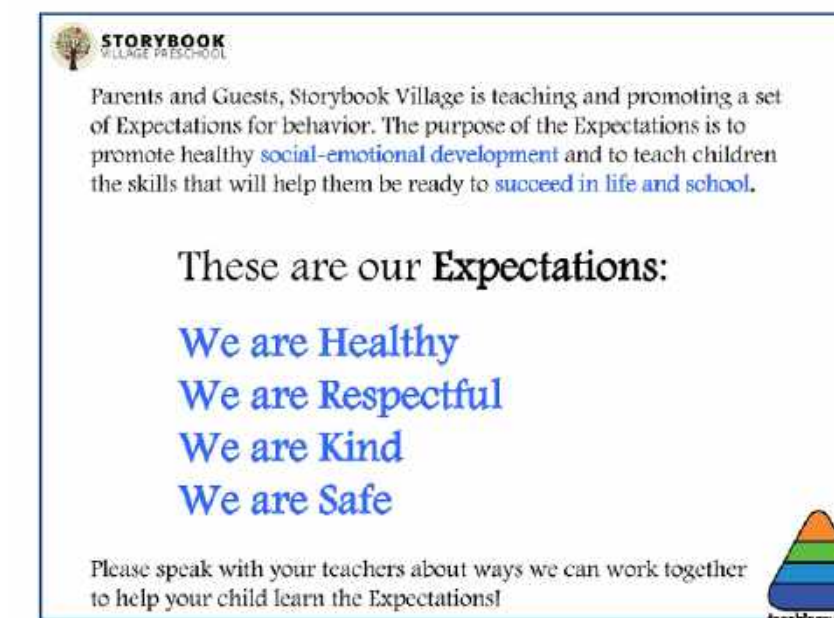
1. Make a commitment today to help your child learn the Expectations.
2. Model the Expectations for your child.
3. Join us for *Teaching Pyramid* & family events.
4. Read and discuss the handouts your child's teacher and preschool director will share with you—and try some of the ideas!
5. Take part in "*Teaching Pyramid for Families*" sessions at this preschool —learn what the teachers are learning while connecting with other families in parent groups!

Love,
Your Teaching Team



FAMILY SUPPORT

Each family will receive materials to learn about the *Teaching Pyramid* at home. These hands-on strategies will strengthen our home-school connections, and family relationships!



We have created family-friendly social storybooks that explain expectations and rules to read at home.



THE REGGIO EMILIA PHILOSOPHY

As we work and create joyful learning experiences in a Reggio-inspired way, we continue to adapt the approach of Reggio schooling to our cultural settings. Each year is full of rich moments, old and new families, children making new friendships, and educators giving their gifts and love in each interaction, contributing to our growing tree, and strengthening our roots as we stay true to our values. No school is alike when speaking about Reggio-inspired programs because the people, environment, and child-led learning make them unique. We are excited to share about the "Reggio" vision for children, "The Hundred Languages of Children," and why Storybook Village Preschool is inspired by this pedagogical approach to early childhood education. By allowing families and educators to share who they are so we can bridge the gap between homes and our programs, we can partner and celebrate a community full of love. Our relationships and shared values make us a preschool family.

There are many wonderful ways to approach early childhood education and quality preschools in Sonoma County, but what makes each preschool unique is its way of being. Storybook Village Preschool is all about loving and celebrating the children as a community. Certain agreements promise practices and procedures to ensure children, families, and teachers receive quality care.



WHAT IS THE REGGIO APPROACH?

Founded by Loris Malaguzzi (February 23, 1920 - January 30, 1994), who began teaching in schools started by parents just after the end of WWII.

The following are essential in the Reggio Approach:

- the image of the child
- the expressive arts in the early childhood programs
- progettazione and documentation
- community and parent-school relationships
- environment as "the third teacher"
- teachers as researchers

Values

"To make a lovable school, industrious, inventive, liveable, documentable and communicable, a place of research, learning, recognition, and reflection, where children, teachers, and families feel well - is our point of arrival."

Loris Malaguzzi



OUR ATELIERS

The schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy, call their teachers *atelieras*, and their unique, intentional spaces known as workshops are called an *atelier* (uh-teh-lee-ay). The children and adults use the ateliers to create ongoing projects and friendship-driven experiences, containing a great variety of age-appropriate tools and open-ended materials called *loose parts*. The Reggio Emilia Approach is more than art; it is about observing the learning processes and being co-learners with each other and the environment in the daily experiences that foster symbolic thoughts in a variety of forms in over one hundred developmentally appropriate ways.

Storybook's learning environments reflect our values as all spaces are designed as "the third teacher" to foster a love of learning and an "I can do it" growth mindset. We have indoor and outdoor ateliers, including proposals to introduce new concepts based on the observations shared during daily experiences. The Reggio Emilia Approach shares their view by expressing, "Children's expression through many media is not a separate part of the curriculum but is inseparable from the whole cognitive/symbolic expression in the process of learning."



THE NORTH AMERICA STUDY GROUP PARTICIPANT

As a Reggio-inspired preschool, Nicole Monachello has a grateful heart for experiencing the North America Study Group that visited Reggio Emilia in November 2023 during the 60th birthday of the First Municipal Preschool in Reggio Emilia, Preschool Robinson. Nicole experienced firsthand how loving a Reggio Emilia community, school, and intentional environments are for the children, families, and teachers. There is no cookie-cutter mold or blueprint to being Reggio; it is a mindset inspired by the Reggio Emilia schools about the children and the community of adults who are responsible for the children.

You can read more about the visit to Reggio Emilia and all that was learned, which our children are experiencing through their play, in our [Preschool Blog: Celebrating Reggio Emilia's Teaching Gems!](#)





COMMUNITY LOVE & PARTNERSHIPS

Storybook Village Preschool is located in Santa Rosa and provides year-round, full-day nurturing care and education for toddlers and preschoolers. Storybook gives our community a goal to aspire to, a building to be proud of, and a standard to maintain, including a “place where I belong” to foster a love for learning and develop a deep awareness of themselves and others. The beginning of our journey has been strengthened through our community partnerships and resources.

TEACHING PYRAMID PARTNER IMPLEMENTATION

Storybook Village Preschool is the first private preschool to be a *Teaching Pyramid* Partner Implementation site for the CA CSEFEL. In March 2021, we joined the elite group of 21 preschool programs from across the state. We are partnering with California to continue our commitment to the *Teaching Pyramid* framework developed by the National Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (National Center). Through the highly successful *Teaching Pyramid* Framework, Storybook Village Preschool has become trained in strategies to support children with challenging behaviors by developing social-emotional competency as an embedded strategy to be implemented throughout the school day. By establishing a healing environment based on best practices and evidence-based strategies for young children’s social and emotional development (birth to 5 years old), challenging behaviors can be prevented, and inclusion can be facilitated.



Nicole is celebrating SVP's first year participating in the *Teaching Pyramid* training.



We serve as a model for our area and thereby help spread the effectiveness of our community partnerships, skilled in supporting young children's social and emotional development.



Laurel and Danielle from the Healthy Apple program facilitated our project work day with free playground stencils and paint, then helped us paint the preschool yard's blacktop to promote physical activity and mathematical learning. (March 2021)



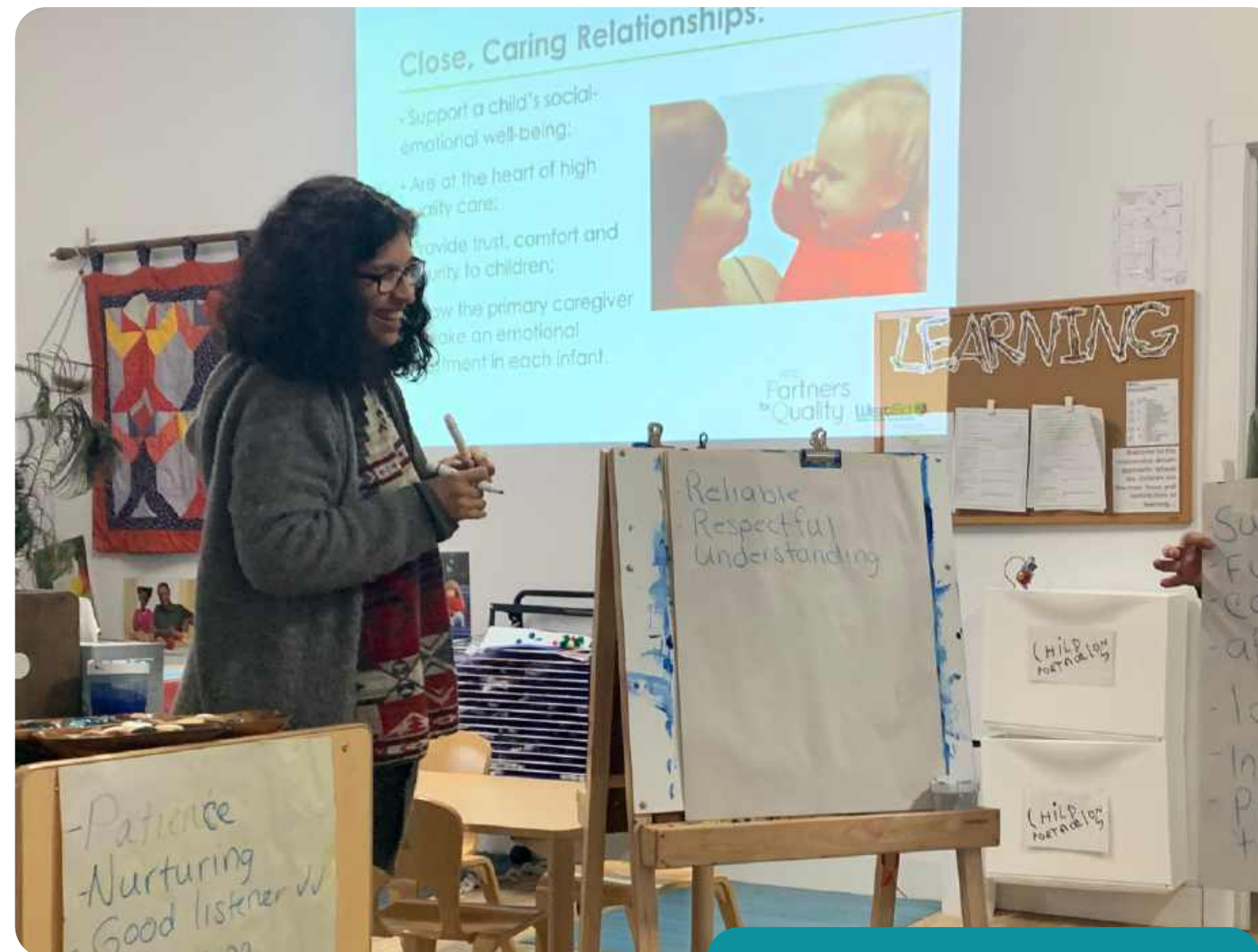
COMMUNITY CARE FOR QUALITY

PITC Partners for Quality Site

At the **Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC)**, we consider a relationship-based approach to caring for toddlers essential. PITC believes responsive, respectful care in a relationship is key for supporting early learning rather than developing lessons for infants and toddlers to master. Adults who implement the PITC find ways to allow for, expand, adapt, and encourage toddlers' efforts to pursue their inborn learning agenda.

(The Program for Infant/Toddler Care, <https://www.pitc.org/about>)

Storybook Village Preschool completed a year of training that allowed our early childhood educators to explore the PITC philosophy and curriculum. It recommended practices through on-site support specific to the needs of our infant and toddler program.



PITC for Quality onsite training with trainer Olga. (Winter 2019)



We received a double gold award and learning materials to teach healthy habits, mathematical language, and friendship.



4CS QUALITY COUNTS!

Storybook Village Preschool demonstrates a commitment to quality as a Quality Counts participant. Quality Counts Sonoma County helps early childhood programs reach goals through coaching, workshops, and community resources to provide quality care. In addition, Quality Counts through 4Cs identify providers who demonstrate a commitment to quality and provide quality early learning and care experiences to meet the diverse needs of Sonoma County families. Research shares how the early learning and care environment you choose can significantly impact your child's future—participating with a growth mindset benefits each family and our preschool community as a whole.

[Quality Counts Brochure for Families \(link\)](#)

HEALTHY APPLE NUTRITION PROGRAM

We are excited to be a Sonoma County's Healthy Apple Program participant and partner with Sonoma County's Public Health to provide our toddlers and preschoolers with nutritious snacks and lunch each day. We work with and receive training from the Sonoma County Department of Health Services to implement research-based best practices in nutrition and physical activity. As participants, we receive training and curriculum material to enhance learning through nutrition, physical activity, and gardening.





FAMILY PARTICIPATION

FAMILY-CENTERED CARE

The rich cultural traditions of Storybook Village Preschool's past, current, and future students offer authentic learning opportunities for our toddler and preschool programs, from its design to the curriculum implemented in our daily learning activities, and most importantly--giving back to our community. We believe embracing families' cultures and traditions is a mark of respect that tells our young children where they come from matters as much as where they're going.

Storybook Village Preschool provides many opportunities to foster strong and positive home-school connections, such as family picture displays and "All About My Family" books, classroom celebrations and holidays, monthly newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, family school events, preschool field trips, and program volunteers. Also, each classroom has a "family artifact" shelf to add a special item from their home so the children can feel their families' presence in the school.

Frankie Mae's grandma taught us how to use an instrument from her teaching days.



Tal vez sea verdad: que un corazón es lo que mueve el mundo (Maybe it's true: that a heart is what moves the world.)

– Dámaso Alonso, Spanish poet, 1898-1990

WE HAVE TEAM SPIRIT!

Our family-involvement policies are created to include each family's presence and participation. Please share strategies to welcome your family since we're all about adapting to changing family patterns. We know people may see things differently, so we create the space and time to discover, appreciate, and learn from each other. As a whole child teaching approach, we respect the whole family as our partners. Parents/guardians are encouraged to partner with our educators and director to plan meaningful and valuable classroom visits. Positive Partnerships Promotes Brain Development & Healthy Children! Brain systems are changeable with high-quality preschool education, parental involvement, and other positive factors. (NAEYC)

"Working as partners, family members and toddler care programs have an invaluable opportunity to support and strengthen each other. Together they can create a rich child care experience that blends harmoniously with the child's life at home."

—Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Creating Partnerships with Families, 2nd Edition, 2010



FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Storybook Village Preschool's ultimate goal for partnering with families is for our educators to create and maintain open communication with our families to support their beliefs, cultures, and childrearing practices. Our preschool and teaching staff regularly communicate with families using multiple modes of communication (e.g., in-person, written, online, using text through the school app). We ask parents/guardians how their family wants to receive and provide information? What information needs to be shared, and what is their ideal communication method? As mentioned, we use various communication modes, so we follow the family's lead to support strong partnerships.

We love family participation! Parents/guardians, family members, and friends can share their talents, interests, and traditions with our young children by reading aloud during storytime, sharing family recipes through cooking projects, family cultural performances, gardening, special events, parties, and volunteering to join us when we venture out to local parks and field trips, classroom chores/support, outdoor maintenance/creations and gardening. In addition, SVP schedules Family Work Days for any family member to contribute to our goals.



Our first field trip to a pumpkin patch with wonderful parents! (October 2019)

"It takes a village to raise a child. It takes a village to support that child's parent."

—Ann Douglas

As the California Head Start Association states, "Partnerships emerge with time and patience, in programs that are committed to serving and nurturing families and children."

PARENT & PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Child Care Licensing requires volunteers, including minors, who provide care and supervision to children at our school, must be immunized. [\(CDPH FLYER\)](#)

Storybook Village Preschool requires proof of immunizations (Influenza, Pertussis, Measles) and proof of TB clearance before volunteering in a classroom with children.

Volunteers may receive the influenza vaccine annually between August 1 and December 1. Once volunteering past December 1, proof of the influenza immunization is required or must have a written statement declining the influenza vaccine on file. Volunteers are never left alone with the children.



VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

WE ARE SAFE:

- Check-in at the school office with identification
- Put on a volunteer badge or sticker
- Wash your hands upon arrival
- Check-in with the teacher(s)
- Review posted conflict resolution process
- Review posted emergency procedures
- Only use adult restrooms; do not assist other children with bathroom routines

WE ARE KIND:

- Introduce yourself to children and other volunteers. How would you like to be addressed?
- Get at children's eye level when speaking to them
- Give positive descriptive acknowledgment when children are following the expectations
Ex. "You are being safe by using walking feet"

WE ARE RESPECTFUL:

- Use children's names when speaking to them
- Maintain confidentiality
- Use words to guide interactions; do not touch the children
- Silence and stay off cell phones, including other personal devices with screen time

WE ARE HEALTHY:

- We do not bring outside food into the school
- We drink water in front of the children
- Provide proof of immunizations before spending time with the children ([CDPH FLYER](#))



Our first family game night with preschool families!



Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.

—Mother Teresa

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Storybook Village Preschool is committed to guiding the learning of all its students while ensuring all members of our preschool are treated with dignity and respect. We strive to provide a kind, respectful, safe, and healthy learning environment that includes all children from various backgrounds and learning styles. We do not discriminate based on race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, family composition, or different mental and physical abilities.

The center director makes accommodation decisions, including admissions policies, program modifications, auxiliary aids and services, and facility modifications. The center director will evaluate SVP's program and the needs of the children currently enrolled, keeping in mind each child's needs before determining how many children need additional support and if the school can accommodate them. In addition, a step in assessing accommodations will include identifying community resources that can assist with inclusion and the family's commitment to partnership.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Storybook Village Preschool has a passionate team of loving, dedicated, and experienced early childhood educators who are all committed to the safety and health of each child, including developing every child's individual potential—celebrating all children. Our educators are excited to join families in supporting young children's growth and development. Each educator meets or exceeds all qualifications required by the State of California. We have teachers with different backgrounds in early childhood education (ECE), including Licensing Regulations of the core units and the training required to teach. All lead teachers to have an AA, BA, or Teacher Permit with an ECE focus. We encourage continued personal and professional growth through education and professional development. Our toddler care educators are mentored and coached on implementing the PITC philosophy and essential policies for promoting responsive, individualized care within a nurturing group setting.

Our highly-qualified preschool educators are passionate about establishing positive relationships and creating a dynamic preschool environment while fostering a love for learning. They strive to implement the Teaching Pyramid strategies for children to learn, develop, and build the skills necessary to get along in the world and academic success. Teachers must participate in the Teaching Pyramid year-long training, including completing 21 hours of professional development annually. We are part of a strong ECE network within Sonoma County and are excited to model what cultivating a positive workplace looks like for everyone to feel supported. We are a Partner Implementation Site through California's WestEd Teaching Pyramid program, so continuous growth and learning are our love language. A preschool community that grows together stays together!



First in the heart is the dream. Then the mind starts seeking a way.

—Langston Hughes (1943)





PROGRAMS & AGES OF CARE

Storybook Village Preschool provides care for children, ages two of age through age 5, or entry into TK and Kindergarten. Our policies are designed to give children a high-quality early childhood program. Families enroll their children in our program to ensure they have a childhood full of play, love, and investigation while reaching their developmental milestones. Children master the desired skills for positive social-emotional experiences and are ready for future successes beyond our time together.

Our mixed-age grouping respects developmental differences. With an emphasis on friendship skills, our daily routines and relationship-driven approach to learning will teach children to be more in sync with themselves, their peers, and a loving community. We provide primary caregiving and primary learning groups in the Preschool Room.



The children enjoy the cozy cove with books in the play yard.

With the children at the heart of our program policies, we want to ensure we're the right fit for your family, so visit our website for additional information about our program and policies.

TEACHER-CHILD RATIOS

We have a preschool license, providing services for preschool-age children. SVP will maintain a 1:12 adult-child ratio in the center: portions of the day will have a lower ratio, including small group experiences throughout their play.

Supplementary Services: We do not offer supplementary services.

A Child Enrolled is A
Family Enrolled!



THE VALUES OF MIXED AGE GROUPING:

An excerpt from the Highlander School Parent Newsletter

by Rukia Monique Rogers

Some of my fondest memories were discovering the wonders of my childhood side by side with my uncle and aunt, who were three and six years older than me, and scores of neighborhood children, for our play was filled with the construction of go-carts, tree houses, fishing, scavenger hunts, marbles, double-dutch, games, and countless investigations. This play was the palette for creativity, prosocial behavior, and shared knowledge.

The modern child care center has come to replace the extended family and neighborhood units that I enjoyed as a child as did many others, as many children are spending most of their waking hours in schools and centers. I recognize the vital role that early childhood programs now play in the lives of young children and their families. With great intentionality, The Highlander School seeks to create the time, space, and experiences in which children will encounter and sustain deep relationships with peers that reflect a range of ages, development, and the wonders of childhood.

Lilian Katz (1995), an early childhood educator and pioneer, explains:

“Although humans are not usually born in litters, we seem to insist that they be educated in them. The time that children spend in groups in schools and child care centers, particularly for preschoolers, amounts to replacing families and spontaneous neighborhood groups as contexts. More and more children are deprived of the information and models of competencies that once were available to them in natural mixed-age groups.”

Understandably, the notion of mixed-age groups can cause anxiety for many parents because it has become an uncommon practice. The questions they ask are valid. Will my child fit in? Will his/her needs be met? Will my child have friends? Will it be overwhelming?

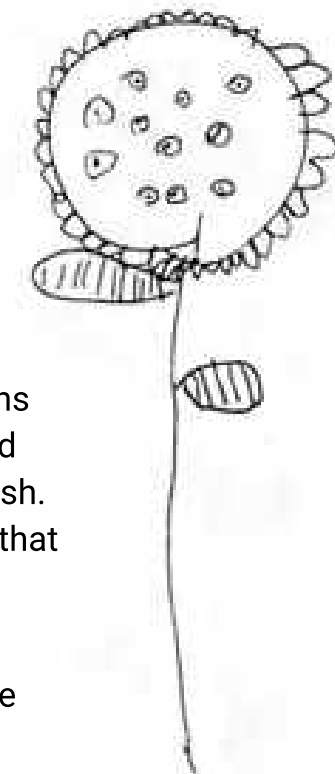
Research suggests there are tremendous benefits to mixed-age grouping for children, not only for younger children, but especially for older ones. Some benefits are:

Children and their development are viewed on an individualized basis. In a same-age setting, often the tendency is for the adults to hold expectations that children’s development is the same. Lessons and plans are focused on the whole group instruction, regardless of an individual child’s development. An older child may be socially immature, but a mixed-age group setting provides time for his or her social skills to flourish. On the other hand, a younger child may have an interest and competence in spatial relationships beyond that of many children his or her own age. A mixed-age group setting ensures opportunities for this child to explore the interest at deeper levels and to have peers that share this interest.

Peer modeling and cognitive development. Younger children benefit from the presence of older and more experienced peers to introduce and model complexity to their play and new skills. This is consistent with Vygotsky’s ideas (1978) of peer modeling, collaborative learning, and scaffolding. Likewise, older children benefit from these experiences as their knowledge transforms and deepens. For example, four-year-olds may understand the process of washing their hands or making strawberry jam, but creating an instructional book for a younger child challenges them to write, represent their knowledge, and create a sequence for the process.

Support cooperative relationships and social participation. Research has shown that children in mixed-age groups exhibit less competitiveness and more cooperative participation. Younger children actively participate in complex experiences that they would not normally be expected to engage in. And older children working with younger children learn empathy and develop more positive self-esteem and leadership skills.

By attending the Highlander School, children have a chance to participate in a style of learning that has been the model for early care and socialization around the world and across the centuries. Mixed-age groupings for young children can create an optimal learning and nurturing environment that reflects the natural family and the interwoven relationships of an intimate community





HOURS & SCHOOL CALENDAR



DAYS & HOURS OF OPERATION

Storybook Village Preschool's full-day hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. There is an option to add an hour before or after your family's schedule. Since children thrive within structured routines with flexibility, wonder & joy, we offer several scheduling options from three to five days.

The hours and daily routines allow us to honor our values of providing quality care and education and creating responsive, strength-based relationships while promoting teacher retention. The timetable options allow the children to spend most of their day with the same teacher. The extra care hours space are limited.

Full-day:

8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Part-day:

8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Extra Care Hours (limited spaces):

7:30 - 8:30 am OR 4:00 - 5:00 pm



Lucy, Cameron, and Kayce enjoying the picture books before their Pre-k Graduation. (June 2021)

SCHOOL CALENDAR



We operate on a year-round basis except for holidays and planned closures. **Our school follows the local school district's holiday closures, including an early closure at 12:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month for professional learning.** Our preschool is closed for three weeks: winter, spring, and summer. At the beginning of the school year, calendars of special celebrations, important events, and closures are provided for families. We have posted our updated calendar with upcoming family events on the [website](#).

SCHOOL CLOSURES

There are planned closure days shared on the school calendar. There may be unexpected closure days due to emergencies from natural disasters or community crises, including illness outbreaks impacting our staffing ratios. There is more information about undesirable closures in the *Emergency Closures* section.

Predictable morning routines are important because they can set the mood for the whole day. This is a pleasant, informal time of the day when children are dropped off by 9:00 am in the classroom. Please call the school or send a note in the school app in advance if your child will be later than 10:00 am or absent.



PROGRAM & DAILY SCHEDULES

TWOS PROGRAM

Storybook Village Preschool's Toddler program is where toddlers are supported, loved, respected, and celebrated. The program welcomes toddlers continuing their group care experience or introducing a child to time away from home. SVP provides individualized care and primary caregiving, fostering positive and trusting relationships. Our highly-qualified educators are mentored and coached on implementing WestEd's comprehensive program-wide approach to the *Teaching Pyramid* and the Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) Partners for Quality.

The toddler environment is emotionally and physically safe and developmentally appropriate for bridging the gap between infancy and preschool. Our toddlers develop a secure base for exploration and master emerging skills through a relationship-driven learning experience, while building independence.



Our toddler program has supportive learning areas to welcome and promote meaningful play and exploration to foster independence, self-help skills, and the desired friendly behaviors for a group setting.

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

- 8:30 am - 10:00 am** Arrival (Greeting and play freely)
- 10:00 am - 10:30 am** Morning Snack and Music and Movement Circle
- 10:30 am - 11:45 am** Outdoor Play
- 11:00 am - 11:45 am** Play freely, creative arts, sensory exploration
- 11:45 am - 12:00 pm** Storytime
- 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm** Lunch Time
- 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm** Nap Time & Caregiving routines
- 2:30 pm - 3:00 pm** Afternoon Snack & Sensory Exploration
- 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm** Outdoor Play & Goodbyes

"Predictability brings about security."
—Magda Gerber



PROGRAM & DAILY SCHEDULES

PRESCHOOL & PRE-K

Our mixed-age group respects developmental differences. With an emphasis on friendship skills, our daily routines and relationship-driven approach to learning will teach children to be more in sync with themselves, their peers, and a loving community. We have two primary groups to strengthen connections! The preschool and Pre-k mixed-aged group separates into learning groups within our "Great Room," block room, art room, garden, and outdoor classroom.

Teachers and children engage in a developmentally appropriate emergent curriculum through a relationship-driven environment. Each child's awareness and knowledge of the world around them is enhanced and celebrated by intentional teachers, allowing them meaningful exploration while demonstrating respect for their ideas. Elaborate and significant interests or projects emerge from the purposes of the children and can extend over long periods.

"Our task, regarding creativity, is to help children climb their own mountains, as high as possible."

—Loris Malaguzzi



TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30 - 8:30 am Early Care Hour

8:30 am Morning Arrival and Play Freely. Grown-ups drop off their child in the Great Room. Uninterrupted and structured play (self-managed and hands-on activities, with teachers engaging small groups in the atelier). 9:30 am clean-up bell

9:30 am Morning Snack

10:00 am Morning Gathering

10:15 am Outdoor Play

11:45 am Storytime

12:00 pm Lunch. Children transition to handwashing in groups and help prepare for their mealtime.

12:30 pm Part-Day Dismissal; rest time and quiet activities; self-help routines; small group is offered 2:00 - 2:30 pm.

2:30 pm Afternoon Snack

2:30-4:00 pm Outdoor Play

4:00-5:00 pm Extended Care Hour; play freely indoors, small group activity & Dismissal.



REST & NAP TIME

We believe it is important to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of each child and their family while having realistic expectations about what is possible and best for the community of learners. We have a flexible sleep-rest philosophy, providing a way for the children to be appropriately involved in independent, quiet play while others are sleeping. Our educators will partner with families regarding their child's sleep and relaxation needs, supporting sleep routines and peaceful family life.

Children learn about their world through relationships and how to be capable and confident through predictable routines. The educators will guide the toddlers and preschoolers with consistent and predictable routines. Social and emotional development will be supported through positive relationships, visual napping strategies, and a sleep-supportive environment.

When working with young children, we know how important it is to understand their cultural and family preferences when planning and to implement routines for nap time. It's all about the routines. We ask parents to bring a light blanket, a crib sheet, and a small stuffed animal if a transitional object is needed for comfort. We will send these items home weekly for the parent to launder and return to school the first day the child attends the following week. During nap/rest time, children will either sleep or relax quietly. A regularly scheduled time for children to rest or just wind down is beneficial since they are active throughout their school day.



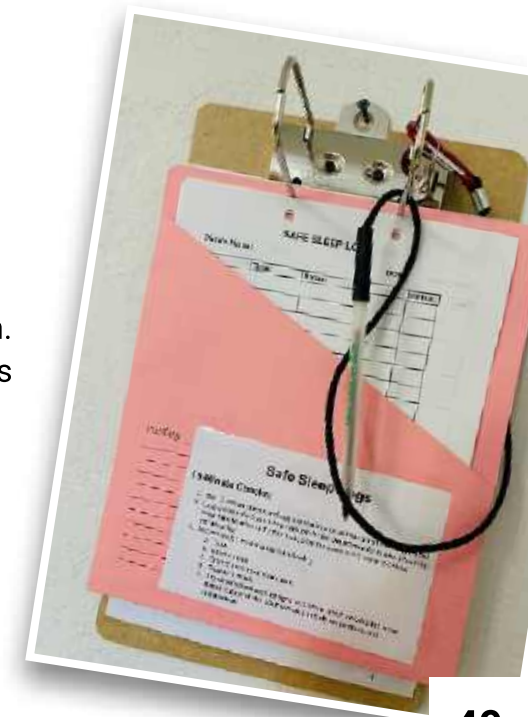
Storybook Village Preschool uses the best practices based on evidence through [Caring for Our Children \(CFOC\)](#), [National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs](#) to create program policies to meet the Licensing regulations.

Nap time is designed to allow children to physically rest and emotionally unwind. It's a time of day when the 'care' in child care really comes into play.

LICENSING REGULATIONS

It is important for families to understand there are different expectations and licensing regulations for each program within our center. In California, licensing regulations require that all children shall be given the opportunity to nap or rest without distraction or disturbance from other activities at the center.

- Supervision means visual observation of children.
- Children cannot be forced to stay awake or nap.
- Cots and floor mats used for napping are in a safe condition.
- Floor mats are at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick, covered with vinyl, and marked so that the sleeping side is distinguished.
- There are Safe Sleep Regulations for infant and toddler care.





NAP SCHEDULES

OUR VALUES ABOUT SLEEPING & NAPPING ROUTINES IN THE EARLY CARE SETTING

Toddlers will transition into rest time with their primary group and caregiver to provide them with a consistent ritual of relaxation and rest. The preschools will move and flow in small groups as the children are ready to enter the classroom and be part of creating a peaceful atmosphere, mastering self-help skills by making their beds beautiful and tidying their belongings, or helping their peers—teaching young children to value solitude and resting their brains. Our pre-nap routines set the tone with soft music, so we encourage children to sing their favorite songs before we turn the lights off. The educators have already predetermined where cots/mats will be located in the classroom, keeping each child’s unique personality and sleep habits in mind. Effective educators offer support and guidance from the wings while children engage in tasks tailored to their abilities. It’s amazing to see the confidence, self-esteem, and independence children develop while carrying out familiar routines without adult intervention. (NAEYC)

To help children settle into peaceful quiet time, we offer transition activities like looking at books on their cots for 10 minutes, and then their teacher will sing "put your book away" until all children place their book under their cot. The educators will have a poem to repeat as a ritual while tucking children in so they can cuddle into rest. For the early risers or non-nappers, we have established non-napping and wake-up routines for children to be appropriately engaged and supervised, respecting the solitary time and the nappers' rest. Other options may be considered depending on the teaching team's lunch breaks, such as children going outside where they can participate in free play or specific activities with their teacher—or setting up a quiet activity at the respectful table (i.e., journaling, play dough/clay, stringing beads).



Moving into and out of sleep are times when most humans are very vulnerable. If there is ever a time to be relaxed and gentle with children and to treat them as individuals, it is while helping them to move into and out of sleep.”

—Prime Times: A Handbook for Excellence in Infant and Toddler Programs

PROGRAM NAP SCHEDULES

Consistent sleep routines at home and morning drop-offs at school will support consistent nap routines at care. Consistency during routines is key for mastery of pro-social skills.

Toddler & Twos Room

All children rest after lunchtime.
The room is quiet between 12:30 - 2:30 pm

Preschool & Pre-k Room

All children rest after lunchtime.
The room is quiet between 12:30 - 2:30 pm

The non-nappers learn to be respectful of their peers who need sleep to have a successful afternoon at school. They learn the mantra "We are respectful and kind," and empathy is taught—fostering a caring community of learners.



SLEEP SOURCES & RESOURCES

For families of younger toddlers, we can explore how to create a "third space" to connect the family's cultural practices with the program's necessary routines. Families share their rituals used to support their sleep routines, such as being rocked or having an adult pat their back. Together we can follow an individualized Sleep Plan to provide each toddler with the best rest possible. Parents must update their child's Intake quarterly.

Consistent routines, and activities that happen at about the same time and in about the same way each day, provide comfort and a sense of safety to young children. Whether it is time to play, time for a snack, a nap, or for a loved one to return, knowing what will happen next gives children security and emotional stability. —Zero To Three (2010, p. 2)

***"To do for a child, is the work of servants.
To teach how is the work of educators."***

—Maria Montessori, *The Discovery of the Child*



We make visuals for children and adults to learn each routine.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL WELL BEING & PROMOTING HEALTHY SLEEP

- Health Promotion in Child Care: Safe Sleep (Caring for Our Children)
- Encouraging Healthy Sleep Habits (National Association for the Education of Young Children)
- How to Help Your Child Have a Successful Bedtime (National Center for Pyramid Model)
- Nap Time Is for Letting Go (National Association for the Education of Young Children)
- How Much Sleep Do We Really Need? (National Sleep Foundation)
- Shifting Schedules: How to Change to Two Naps From One (Excerpt from The No-Cry Separation Anxiety Solution)

Teaching Pyramid Family Article

- Making Life Better: Bedtime and Naptime (National Center for Pyramid Model)
- Making Life Better: Bedtime and Naptime (National Center for Pyramid Model) (Spanish)
- Making Life Better: Bedtime and Naptime (National Center for Pyramid Model) (English)



WHAT TO WEAR & WHAT TO BRING

There are clothing items that will help children master self-help skills and clothing that will make it difficult for children to master independence. We will change or help assist children whenever they are wet or have bowel movements.

Your child should wear:

- Clothing appropriate for active and messy play. We do not want a child's creativity hampered because they are wearing clothing that should not get dirty.
- Clothing appropriate for the weather. In the fall and winter, hats and mittens are needed as needed. Please bring all outdoor gear in a labeled bag.
- Sturdy, protective shoes that will enable them to run, climb, and play with ease. Flip-flops and open-toe sandals are not allowed.

Our school has a **Lost & Found** cabinet where we store belongings left behind. We accept and appreciate donations of outgrown clothing, shoes, boots, and accessories like gloves, socks, and beanies to add to our school's backup supply.

Stuffed animals and comfort objects are allowed on the cozy carpet when a child needs to co-regulate or take space with a familiar item. We made a visual to teach the children porch expectations of being a calm and quiet space.



WHAT TO BRING & NOT BRING

We need at least two sets of backup clothing to keep in the bathroom for each child. For children who are potty training, we need five pairs of training pants, three pairs of socks, three pairs of pants, and extra shoes available at all times. Please label all the clothes, shoes, and boots with your child's name with a marker or name tag.

We welcome comfort items like a stuffed animal or blanket. We always welcome books! We would love to read books from a child's home so the children can embrace meaningful literacy experiences.

Children and adults cannot bring items from home like toys or expensive watches with electronic games. SVP is not responsible for lost, broken, or damaged items.

Toys from home are not allowed on school property. Please set loving boundaries so toys do not leave your home or vehicle as a transition item.

Belonging, comfort, and family bonds

"The child who invents the use of a transitional object has the foundation to accomplish many important milestones. The existence of a transitional object implies relationship because the child must have an attachment relationship in order to create a symbol for it. Toddlers who use a transitional object are demonstrating their ability to solve problems symbolically. The preschool child who enters the classroom with one hand wrapped around her transitional object comes into the classroom with the capacity to connect and the ability to invent her learning?"

—Lesley Koplow, *Bears, Bears Everywhere: Supporting Children's Emotional Health in the Classroom*





FAMILY AGREEMENTS

We pride ourselves on fostering a caring community with a sense of respectful partnerships. Business matters are an important part of this handbook, so the admission agreement ensures families and staff members adhere to agreed-upon policies and fulfill their respective responsibilities. Each person's contribution is essential. There is much transparent information about our sound business practices in this handbook, shared in newsletters, and discussions with the director, demonstrating to your family that Storybook Village preschool is reliable and well organized. Our policies meet the demanding needs to sustain operations while considering insurance, salaries, taxes, equipment, food, facility rent or mortgage, maintenance, and so on. We share with families upfront how important it is to understand our policies before enrolling since everyone in our program is affected when a family neglects their financial responsibilities, late pickups become a problem, or other policies are disregarded and challenged. We are fair in business dealings with families by putting careful thought into the policies and consistently implementing them. We offer friendly reminders so families know what we expect of them, and they know what to expect from us—making this a harmonious beginning of our story together.

ADMISSION & PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

If for any reason, either of us cannot honor the terms of the school's admission agreement, we will communicate that fact to the other party immediately. We look forward to having the same openness of communication concerning business affairs as in other areas of our relationship. All business matters and concerns need to be addressed directly with the director.

"Our job is too difficult and too beautiful to do alone."

—Amelia Gambetti, Reggio Emilia, April 2015



The Press Democrat Article: Is the pandemic the tipping point needed to improve Sonoma County's child care network?

Storybook teacher (left) reaches to pull down a tree branch for her students to swing from at Storybook Village Preschool in Santa Rosa, California, on Tuesday, March 16, 2021. (Beth Schlanker/ The Press Democrat)





ADMISSION AGREEMENT

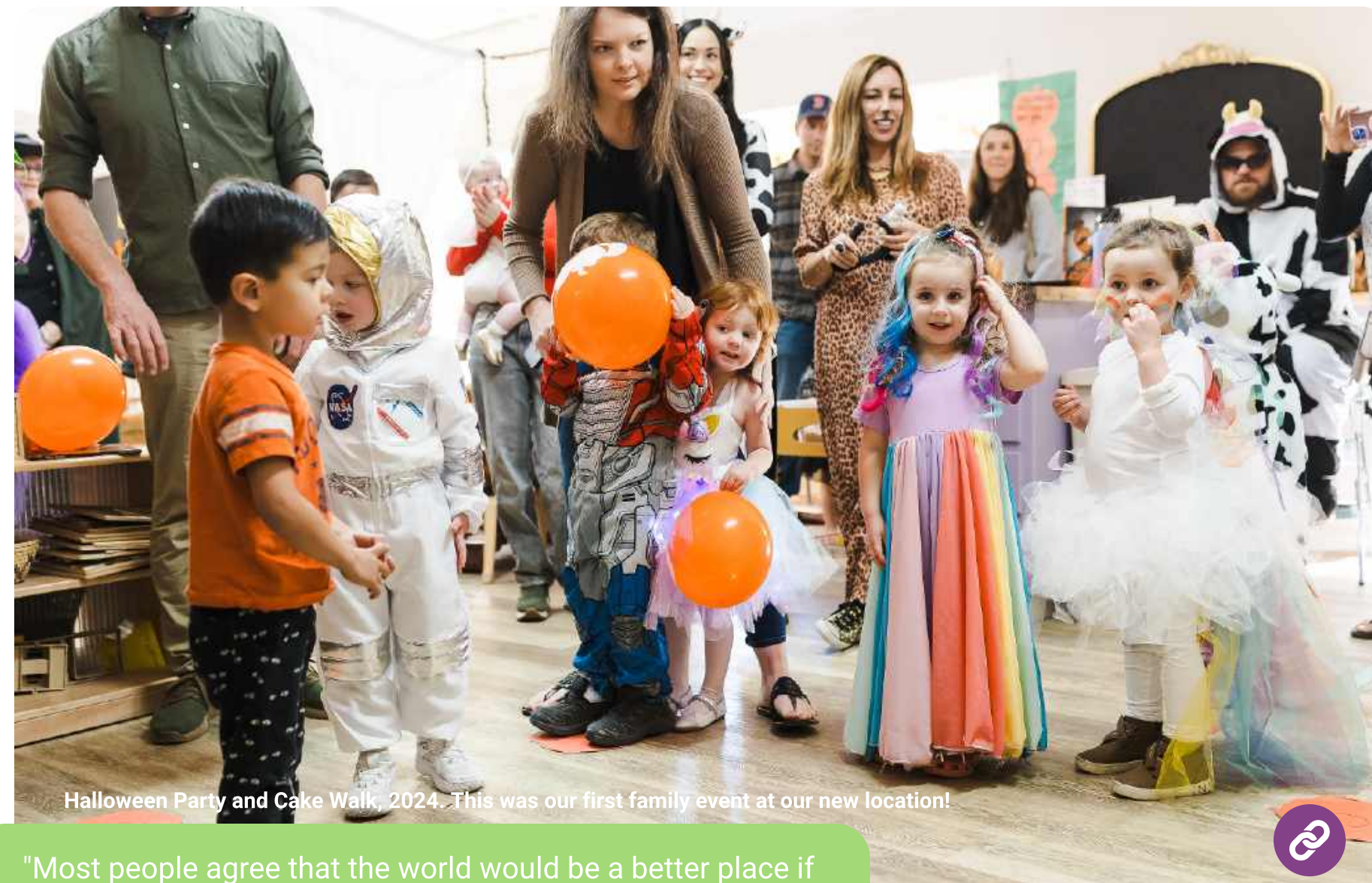
Business matters must be discussed and agreed upon before a child enters a program. If clearly defined agreements are not established, problems are likely to arise in the following areas:

- Fee arrangements
- Arrival and pickup times
- Health policies and emergency planning*

The above topics are the most significant information for all family members to dive into together to ensure we match your family's needs and can be strong partners in care.

*From the California Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Creating Partnerships with Families, 2nd Edition. 2010.

- ▶ **Terms and Conditions:** From time to time it may be necessary for SVP to change the terms and conditions of the Agreement, which could include changes in fees, the addition of new charges, or other items. Rather than having parents sign a new Agreement, SVP will accomplish the changes by giving appropriate advance notification that allows parents a certain time period within which to remove their child from our school if they disagree with the change. Parent inaction within the allotted time period causes the changes to become a binding part of the Agreement.
- ▶ **Waiver Provision:** Our waiver provision states that although SVP may have, on one or more occasions, failed to enforce a right contained in the Agreement, that failure to enforce does not constitute a waiver for all time.
- ▶ **Agreement Signatures:** Both parents with legal rights or the child's legal guardian(s) as established by court documents must sign the Admission Agreement before enrolling their family.



Halloween Party and Cake Walk, 2024. This was our first family event at our new location!

"Most people agree that the world would be a better place if we all cared more for one another, but despite that initial agreement, we find it is hard to say exactly what we mean by caring."

—Nel Noddings, *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy*



TUITION & PROGRAM FEES

MONTHLY TUITION

Storybook is a full-year-round preschool program (September - August). Tuition is collected on the 25th of each month for the upcoming month of care. Families are set up for automatic recurring payments, which are deducted from their bank account or charged to a credit card for the monthly tuition. There are additional fees for late pick-ups, including late and returned payments.

Enrollment is based upon the number of days the child is scheduled to attend regardless of the actual days attended. There are no makeup days or credit for school closures, holidays, absences, or illnesses. If your child is part-time and you would like to add another day or more time, if space is available, you will be charged the hours and days of care provided in addition to your child's scheduled tuition. These extra hours or days will be granted if space allows and, if approved in advance by the director, then applied to the current month's tuition. Suppose a family is repeatedly late in paying fees. In that case, we will remind them that timely receipt of payment is necessary for our program's financial stability and that late payments cannot be tolerated.

PRIVATE PAYMENT OPTION

- Accounts set up for automatic payments through Tuition Express are processed on the 25th of the month before the first of the month the tuition is due to collect payments automatically.
- Parents can place the payments by the 25th of the month in the drop box outside the office door if their family's preferred payment method is a check or cash.



PROGRAM FEES & TUITION POLICY REMINDERS

- **Late Payment Fee:** A late charge of \$50 is assessed at noon on the day following the due date. Nonpayment is grounds for immediate termination of enrollment.
- **Extra Care Hours:** Extra care hours are limited. Families can add one hour to their child's day for an additional monthly fee.
- **Late Pick-up Fee:** There is a \$20 fee for every five minutes late past the child's scheduled time. Please note that there is no "grace period." Families are encouraged to pick up five minutes before pick-up time. Late pick-up fees will be applied to the current balance.
- **Monthly Tuition:** Tuition is due even in the case of school closure for any reason. No tuition reductions will be made for absences due to family vacation, illness, emergency, etc.
- **Re-Registration for Returning Families:** A \$100 annual registration fee is required during re-registration every January-March.
- **Pre-enrollment, Deposit, and Registration Fees:** Waiting list application fees, pre-enrollment fees, including the deposit, and registration fees are nonrefundable. The \$500 deposit is applied to the child's final month of tuition, when a written 30-day notice is provided to the director.





ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT PROGRAMS

SUBSIDIZED PAYMENT OPTION

The state and Sonoma County provide options for using public funding to help parents meet the need for child care while they work or attend educational or training programs. Storybook Village Preschool accepts all types of child care subsidy payments; the parent is responsible for paying a monthly family fee if the subsidy agency does not fully cover the tuition costs.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES' CONTRACTS

The parent must keep their federal, state, or local funding contract current; the child may not enroll or return to school until the contract is verified to be current or extended. Storybook Village Preschool cannot hold enrollment spots; parents are responsible for the child's tuition if continuing care without a current certificate and contract and must follow the *private payment* policies. A late fee of \$50 if the attendance form is not signed by the last day of the month.

GET HELP WITH CHILD CARE COSTS

There may be funding available to assist Sonoma County Families with child care costs. The following resources may be able to provide assistance:

- [Sonoma County 4Cs](#)
- [Child Care Resource & Referral Network](#)
- [R&R for Sonoma County](#)
- [California Department of Education](#)
- [CalWORKS](#)

LATE PICK UP & FEES

A child who is picked up late can get anxious, and teachers who have worked a full day need to be able to count on leaving their job promptly. Parents are required to pick up children by their scheduled pick-up time. Ex.: If your child's scheduled pick-up time is 12:30 pm, you must arrive before 12:30, since 12:31 pm is considered late. Being on time is a significant contributor to our teachers' job satisfaction and our children's happiness. We pride ourselves on being a community whose parents are on time and strive to have no violations of this rule.

Late pick-up charge: \$20.00 for every 5 minutes will be applied If the parent or authorized grown-up is late picking up a child after their scheduled pick-up time. The fee will be enforced after all partial-day schedules, including 12:30, 4:00, and 5:00. The late fee will be applied to the family's current tuition bill. The same fee applies if the parent or authorized grown-up drops off their child before their scheduled drop-off time.

Every grown-up who picks up late must sign the late pick-up book in the classroom. If a parent is cutting it too close to the pick-up time and clocks out just in time in the front of the building but arrives late to the classroom to pick up their child, the teacher will ask the parent to sign the pick-up book, and there will be a late pick-up fee assessed based on the time the teacher notes.

If a parent has not arrived to pick up their child and cannot be reached by phone within 15 minutes of closing time, we will call the emergency contact(s) listed on their enrollment forms. The Department of Social Services and/or the police department will be contacted if parents cannot be contacted or do not arrive within 30 minutes of closing time.

Please contact the director if you need special arrangements for your child to stay later in an emergency. If tardiness is excessive, a meeting will be set up with the parents and the director to discuss the continuation of care at Storybook Village Preschool.



SIGNING IN & OUT

SIGNING IN AND OUT

Storybook Village Preschool requires physical full signatures to be compliant with licensing, including ensuring children's safety. Procure's Parent Signature feature will allow our program to collect signatures from parents when they drop off or pick up their children. The subsidized child care attendance forms can be signed in and out of the binder near the office door.

THE KIOSK FORMS

The kiosk forms help us obtain important information from parents during check-in or check-out. SVP asks questions and tracks responses from parents when they are signing their children in and out. This is a great way to have our parents provide health information or individual needs while only touching their personal devices.



At Storybook Village Preschool, there is an open door policy. You are free to come unannounced and visit your child. Parent engagement is very important to a child's experience.

QR SCAN PROCESS VIA THE MOBILE APP

The software program requires parents to sign in and out through a QR code scanning process with their device or our school tablet.

Parents will open their mobile app and click the QR code icon in the top right corner. They will scan the QR code by focusing their device's camera on the code. Once the code is scanned, the parent will be prompted with the same steps as if they signed their child out on the kiosk.

To learn more about the steps to sign your child in and out with the touchless QR Codes, visit their support pages:

- [How to Use QR Codes for Sign in and Out.](#)
- [Sign In-Out on the Parent Kiosk](#)



ARRIVAL & DEPARTURES

ATTENDANCE

Please call the school in advance if your child is absent or late. Children's arrival times are flexible within their contracted schedule; we have shared that arrivals are not permitted during the morning gathering. If a family plans doctor appointments or spends longer mornings together, please be mindful of the activity happening during arrival so we can support your transition. We cannot allow children to arrive right at lunch or rest time due to the child and family interrupting the sleep of the other children. It is unrealistic for children to be expected to rest as they are full of energy and excitement.

ARRIVAL & GOOD-BYE RITUALS

This is a pleasant, informal time of the day where toddlers and preschoolers are dropped off by 9:00 am in the classroom. We encourage families to stop to chat with the teachers or play for a while with our young children before departing for the day; however, please be respectful of our morning meeting and gathering. SVP requires that families walk the child into the classroom, help wash their hands, help put away items in a child's cubby, and greet the teachers (wellness checks are required) and friends. When it is time for the grown-up dropping the child off to go, they are encouraged to tell the child they are leaving and say "Goodbye" to create their predictable good-bye rituals.



DEPARTURE & TRANSITIONS

During departure, it is also important to follow a set routine. SVP recommends that when families arrive, they greet their child and the teachers and let the child know how much time they have to wrap up the ongoing project or play taking place. While the child is finishing up, it is an excellent time to talk with the teachers to discuss their child's day, but this is not the opportunity to address development, concerns, etc. If needing to have a more extended check-in, please ask the teacher to set a separate meeting time to connect.

On the way out, check the child's cubby and coat hook. It is important for families to model saying "Goodbye" to the child's teachers so they know you and your child are leaving. Families need to ensure their child remains with them inside and outside the building. Families should use the sidewalk when going to their vehicle in the circle drive, parking lot, or street. We are respectful of peaceful arrivals and departures! We are also safe when walking out front; the child must hold a parent's hand.

If arriving during the morning circle, please be patient and wait to drop off until after the morning gathering. You and your child are welcome to join the morning circle, too. Educators are not available to assist with families' arrival during large group times, and the disruption will create a struggle to maintain the children's engagement. We want to connect with families, so thank you!



WAITING LIST & ENROLLMENT

TOURS, WAITING LIST & ENROLLMENT

Until we can share our school, we hope you enjoy seeing the love and care we provide to the children by browsing our family handbook, website, and social media pages. Email us or subscribe to our newsletters to be invited to our school celebration, open house, or a multifamily tour. We're accepting waitlist applications. Make sure to subscribe to our newsletter for updates, and reach out to us to say hi! Thank you in advance for your patience as we take a little longer to respond to inquiries. If you would like to ask us for further guidance or information, please email us, and we will be happy to assist you.



BELOW IS AN OUTLINE WITH DETAIL ABOUT THE ENTRY PROCESS:

1. **Inquiries & Waitlist Application.** Enrollment is year-round, and depending on our current families' needs, we may have limited spaces. Current Storybook Village Preschool families have priority for each annual registration and pre-register the winter before the school year to hold their family's space since we are all about continuity of care and long-lasting partnerships to raise a healthy child. The enrollment at SVP is typically full, so families are encouraged to apply early to be added to waitlists. All applicants will be charged a \$50 non-refundable application fee upon submitting their application in person or by mail.
 - a. Families applying for the waiting list will be notified via email within 14 days, sharing availability or waiting list status.
2. **Sign Up for a Tour or Open House.** We require families to visit with their children before enrollment. Tours will be held in person if space is available for the family immediately or in the upcoming school year. If there is not a known opening or a long waiting list, we organize open house events or multifamily tours throughout the year for families interested in our preschool.
- a. The following criteria helps determine the appropriate placement given the child's needs: A required meeting as a family interview during tours and time with the child; families can complete an ASQ Ages & Stages Questionnaire if there are questions or concerns about a child's needs being met in our current group setting. (See page 72 for more information)
3. **Confirmed Enrollment.** When a space becomes available, waitlisted families will be contacted via email and has 48 hours to confirm their spot. Once a start date is established, the remaining non-refundable enrollment fees are due to hold the family's spot. We cannot hold spots; however, we will honor a family's current program's withdrawal policy to provide a notice to ensure a respectful and positive transition.

"There is nothing musky about caring. It is the strong resilient backbone of human life."

—Nel Noddings, *The Challenge to Care in our Schools*



ENROLLMENT PACKET

Families will receive the enrollment packet, family handbook, and required resources at the beginning of the enrollment process.

The following forms must be completed by the parents or authorized representatives as part of the enrollment process before the child may attend care:

- Notification of Parents' Right (LIC 995)
- Child's Personal Rights (LIC 613A)
- Identification & Emergency Information (LIC 700)
- Consent for EMergency Information (LIC 627)
- Child's Preadmission Health History - Parents Report (LIC 702)
- Physician's Report (LIC 701)



Kenny and his grandma enjoyed our story walk, reading *Where the Wild Things Are!* April, 2021.

| A very warm welcome | | |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Child's Name | Birthdate | Start Date |
| Pre-Enrollment Fees | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enrollment Application Fee - \$100 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Registration Fee - \$500 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tuition Deposit - \$500 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tuition Waiver Form | | |
| Required Forms | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Admission Agreement | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identification & Emergency Form (LIC 700) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent's Health Report (LIC 702) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physician's Report (LIC 701) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consent for Medical Treatment (LIC 627) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Up-to-Date Immunization Record | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notification of Parents' Rights (LIC 995) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Rights (LIC 613A) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What My Teacher Wants to Know | | |
| Things To Send and Bring | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enroll family pictures | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backpack clothing | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas (if needed) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wipes (if needed) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen with form (LIC 627) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries & Tissues | | |
| Important Resources | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Handbook | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly Tuition Schedule | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What to Bring & Not Bring | | |

We host a family orientation each year to share our admission policies and procedures while modeling our vision as we create a community-building experience. Please see the *Family Orientation* section for more information.

TRIAL PERIOD & WITHDRAWAL

Either party, for any reason, can cancel the enrollment without penalty within an initial 30-day trial period. The registration fees and the first month's tuition are non-refundable.

SCHEDULE CHANGES & WITHDRAWALS

A 30-day written notice to the Director is required to make schedule changes or withdraw a child from the program. Schedule changes are not guaranteed and are subject to availability. Parents are responsible for the contracted tuition for the tuition during the required 30-day notice, whether the child attends Storybook Village Preschool or not.

If it is necessary for SVP to terminate the child's enrollment, the parent will receive a two-week notice in writing.

The following are reasons for termination: Consistently disregarding the program policies, lack or tardiness of payment of services, disruptions to the daily schedule, the use of inappropriate language, aggressive or passive-aggressive behavior, unnecessary rudeness, or disruptive behavior toward students and staff; including if the program is unable to meet the needs of the child and their family.



HEALTH FORMS

ASQ-3 AGES AND STAGES QUESTIONNAIRES

Parents will be asked to answer questions about some things their child can and cannot do. The questionnaire includes questions about their child's communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social skills

Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ-3™) is a set of questionnaires about children's development. It has been used for more than 20 years to make sure children are developing well. Screening provides a quick look at how children are doing in important areas, such as communication, physical ability, social skills, and problem-solving skills ASQ-3 can help identify the child's strengths as well as any areas where the child may need support.

Families are active partners in their child's learning and development! By completing ASQ-3 questionnaires, they ensure their child is off to the best possible start at Storybook Village Preschool. Families can talk to their health care or education professional to find out more or visit www.agesandstages.com.



For a community to be whole and healthy, it must be on peoples' love and concern for each other.

—Millard Fuller

PHYSICALS & IMMUNIZATIONS

All children are required to have a completed physician's examination form and all immunizations up-to-date at enrollment. Immunizations are to be kept up-to-date after that, following the California guidelines schedule. A physical exam is required every year, beginning of the school year. Immunizations are an important public health policy affecting young children.

As a matter of state law, children in the program must:

- Be fully immunized OR
- Be in the process of becoming fully vaccinated according to the approved schedule

PHYSICIAN'S REPORT—CHILD CARE CENTERS (FORM)

Family Resources

- [Parents Guide to Immunizations](#)
- [Parent Brochure with Easy-to-Understand Immunization Schedule](#)



NO CELL PHONE POLICY

Besides clocking in and out, we ask that you do not use your cell phone during pick up, drop off, or when children are present. Children and educators need your full attention during these transitions. If you need to take a call, please step out front of our school to do so. Our teaching team appreciates families being respectful and supporting our Program-Wide Expectations to provide a high-quality learning



To the right is Micah and Ethan made a selfie to take pictures with their buddies.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Occasionally a newspaper or television station wishes to do a story and take a few pictures of SVP children involving one of our field trips or activity at school. We also use photos and articles about learning activities and accomplishments on the school website, Facebook, and SVP publications. You will be asked to sign a press release/photo release form, which will be one of the initial forms you will be given upon your child's admission to SVP..

If you choose to not sign the form, or if after signing it you change your mind, your desire will be honored. In that case, your child's picture may still appear on materials that have already been designed and printed, but his/her image will no longer be used on new materials.





NO SCREEN TIME & FAMILY RESOURCES

- Televisions are not located in the school.
- Children are not allowed any screen time while at school.
- If screen time happens such as during a Parents' Night Out, children are shown only educational and commercial-free television or videos. Children are always given the opportunity to do an alternative activity during screen time.
- Screen time is never offered as a reward or withheld as punishment.
- Educators complete professional development on screen time at least 2 times per year.
- SVP will offer families screen time information 2x or more per year that includes recommended amounts and types of screen time, positive screen time practices, not using screen time to reward or manage behaviors, and more information within our program's policies. Look out for the fun family resources and support!



We facilitate play topics and redirect them to appropriate themes. Children learn about being a Super Friend and school play may look different than playing at home.

MEDIA

We strive to create a learning environment that nurtures children's social and emotional development, fostering a rich imagination and positive play experiences. In doing so, it is important to recognize the impact that technology and media play on children's development. Imaginative play has become restricted to narrow scripts that children adopt from television and movies, leading to exclusion of peers to stay on script and violence to solve problems.

As educators, we recognize that media does have value and can also impact children positively when programs are chosen carefully and used with guidance and intention. We place no judgment on families who choose to expose their children to media. We also recognize that children's experiences in the home are carried over into their school experiences. For this reason, we ask that you follow these guidelines regarding media use:

1. Select television programs and movies carefully. Do the character's actions and words reflect the positive values you wish to instill in your child?
2. Limit your child's exposure to media in the mornings. Consider the energy your child brings to our program. Is your child arriving present and ready to engage or is your child revved up and inspired to reenact a program they watched in the morning?
3. If your child needs more time to separate from a tablet, please eliminate screentime on your way to school so your child has the time to co-regulate before arriving at school.



SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Community-building orientation

Parents are required to attend an orientation meeting with their child's educators, other parents from their child's class, and the director in August, just prior to the start of school. It is required that one parent from each family attend a family orientation. If for some extenuating circumstance this is not possible, please let the director know.

This community-building family time focuses on the following topics: roles family members play in both our toddler and preschool programs, Program-Wide Expectations, illness policy, emergency procedures, the Teaching Pyramid approaches for guiding behaviors and supporting friendships such as child-guided curriculum, and how to be part of the learning taking place in SVP. Our goal is to make families visible in our program and to establish school year goals and projects as a preschool community.

Families are encouraged to share their children's individual needs and interests for teacher planning and to provide the best nurturing care. This is a time for families to connect with the director, educators, and other families while learning to support all children being safe, respected, kind, healthy, and loved while at Storybook!



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Storybook Village Preschool has several public social media school accounts for families and educators to share learning, events, and important updates. SVP recognizes the vital role that social media plays in communicating, collaborating, and interacting with families, friends, colleagues, and the general public. We respect the wishes of families who do not want pictures or videos of their child shared on social media. Please gain other parents' permission before positing photos or videos of their children on your personal social media accounts.

We have a zero-tolerance policy for cyber bullying and posts or comments that are political, racist, sexist, abusive, profane, violent, obscene, spam, contain falsehoods or are off-topic, or that libel, incite, threaten, or make ad hominem attacks on children, families, employees, guests, other individuals, or SVP. We encourage you to use social media to connect with our SVP community, fostering a place for vibrant and thoughtful engagement.

BABYSITTING POLICY

Arrangements made for private sitting are between the individual and the family and are outside the responsibility of Storybook Village Preschool. We do not endorse or recommend individuals beyond their work in our supervised setting. Please refrain from asking educators who baby-sit for you about children, families, or other educators.



FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Storybook Village Preschool's partnerships are not limited to families and program staff. They also include extended family, friends and neighbors, specialists, health professionals, and community partners such as family-support agencies like Early Learning Institute. All partners benefit from the expertise of the others and from an understanding of the critical role each plays in the child's life. This understanding develops through two-way and multi-way communication.*

Our ultimate goal for partnering with families is for our educators to foster and maintain open communication with our families to support their beliefs, cultures, and childrearing practices throughout all learning experiences. Our program regularly communicates with families by using multiple modes of communication, such as informal communication, communication through the school app, newsletters, family meetings and projects, bulletin boards, phone calls, website, social media, notes that go home with children, and any other options to support open, honest communication. We would love to expand our one-way communication into two-way communications by inviting family members to add their thoughts, experiences, and expertise to our newsletters and blog!

*From the California Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Creating Partnerships with Families, 2nd Edition. 2010.



Elliot and her mom celebrated their love during our morning muffin gathering. May 2019.

Families and educators are important sources of information for each other.

—Infant/Toddler Caregiving: A Guide to Creating Partnerships with Families, 2nd Edition, 2010

FAMILY DIRECTORY

The Family Directory is an excellent resource for planning playdates to strengthen school friendships and family connections. We continuously update our Family Directory as children join us and move up classrooms. Please let us know if you see a correction needed or if you would like to add information like siblings and pet names, including updated photos.

WALKING FIELD TRIPS

Once young children enter our preschool classroom, they may participate in planned walking field trips. We will ask for volunteers. All field trips will be scheduled in advance. Families are notified and required to complete a permission slip for their child to attend. There are so many beautiful places to walk to from our preschool! We're close to Howarth Park, Yogurt Time, a veterinary hospital, Pizzerias, and much more within our Montgomery neighborhood! We will not plan field trips beyond walking distance; Storybook Village Preschool does not offer transportation for school-related events.



SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

family events, milestones & celebrations

We believe young children should be allowed to celebrate holidays in their preschool, as long as we use an anti-bias approach! Storybook promises to be sensitive while acknowledging all holidays celebrated within our preschool community while respecting the diversity of all families. Our family cultural questionnaire is our invite for families and educators to share at least one holiday or event that is important to them so we can teach the diverse ways families and staff celebrate the same holidays, including encouraging children to learn about their classmates' special holidays and family traditions. We are committed to embracing and shaping each year's celebrations by having them reflect the children and families in our preschool community.

Through an anti-bias approach and intentional teaching, we are excited to pepper our program with families' most cherished, holidays, traditions, and milestones! We would like to find out from our families which holidays if any, they celebrate, and what they might like to share about their family's personal traditions. Our educators create learning activities with our families and various traditions shared with us in our classrooms throughout the school year, from reading rich stories reflecting cultures and traditions, cooking shared family recipes, singing songs with multicultural musical instruments, to hosting family potlucks with shared dishes peppered with love. We are excited to celebrate each child and family during these amazing early years.



Nicole's mom shared handmade puppets from Sicily, where Nicole's family is from. Summer 2020.

We invite parents to share at-home musical moments and favorite family songs—it is a great way to foster singing classroom songs at home and including home languages in the school.

PRESCHOOL BLOG



Our blog is one way we can make care visible and contains helpful parenting tips and teaching tools. The care we provide to young children and the care we hope reaches the families wanting more than just child care, early childhood learning, and education.



"Chinese knot symbolizes good luck and prosperity. Happy Chinese New Year! From Caleb & Family" Feb. 2022



PARENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

A group of parents enthusiastic about being part of designing the program to reflect families' strengths and program needs.

We have established a robust and active Parent Ambassador Program, which will give incredible rewards to all community members, such as a sense of belonging, acceptance, and support. Each family has a presence within our preschool's learning environment, including being valued by our community. Our commitment is to know each family while partnering with them to foster a love for learning. While having many family members reach out how to help others, provide feedback for quality program improvements, or connect, we are excited to provide a support network for our families.

The Parent Ambassadors will significantly help our preschool in welcoming new families, building connections, and hopefully creating lifelong relationships to strengthen families through love and support networks. All of our families are special and important to us, and we hope that ambassador parents feel they are a vital part of our school, making a community. This meaningful program will hold SVP accountable for staying focused through a family-centered approach and not missing an opportunity to help a family feel connected.



“Hands down, THE BEST preschool in town! I say that to my boys, and their eyes light up in agreement.” - Shayne



“This is seriously a top notch school.” –Jenn



We would love to expand our one-way communication into two-way communications by inviting family members to add their thoughts, experiences, and expertise to our newsletters and blog!

If you would like to learn more about being part of the parent ambassador program and sharing voices and solutions to designing the program to reflect families' strengths and program needs, please reach out to the director and look out for the Zoom or in-person invites. We are excited to support families growing together, old and new!

The overall objectives of the program are to:

- Engage parents in community partnership-building efforts
- Promote parent education about parenting, child development, and local and state child care issues
- Encourage and increase the civic involvement of parents in our program, policy and procedure issues, community volunteering projects, etc.

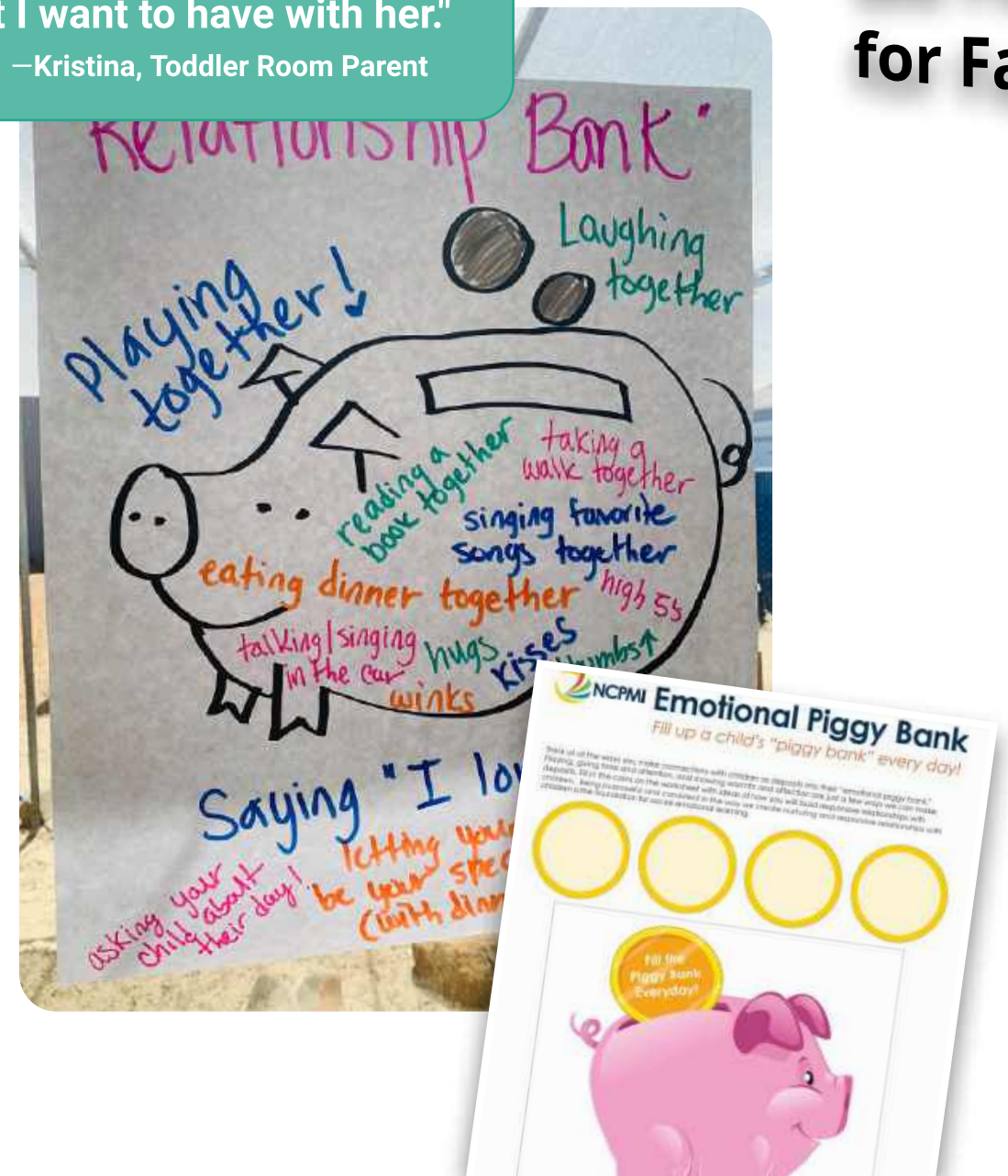
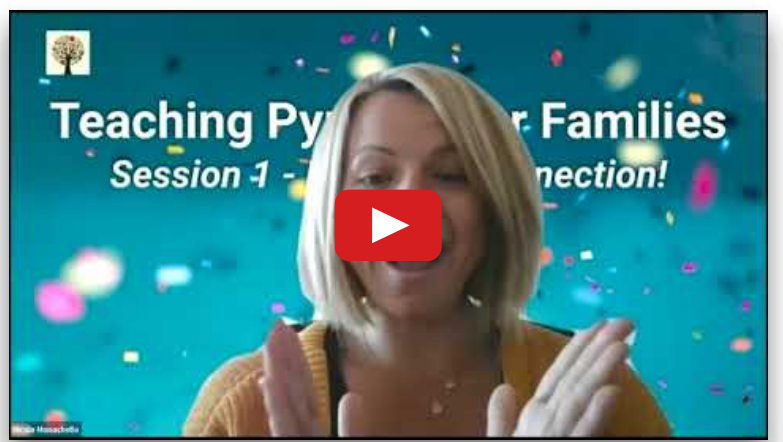


TEACHING PYRAMID FOR FAMILIES

We know "it takes a village to raise a child," and we are proud and enthusiastic about being part of Sonoma County's *Teaching Pyramid* Leadership Team. Storybook Village Preschool offers the *Teaching Pyramid For Families* parent education, promoting family engagement to strengthen the link between home and school: Materials designed for family members are part of the CA Teaching Pyramid approach because strong partnerships with family members are important to us, and for positive child outcomes.

The *Teaching Pyramid For Families* is an evidence-based series of sessions developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). The parenting groups connections help parents and caregivers promote their young child's social and emotional development and better understand young children's challenging behaviors. Parents and caregivers will learn how to use positive approaches to improve their interactions with their children; help children learn appropriate behavior, and build their child's confidence and self-esteem. Thereby preparing children for successful early learning experiences and, later on, school success. We are a Pyramid Model preschool, so we are excited to share the magic with families to promote positive home-school connections through consistency.

"It has definitely changed my approach to parenting. More than anything, it has given me time to reflect on Malia's emotional development and the relationship that I want to have with her."
—Kristina, Toddler Room Parent



We Facilitate Teaching Pyramid for Families Workshops!

SERIES ONE

- Session 1: Making a Connection!
- Session 2: Play & Positive Interactions
- Session 3: Reflecting & Reframing
- Session 4: Friendship, Feelings, & Fun!
- Session 5: Strong Emotions & Solutions
- Session 6: Why Do Children Do What They Do?

SERIES TWO

- Session 1: Going Deeper with the Teaching Pyramid Part 1, (Strategies to promote positive behavior)
- Session 2: Going Deeper with the Teaching Pyramid Part 2 (Problem-solving; Challenging behavior; Everyday routines)



GUIDANCE

It's all about the relationships!

Storybook Village Preschool is a Reggio-inspired program! Relationships are the foundation of everything we do. Strong relationships allow young children to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as a group. As children learn in the context of caring relationships with their educators, they will be more skilled at building positive relationships with their classmates, reflecting the core of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, which emphasizes building and sustaining relationships. Our educators use practical strategies for building positive relationships with the children throughout the preschool day. By establishing meaningful relationships, educators can get to know each child in their care well. Beyond establishing respectful and trusting relationships, teachers support and guide behaviors through intentional teaching, developmentally appropriate practices, and designing supportive environments to meet children's needs and interests while making their identities and families visible.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY! [\(Tell Me What To Do Instead!\)](#)

Acknowledgment promotes internal motivation. Acknowledgment helps children develop a sense of confidence in their ability and ability to have an impact on the world. Teachers "scan for success" by saying what they see and describing the appropriate behavior through narration. This is not a reminder but said while the child is doing the behavior we desire. With our teachers using more focus, generic statements are changed to comments that will really build and deepen relationships! The Teaching Pyramid framework calls this Positive Descriptive Acknowledgment (PDA) and when we follow the statement with an expectation, we are giving children a PDA Plus, so they can connect their behaviors to the behaviors that get attention from adults.



"Today will never come again."
—Thomas Merton



We Are A California
Teaching Pyramid Partner
Implementation Site!



WHAT DOES SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING LOOK LIKE?

Each program implements a friendship curriculum and strategies to support children's social and emotional competence and prevent challenging behavior. We teach children the desired pro-social skills through positive relationships and a supportive learning environment. We teach the skills to master self-regulation, like deep breathing strategies and a safe space where the children can self-select to tuck away like Tucker Turtle. The soothing items and emotional supports will look different at different ages as a child's self-regulation capacity grows. Still, we know co-regulation through trusting relationships remains an important teaching tool for young children's social and emotional development into

young adulthood. That's WHY we focus on teaching these skills in the early years! We ask families to picture a child in their mid-twenties, and what social-emotional qualities, skills, or characteristics will they have?

The Teaching Pyramid Framework's Definition of Social-Emotional Development

The developmentally and culturally appropriate ability to:

- Experience, express, and manage emotions
- Establish positive and rewarding relationships with others



THE TEACHING PYRAMID

Emotional support and learning through the Teaching Pyramid Framework

The California Teaching Pyramid Vision Statement: Social-emotional development is foundational for learning and development in young children, and California is committed to promoting and supporting healthy social-emotional development in all of its children. Learn more about the **CA Teaching Pyramid Framework (PDF)** and the tiered approach of evidence-based practices that emphasize promoting, preventing, and intervening.

We TEACH! Preschool is the setting where children will learn and master social and emotional skills. Our educators guide behaviors and teach pro-social skills through positive relationships, a supportive environment, and effective practices from WestEd's Teaching Pyramid approach. This systematic framework that promotes social and emotional development supports children's appropriate behavior, prevents challenging behavior, and addresses problematic behavior. We share with families how to guide, support, and manage behaviors by learning about our social-emotional supports and resources.

It is called a Pyramid because it builds on each part or tier. We have found that focusing on strong relationships with and between children along with providing a high-quality, supportive environment helps children thrive and do their best. We also focus on teaching children what we expect of them and what skills they need to be successful in our setting. We are going to share these with you!

We Have Something Important to Share With You! (PDF)

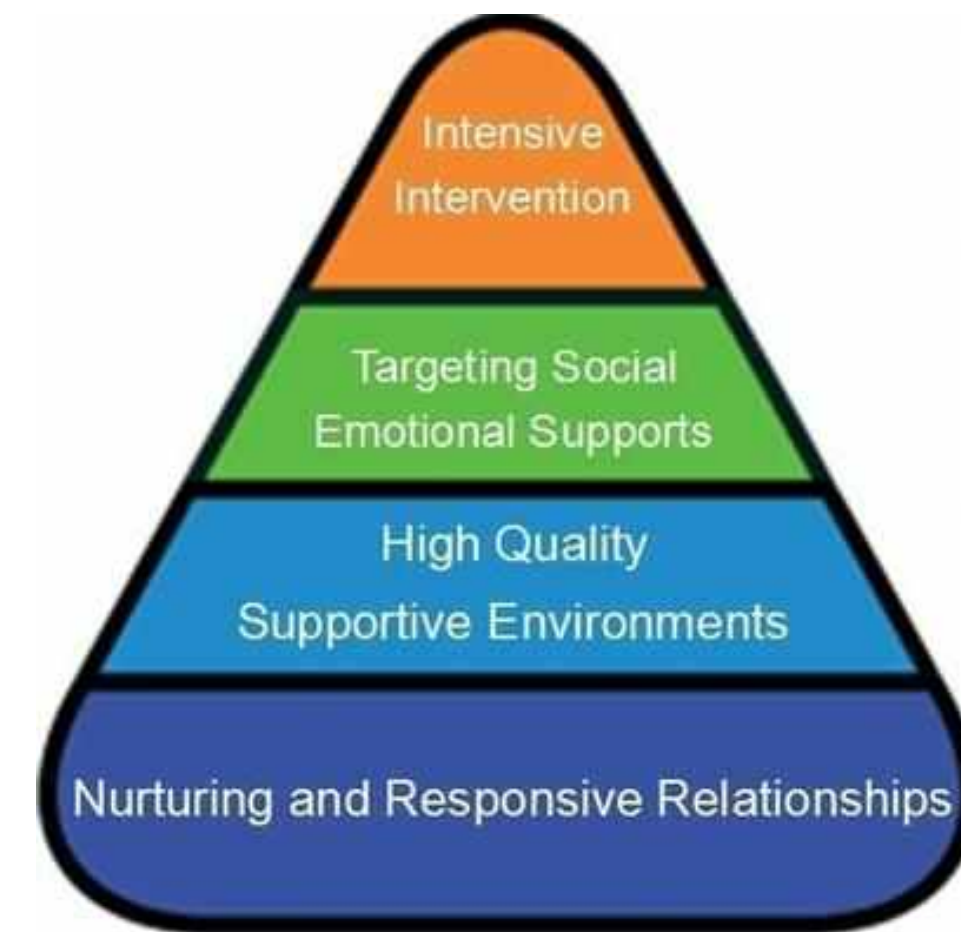


Nine components essential for successful implementation of Pyramid Model (Hemmeter et al., 2006)

1. Administrative Support and Commitment
2. Behavior Support Team and Leadership Team
3. Commitment from Program Staff
4. Family Involvement in All Aspects
5. Program-wide Expectations for Children's Behavior
6. Strategies for Teaching Expectations and Acknowledging Children's Behavior
7. Process for Addressing the Needs of Children with Ongoing Challenging Behavior
8. Staff Training and Support Plan
9. Data Collection and Use for Decision Making

Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.

– Dr. Rita Pierson (1951-2013), Educator





TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK

Nurturing and responsive relationships

Children and teachers co-regulate by taking deep breaths as they "smell the flower, blow out the candle." When children feel safe, understood, respected, and loved by their teachers, they can trust them to help them calm so they can problem-solve. Children's feelings are validated through positive relationships, and they learn the skills to continue positive experiences with pro-social behaviors.

TEACHING STEPS FOR ALL CHILDREN

1. Maintain good early childhood practices
2. Build relationships with the children and families
3. Review information from enrollment and families
4. Learn more about any concerns shared on the developmental screening (ASQ)
5. Access a child's IEP (Individualized Education Plan), as needed

**NURTURING & RESPONSIVE
RELATIONSHIPS**



SCAN FOR SUCCESS! "Getting to know children as people and as learners gives us the information we need to be effective decision makers in the classroom." *The Power of Observation!*



Young children's close relationships with preschool teachers and caregivers are also important to their development of school readiness. A number of studies have found the warmth and security of the preschool child's relationship with a preschool teacher are predictive of the child's subsequent classroom performance, attentional skills, and social competence in the kindergarten and primary grade classroom.

California Preschool Learning Foundations, pg. 32 (2008)

EMOTIONAL DEPOSITS

[Emotional Piggy Bank \(PDF\)](#)

[Moving from Praise to Acknowledgment \(PDF\)](#)

EXTENDED BACK-AND-FORTH CONVERSATIONS

[Tell Me What To Do Instead! \(PDF\)](#)

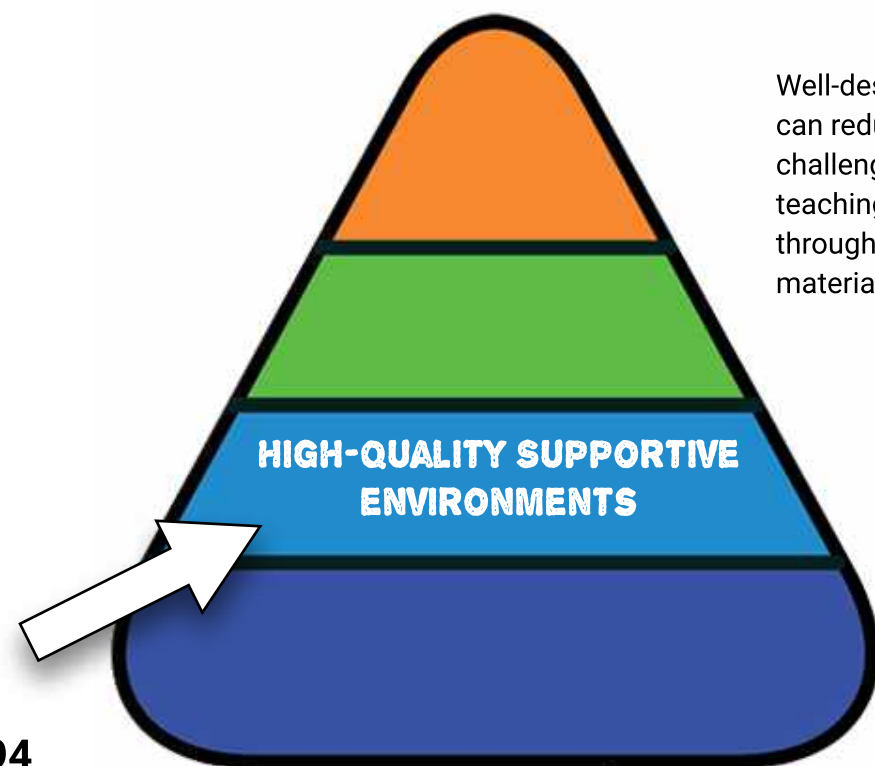
[Help Us Calm Down](#)



TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK

Designing high-quality supportive environments as the "Third Teacher"

We believe in "controlling the environment, not the child," which allows our educators to notice the relationships between using our practices and their effect on children's behavior. Effective preventative methods set the stage for developing a positive, proactive classroom environment and will prevent most problems before they occur. We have visual schedules, classroom-wide expectation displays, and more strategies to teach the children how to behave in learning areas and problem solve when they need a solution. We create quiet spaces with the children to teach them how to "tuck away" like Tucker Turtle when they need to take space and regulate their emotions.



Well-designed environments can reduce the likelihood of challenging behavior by teaching friendship skills through visuals and materials.



Visual Schedules, Routines & Transitions

Visual Supports for Schedules & Routines
Help Us Have a Good Day!
Helping Children Transition Between Activities



Program-Wide Expectations

Families: Let's Talk Expectations!
Teaching Rules at Home (PDF)
Taking a Break: Using a Calm Down Area

Implement the following strategies to complete observations with the Environment Tier:

1. Expectations for Behavior
2. Schedules and Routines
3. Transitions
4. Large/Small Group Activities
5. Physical Environment
6. Observing and Positive Focus

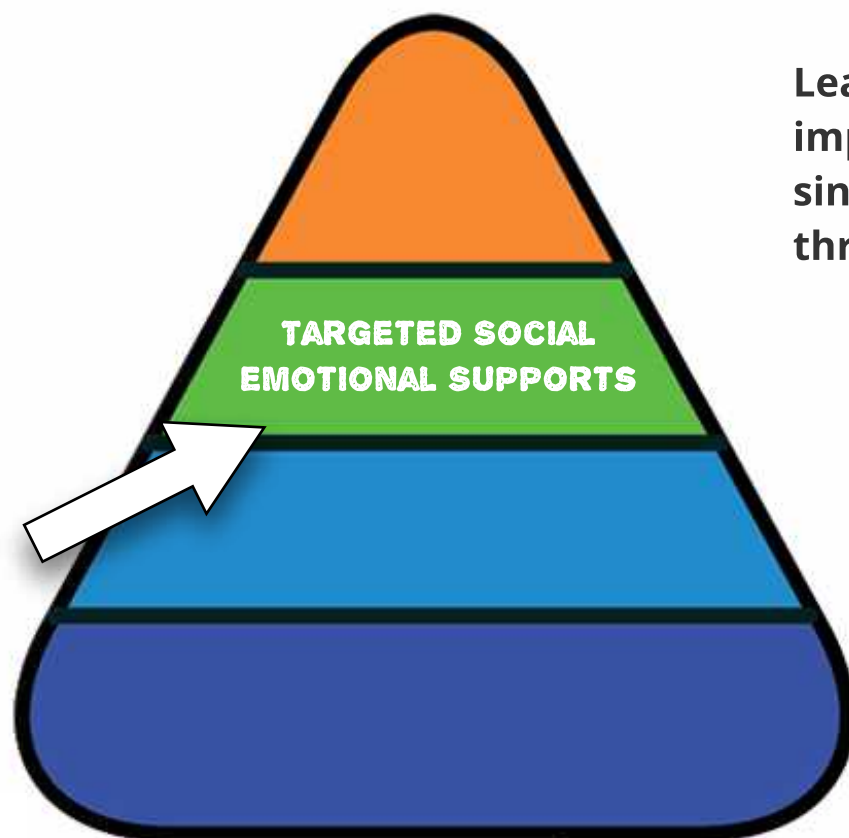




SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

Understanding, Preventing, and Responding to Challenging Behavior as Partners

Besides positive relationships, humor, and books being our go-to teaching tools, Storybook Village Preschool creates and implements visuals to teach and support pro-social skills as a preventative classroom practice. Each program has developmentally appropriate visual supports to teach pro-social skills and self-regulation in a toddler care setting and a preschool learning



Learn more about our Teaching Pyramid implementation in the *Curriculum* section since we teach the desired behaviors through friendship-driven learning!



"Who would choose to live, even if possessed with all other things, without friends." —Aristotle

TEACHING WITH BOOKS & EMOTIONAL LITERACY



Our Great Expectations Book is a social and scripted story to provide a script for children about social situations and expectations. The story is written from the child's perspective, and the photos are visuals that offer practice in desired, appropriate responses or give ideas for alternatives.

IF THERE'S A PROBLEM, WE HAVE A SOLUTION!

We are focused on building trust with each child, so they know we will always help them solve problems while they learn to seek solutions! We teach problem-solving and conflict negotiation with solution cards.



Young children's close relationships with preschool teachers and caregivers are also important to their development of school readiness. A number of studies have found the warmth and security of the preschool child's relationship with a preschool teacher are predictive of the child's subsequent classroom performance, attentional skills, and social competence in the kindergarten and primary grade classroom. California Preschool Learning Foundations, pg. 32 (2008)



ADDRESSING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

We follow protocols for supporting children with persistent behaviors & keeping all children physically and emotionally safe

When we observe young children with persistent behaviors inconsistent with the program-wide expectations and classroom rules, we categorize the challenging behaviors as form and function. The form of problematic behaviors is what we can see (or not see), and the common ones include the following:

- **Aggression** (hitting, kicking, throwing)
- **Task refusal** (ignoring, responding negatively to a directive)
- **Verbal disruption** (crying, screaming, yelling, swearing)
- **Inconsistent with expectations** (taking toys from peers, saying hurtful words to peers, running inside or outside, damaging materials)
- **Focused inwards** (hiding, avoiding social interactions)

Regardless of the form, all behaviors have a function. The function is the meaning behind behavior and how a child communicates their needs. Behavior IS communication. We consider three functions while attempting to understand why a child is behaving a certain way, and they include: Avoid, obtain, and express.

We will never use corporal punishment or other unusual forms of discipline on children. This includes spanking, humiliation, mental abuse, and interfering with a child's daily activities like eating, sleeping, or using the toilet. Learn more about how we respond to harmful challenging behaviors, and notify parents and resources for families at the following pages.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS & ACTION PLANS

Our educators will assess behaviors and provide support through strategies that will help teach the skills to replace the challenging behaviors with the desired behaviors. Children with persistent problematic behaviors that need additional support will require their families' involvement and commitment to partner in creating a plan for home and school. Some strategies to prevent and respond to behaviors may include scheduling weekly check-ins, a morning questionnaire for informal conversations, schedule adjustments, being sent home early to be removed from the moment, or collaborating with the Early Learning Institute.

Each child and every situation is unique, but the general guidelines that a child needs to be separated from school for the rest of the day (last strategy) and parents need to be called are:

1. The child has targeted violent or emotionally aggressive or damaging behavior toward another child or educator. The other children need a break from the behaviors causing a negative climate.
2. The challenging behavior is persistent and the child is unable to respond appropriately through the support strategies. The child's behaviors require additional support, disrupting the routines and others' learning experiences.

We know our educators and families are invested in all children succeeding. Still, we may experience severe problematic behaviors that we cannot support due to a child needing more adult support than we can provide to keep them and others physically and emotionally safe, disrupting our routines and integrity of our program, or violating other children's Personal Rights. Parents sign a Pro-Social Behavior Policy, which can be viewed at the end of this section.

If the behavior is not improving or if it worsens despite the consistent implementation of our strategies and support, the child will need to separate from SVP. The director may need to provide the child and family a two-week notice or less, depending on the severity of the behaviors and posing safety concerns for others.



Responding to challenging behaviors

Suppose a child has any of the challenging behaviors listed below. In that case, we will complete an incident report to share with their parents by the end of the day, including a Behavior Observation Report (BOR) to document and collect data, which will help the educators learn what strategies the child needs to learn replacement skills and behaviors. If a peer, intentional or accidental, hurts a child, we will also complete an incident report for the child who was harmed.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SHARE RESOURCES WITH FAMILIES?

Research shows that actively involving families can help improve long-term outcomes for children. Discussions can play a role in building positive relationships with families. Sharing information with families can also help parents better understand their child's social and emotional development, learn new parenting strategies to try, and appreciate and support the strategies we are using in our program.

TANTRUMS

We teach children that tantrums or angry outbursts will not "work" but that we are supportive of their feelings. We will be there for the child, offering calm words of support as we model deep breathing for co-regulation while waiting for the high emotion to pass. If children are in danger of hurting themselves or others, we will hold the child and offer verbal reassurance. "I won't let you hurt, and I won't let you be hurt."

- [How to Help Your Child Stop Hitting and Pushing](#)

BITING

As upsetting as it can be for children and adults, biting is a normal stage of development that is common among young children. Most young children bite and are bitten by another child at least once when they are in group care settings. Often, whether their child was the child who bit or the child who was bitten, parents experience strong emotional reactions to biting.

When biting happens:

1. Our first response is to take action immediately to provide appropriate care for the child who was bitten by comforting them and cleaning the area that was bitten.
2. We also respond to the child who has bitten with strategies designed to help them learn more appropriate behavior. Our focus is not on punishment for biting but on teaching the child replacement behaviors, including skills to master self-regulation.
3. We will notify a biting incident through the school app to the family of the child who was bitten and the child who bit. We work with families to keep them informed and develop strategies to address the situation.
4. If the same child bites consistently, the director will ask for a family meeting to discuss further steps to take. Those steps may include talking to parents about any changes that may have happened at home recently, shadowing the child who is biting, and asking parents to bring in a "chewelry" sensory necklace.

The educators also pay close attention to who is getting bit. If one child gets bit by the same child frequently, we will call a meeting for both families. The educators will work to empower the child who is getting bit by giving them words to use (if needed) to tell the child that "biting hurts" and support them in standing up for themselves, fostering self-advocacy.

- ▶ [Responding to Your Child's Bite](#)
- ▶ [How to Help Your Child Stop Biting](#)

"Every day, in a 100 small ways, our children ask, 'Do you hear me? Do you see me? Do I matter?' Their behavior often reflects our response."

– L.R. Knost



PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR PHILOSOPHY & POLICY

Storybook Village Preschool's mission is to foster a caring community that celebrates the gifts and strengths of every child and promotes a sense of belonging and purpose.

Storybook Village Preschool (SVP) believes that all children have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and play and learn in a safe, healthy environment. SVP strongly believes that families and early childhood educators are partners in care. SVP is a Teaching Pyramid partner implementation site. The educators have been trained to support behaviors while understanding that social-emotional development is foundational for learning and development in young children and are committed to promoting and supporting healthy social-emotional development in all its children.

Children's social and emotional development is an SVP program priority, including part of each child's [Personal Rights](#). Our educators are encouraged to build positive relationships with every child and their family by creating environments reflective of their family, supportive, and using positive teaching strategies. When problematic behavior takes place, it is addressed and redirected to teach replacement behaviors.

THE FOLLOWING HIGHLIGHTED STRATEGIES ARE USED TO ADDRESS INAPPROPRIATE/CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS:

- Educators will create an environment where every child and their family feel welcomed and engaged;
- All educators acknowledge the child as often as possible for appropriate behaviors through positive descriptive acknowledgments (e.g., listening, problem-solving, taking the initiative, showing determination, etc.);
- Educators will use a variety of methods to support the child in developing friendships, learning to express and recognize feelings, learning how to manage anger and impulses, and learning to problem-solve;
- Teaching teams will meet to discuss and focus on prevention, teaching appropriate skills, and the importance of respecting the rights and feelings of others.

EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILDREN'S POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AT SCHOOL

SVP acknowledges that children are individual and unique in nature, and we are committed to supporting all children so that they can meet the following expectations:

- Develop positive relationships with peers and adults;
- Understand and respect the rights and feelings of others (i.e., emotions, belongings, personal space);
- Recognize how to behave safely and act responsibly.

FAMILY AND SCHOOL AGREEMENTS

Should a child require additional support in meeting these expectations, the school and family agree to participate in the following as needed:

- Informal conversations and meetings between family and teaching staff to discuss concerns, successes, strategies, etc.;
- Conference with the family, teacher, and Director to brainstorm, problem-solve and identify home-school supports and community resources that may be needed;
- Develop a positive behavioral action plan with [The Consultation Project](#) (ELI agency) that will promote social and emotional growth and enable the child to learn and be successful in the preschool setting and at home.

IF THE ABOVE STRATEGIES ARE UNSUCCESSFUL IN SUPPORTING A CHILD'S POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AT SCHOOL:

- Alternative programs that will more effectively meet the child's needs will be explored; and,
- Transition and separation from SVP in the best interest of the child and family will take place.

Our written policies and procedures support the everyday use of interventions with fidelity and address the importance of collaborative planning with staff and families in order to utilize their expertise and establish buy-in from all stakeholders.





EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

All learning happens through positive relationships and a supportive, loving environment through the developmental-interaction approach!

Our curriculum is developed to foster continuity of learning from toddlerhood to Pre-kindergarten through a Reggio-Inspired approach to view all children as capable and creative. Our mixed-age group is organized into primary learning groups. Educators and children engage in a relationship-driven emergent curriculum, with curriculum enhancements for each program.

As co-learners with families, each child's awareness and knowledge of the world around them is enhanced and celebrated, allowing children meaningful time for exploration while demonstrating respect for their ideas. Elaborate and meaningful projects emerge from the children's ideas and can extend over long periods. We begin the school year with Back to School & Family themes, so we can assess children's skills and learn about their interests, which will lead our learning for the year.

We implement strategies to teach friendship skills and to help children learn to become friends. Friendships are closely related to children's development of self-confidence, academic success in school, and positive relationships with others throughout adulthood (Meyer & Ostrosky, 2014).



“The moment I decided to follow instead of lead, I discovered the joys of becoming part of a small child's world.”

—Janet Gonzalez-Mena

Storybook Village Preschool's implements the *Creative Curriculum*, through a friendship-driven emergent approach. We use the *Creative Curriculum* observation tool, which is aligned with the California Preschool Learning Foundations. All play and social learning is guided by the social-emotional development domain, which consists of three strands: 1) Self, 2) Social Interaction, and 3) Relationships.

Nurturing and responsive relationships are essential to healthy child development, and they form the foundation of the *Teaching Pyramid* framework. Although educators attend to many essential tasks on a daily basis, taking time to connect with the children is perhaps the most important one. This is particularly true when there are concerns emerging about children's behavior. Positive relationships help children see adults as nurturing and trusting caregivers.

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CURRICULA

Families will receive a classroom packet with information about specific curricula and learning in their child's classroom, including routines, events, and the current projects the group is exploring and investigating.

Toddler & Two's Learning Enhancements (18 – 36 months)

1. **The PITC Curriculum**, a reflective planning process, which is consistent with the PITC's responsive approach of following the toddler's lead.

Preschool & Pre-k Learning Enhancements (3 – 6 years)

1. **The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool (6th Edition)**, research-based curriculum that features hands-on, project-based investigations as a pathway to learning.
2. **The Zoo-phonics® Multisensory Language Arts Program**, a kinesthetic, multi-modal approach to learning all aspects of language arts, including vocabulary development and articulation, based on phonics and phonemic awareness.
3. **Garden Curriculum: Planting Seeds For Curious Learners**



"Creativity seems to emerge from multiple experiences, coupled with a well-supported development of personal resources, including a sense of freedom to venture beyond the known."

—Loris Malaguzzi

OUR LEARNING FOUNDATIONS

1. Preschool Learning Framework & Foundations (Link)

- a. Child-driven learning
- B. Family-centered approach creates a supportive environment with materials that reflect all children and families. Families are encouraged to complete and share their responses to our Family Questionnaire to affirm their family's cultures and identities.

2. PITC & the Teaching Pyramid Frameworks

- a. We use home- and community-based knowledge to promote positive child outcomes through family partnerships.
- B. The CA Teaching Pyramid content is aligned with the California Department of Education's Preschool Curriculum Framework and Early Childhood Educator Competencies.



SCHOOL & LIFE READINESS

Social-Emotional Learning

From parent participation by sharing strengths and time, family engagement with learning activities and school celebrations, communicating, and having meaningful conversations, we will teach young children how each family is special and how important school is to their family. These early childhood experiences will support social and emotional development, raising capable and confident children. We know how the first three years are incredibly precious for a child's growth and success, so we are honored to be the place where children get to grow as lifelong learners. From toddlerhood to Pre-kindergarten, we provide a continuity of care, support, and love to promote school readiness.

Our shared expectations and values will support your family's current school year and long-term goals for your child. As we get to know children and their family's strengths, abilities, and interests, our educators will support developmentally appropriate learning through intentional teaching while setting up a nurturing and supportive learning environment.



**READINESS: NOT A STATE OF
KNOWLEDGE, BUT A STATE
OF MIND (NAEYC ARTICLE)**

**Play is the highest expression of human development in
childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is
in a child's soul.**

—Friedrich Froebel, educator who invented the kindergarten

**And what we mean by school readiness,
is we refer to a child's mindset about
learning on top of academic knowledge.
As a village and partners with all
families, we hope to raise children who
feel confident with a love for learning.**

With an emphasis on developing social-emotional skills as the core component of our curriculum, we implement child-led learning embedded in a research-based curriculum to meet each child where they are at to embrace their abilities and family identity. Simultaneously, the educators connect learning with expertise and resources in all children's homes and communities. As PITC Partners for Quality in our toddler program and CA *Teaching Pyramid* participants in the preschool program, our learning is rich and family-centered, establishing lifelong relationships and skills to succeed in life.



CHILD & PLAY OBSERVATIONS

Our educators observe playful learning through a research-based lens with the developmental domains. The educators gather observations throughout the year and use an assessment tool twice a year. The assessments are analyzed to plan the curriculum, and lesson plans are created from the results, CA Preschool Foundations and Frameworks, and child-led inquiries. Programs need to know where a child is functioning according to the developmental guidelines to successfully support a child's learning, early care, and education providers. There are several factors to consider to provide the most support (CCSS)*, 2005); this includes observing the child's work and behavior using reliable instruments to assess appropriate skills and applying a system that helps researchers both organize the learning environment and plan experiences.**

*Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Key Considerations: Building an assessment system to support successful early learners. Washington DC

**Quality Counts. Sonoma County's Quality Improvement Rating System (QRIS). QRIS Rating Portfolio Workbook. 2022.



"When observing children mindfully, a teacher will discover small scientists at work – gathering information, comparing, experimenting, making assumptions and evaluating assumptions through their actions, and over time, building mastery of a wide range of concepts and skills."

—California Infant/Toddler Curriculum Framework, 2012

Making Learning Visible

A significant aspect of Storybook Village Preschool is the role of documentation in making learning visible. The documentation within our learning setting is for our young children, educators, families, and community, which documents the children's engagement and learning process.

Each classroom has a documentation panel. Each child has a notebook to capture growth and development with photographs, art samples, drawings, and quotes from the children's stories and play. Since the SVP curriculum is child-guided with Curricula enhancements, lesson plans consist of idea webs from the children's interests and the educators' reflections of the learning being documented with planned inquiry prompts such as providing a project station as an exciting invitation to explore, investigate, learn, represent, and create. Facilitated teaching initiates projects based on children's interests or link them to our DRDP assessment tool for learning purposes. These project stations present beautiful and inviting materials to children and provoke wondering and thinking.

YOU'RE "IN THE STORY" OF OUR PLAYFUL LEARNING!



CHILD PORTFOLIOS

Assessment of Child Progress

Our educators use assessment tools and methods to design goals for the classroom learning environment, individualized learning through monitoring children’s progress, and improvements and teaching strategies to support children’s learning. Storybook Village Preschool uses developmentally appropriate observation tools aligned with the *California Preschool Learning Foundations*. Teachers observe children’s play and assess children’s skills and strengths through establishing meaningful relationships, providing a supportive environment with developmentally appropriate materials, facilitating small and large group times, and observing each child’s interests with a sensitivity to the cultural context of learning.

Educators will use the information observed to plan and be flexible with future lesson planning to extend learning from the children’s ideas and interests. Information and knowledge from communication with families about their children are essential to assessing children’s development.



What children learn does not follow as an automatic result from what is taught, rather, it is in large part due to the children’s own doing, as a consequence of their activities and our resources.

—Loris Malaguzzi, *The Hundred Languages of Children*

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Storybook encourages opportunities for families to discuss their child’s learning and development. Learning progress is shared with families twice a year in the fall and spring to support parents in supporting the child’s progress. After 60 days of being together, we provide family meetings beginning the school year to discuss children’s development, behavior, and goals. Our goal is to encourage families to partner with their child’s educators to develop an individualized support plan for their child, including strategies that may be used in the home and community. Educators collect a substantial number of anecdotal notes, photos, work samples, and other pieces of documentation from family members and other staff that demonstrate the children’s mastered developmental levels. The organization of collected documentation can be achieved through “portfolios.”



FRIENDSHIP CURRICULUM

Our teaching team recognizes and embraces the families as children's first and most important teachers, giving us a unique role as everyday family advocates. Our teaching vision is to foster a classroom culture of friendship through teaching love and modeling peace with a friendship-driven purpose. Our program encourages family engagement in our children's early care and learning environment, including partnering with each family to guide their child's behaviors and education.

As a Teaching Pyramid Partner Site, the Pyramid Model is implemented in our daily practice, so sharing our vision with families, friends, volunteers, and guests is important. Our Vision in View document shares how we implement the Teaching Pyramid practices in our classroom.

- Socialization Goals & Identifying Strengths
- Teaching Foundational Friendship Skills
- Positive Descriptive Acknowledgment & Feedback
- Fostering Positive Connections & Support

When children feel that they and their families belong, feel accepted for who they are, and are valued as contributing members of the classroom community, the foundation for a classroom culture committed to friendship is built.



We wait to see if the children need adult support rather than interfering with their social learning experiences. Educators teach friendship skills through co-regulation and supporting the steps for conflict negotiation,

In addition to creating a welcoming and responsive environment, teachers foster a culture of friendship when they promote helpfulness and cooperation among children while intentionally and explicitly focusing on the formation of friendships as a primary outcome of their teaching. With this friendship-driven purpose, teachers are aware of which children are friends, peers who aspire to become friends, and strategies for actively teaching friendship skills and providing opportunities for children to practice these skills with support. In order to focus on the formation of friendship as an outcome for all children, educators must first understand the characteristics of friendships (Unpacking the Pyramid Model, 2021).





ANTI-BIAS LEARNING

Self-love, Self-Acceptance & Self-Control

Anti-bias education is a way of teaching that supports children and their families as they develop a sense of identity in a diverse society. It helps children learn to be proud of themselves and their families, respect a range of human differences, recognize unfairness and bias, and speak up for the rights of others (Derman-Sparks & Edwards 2010). Our educators implement innovative practices tailored to the members of our community by listening to children's thoughts, embracing their curiosities, and observing the injustice issues shared through behaviors or play. Children learn where they come from is important, their family is valued, and they have gifts to share with others, which is an excellent beginning in our anti-bias teaching. We dive deeper into addressing social issues through a social justice approach so children can learn about fairness. While children are curious and learn to explore and appreciate similarities and differences, gaining awareness, we hope to teach them about advocates and how if there's a way, there's a will always to do our best when our silence can hurt someone's feelings. By children celebrating their similarities and empowering their differences, they will learn anti-racist beliefs and skills to make this world a more just place.



We're all about beating bias with quality books to teach young children how to make the world a better place for everyone. We have a "lending library" for our families to borrow books about celebrating our families. Children's literature is the best teaching tool and a developmentally appropriate way to raise awareness of society issues.



We find these joys to be self-evident: That all children are created whole, endowed with innate intelligence, with dignity and wonder, worthy of respect. The embodiment of life, liberty, and happiness, children are original blessings, here to learn their own song. Every girl and boy is entitled to love, to dream, and belong to a loving "village." And to pursue a life of purpose.

—Raffi, "A Covenant for Honouring Children"

We use the four anti-bias education goals as a framework for constructing daily learning experiences and the environment, including year-round holiday activities.

1. **Goal #1—Identity.** Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social/group identities.
2. **Goal #2—Diversity.** Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity, accurate language for human differences, and deep, caring human connections.
3. **Goal #3—Justice.** Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness (injustice), have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.
4. **Goal #4—Activism.** Each child will demonstrate a sense of empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.



EARLY LITERACY

Fostering a love for literacy

Storybook Village Preschool fosters children's learning through play, a child-guided curriculum, and literacy-rich exposure and encouragement. Toddlers and preschoolers are ready to learn pre-literacy skills that provide a foundation for later literacy. Research shows the best way to help children become readers is to read to them. As young children hear stories read aloud, they learn new words, figure out how letters and sounds are related (phonological awareness) and learn how words are conceptually related (Biemiller & Boote, 2006). Furthermore, a robust vocabulary predicts reading comprehension; in other words, the larger a child's vocabulary, the stronger her reading comprehension (Duke & Carlisle, 2011).

Our programs' daily activities promote language development through interactive read-aloud experiences with deep, intentional conversations about the text, from large group time to a child initiating a story being read to them. Research shows clearly that even very young children engage in literacy when they use "print to represent their ideas and to interact with other people" (Dyson, 1992). The learning environment provides materials to encourage children to scribble, draw and label pictures and create, act out, or retell stories. During these times, they are engaged in literate behaviors, and literacy emerges, supporting language development.



"Language does not need to be only accepted. It needs to be explored, expanded, and celebrated."

—Alma Flor Ada, Fostering the Home-School Connect

"Children who know alphabet letters and the sounds they represent, who can hear sounds in words, and who can understand how print works are far more likely to be good readers in kindergarten and in the grades that follow."

—Susan Bennett-Armistead, Nell Duke, & Annie Moses, 2005





SCIENCE EXPLORATION

Experimental Science Experiences

Storybook Village Preschool developed an experimental science program for your child. The program requires using many items that are not presently available in our school. We would like your help in collecting these materials for our toddler and preschool programs.

We share a donations list with families; if you have materials on the list, put them in a bag with your name and drop them off in the office. When we have collected the needed materials and need no more, we will cross them off the master list that will be posted near the entrance to the office. If you find an item on the list a month from now, check the master list, as we still may not have obtained it. We will also add new items to the master list as needed. Please, if you have something that is not on the list but you think it will be helpful, ask the director. We are sure most things can enhance our learning experience.



Below are science concepts we include in our science explorations and integrate experiences and activities while following the children's lead and shared interests:

- Plant life
- Animal life
- The human body (animal and human skeletons during Halloween)
- What is air, water, etc.?
- Weather and seasons
- Rocks and minerals
- The effects of magnetism, gravity, movement, etc.
- Simple machines (Great Aunt Connie's typewriter)
- Sound, light, electricity



PLAYFUL MATH

Math is Everywhere!

We are excited to be part of the California Early Math Initiative Project offered to the school through 4Cs Sonoma. There was one spot for a private preschool to join this project, providing professional learning and coaching that will improve mathematical outcomes for children from birth through age eight. We are grateful for the learning opportunity to give our children richer early math experiences since math happens everywhere, and pre-math skills are crucial for school readiness!

[Family Article: Message in a Backpack™ Math: It's Important and Fun](#)



Math is everywhere, and within all routines and activities. Below are examples of how we teach mathematical language, concepts, and learning:

- Setting the table for meals and snacks
- Passing out art or project materials
- Comparing and sorting blocks during clean up times
- Reading recipes and cooking
- Taking turns while riding the trikes and counting turns
- Singing songs with repeating choruses
- Reading books with counting
- Sorting crayons and markers by color





BIG BODY PLAY

Coordinated Approach To Child Health (CATCH) Early Childhood PE program

The purpose of the Coordinated Approach To Child Health (CATCH) Early Childhood PE program is to provide children with a variety of robust physical activity experiences which nurture their love of movement. CATCH Early Childhood PE achieves this vision by:

- offering a wide variety of movement experiences and opportunities
- providing children a safe place to be themselves and develop skills at their own pace
- promoting physical development by giving children opportunities to practice and refine their motor skills
- developing fitness by engaging children in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA).

CATCH Early Childhood PE does not require certain activities be taught on specific days. Rather, it provides resources and materials to assist early childhood educators in successfully developing and implementing a fun and meaningful physical education program. The activities are designed to be versatile enough so that they can be utilized in diverse settings and instructional environments. ([CATCH.org](https://catch.org))



We love the CATCH box full of activities for transitions and large group experiences to either promote physical development or to calm bodies for supporting transitions into routines. We make adaptations for either the ages in the group or the interest for engagement. The children love the Belly Laughs and being a bear finding its cave to hibernate—it's our go to activities.



ENRICHED EVENTS & FIELD TRIPS

As children enter our preschool component, they may participate in planned walking field trips and field trips. Taking a day trip with young children can provide wonderful learning opportunities to enrich and extend our curriculum and make connections to the children's world—but day trips are not for the faint of heart! We plan ahead of time to include families, their strengths, and time, from visiting the destination beforehand, health and safety supplies, staffing ratios, preparing healthy snacks and lunch, ensuring family participants, and teaching the children all about safety and field trip expectations before our special adventure. We love volunteers! Transportation will be by parent drivers with teaching staff. We will schedule all field trips in advance. Families are notified and required to complete a permission slip for their child to attend.



Community Walks

Venturing out with the children allows us to engage in inquiry-based investigations in our community. We love our walks through the local neighborhood, enjoying a live musical, and then stopping for a picnic before returning to our preschool for rest time. We provide snacks and lunch, including having a field trip shirt for each child. We share walking field trip plans with adult responsibilities and safety protocols for the parents joining us.





MEALS, BIRTHDAYS, & CELEBRATIONS

Nutrition Policy

Our school provides nutritious morning (9:30 am) and afternoon snacks (2:30 pm), including lunch (12:00 pm).

Storybook Village Preschool is a Healthy Apple Program participant through Sonoma County 4Cs. This program supports child care educators in implementing research-based best practices in nutrition and physical activity for children from birth to age 8. Storybook Village Preschool implements nutrition and physical activity policies to provide the best possible nutrition for the children in our school. The director and educators appreciate families' support in promoting our children's health. Children begin learning healthy eating habits at a very young age, and their bodies are growing rapidly.

Additionally, most children eat 50% to 75% of their daily calories in child care. It is important that the food served at Storybook Village Preschool is nutritious and that the educators model and encourage healthy eating habits. As one of our Program-Wide Expectations states, "We Are Healthy!"

We are a "Nut-free" preschool.



MANGIA! MANGIA!

We provide a morning and afternoon snack and lunch. Outside food is not allowed. We use tasty alternatives for any child who is vegetarian or has specific food allergies. SVP is a nut-free facility. The menu is subject to change.

Sweetened treats, juice, and flavored milk are not allowed; these items will be stored in the school kitchen to return home to families.

Below are the food groups for lunch and serving size expectations for lunches:

- Fluid milk - 6 oz (3/4 cup)
- Meat/meat alternatives (M/MA) - 12 oz
- Vegetables - 1/4 cup
- Fruit - 1/4 cup
- Grains - 1/4 cup

MyPlate: [Behavioral Milestones: Ages 2-5](#)



MENU & RECIPES

Our school menus include healthy items from a variety of cultures that are individually planned and changed regularly to give a variety of choices with a combination of new and familiar foods. We do not serve breakfast. If families arrive late and have missed a meal or snack time, the child must have eaten before arrival. This allows the child to come in and participate in the program without any disruption.

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Check our [monthly menu](#) on our school website. We love sharing resources and recipes with our families to help with mealtime challenges and celebrate successes together!



FRIENDSHIP FRUIT SALAD FRIDAYS

Children can bring a fruit to share with their class each Friday! They will use safe, kid-friendly knives to help cut and prepare the fruit for the Friendship Fruit Salad, which will be served with the school lunch. This small group experience will be supervised by an educator, while they use math language and concepts as they sort the fruit by color, size, and other mathematical attributes. We appreciate our home-school partnerships as we foster a healthy, caring community of learners!

| STORYBOOK MENU | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
| MAY 30 Closed for Memorial Day | MAY 31 Multi-Grain Cheerios with milk Fish sticks, mixed vegetables, mangoes, milk Diced peaches, string cheese | June 1 Wheat bagel with cream cheese, cranberries Bean and chicken burrito, green beans, peaches, milk Banana Bread Snack Cakes, pineapple chunks | June 2 Berry Smoothie with yogurt Teriyaki chicken, green rice, creamed broccoli, pineapple chunks, milk Skewered peaches, pineapple | June 3 Wheat waffles, pineapple chunks Sweet potato mugnuts, Popsicles, berries, milk Applesauce Cookies, milk |
| June 4 Multi-Grain Cheerios with milk Bean and chicken burrito, green beans, peaches, milk Tuna salad with Greek yogurt, wheat crackers | June 5 Multi-Grain Cheerios with milk Bean and chicken burrito, green beans, peaches, milk Tuna salad with Greek yogurt, wheat crackers | June 6 Fruity Toast, diced peaches Vegetable Stir-Fry, brown rice, black beans, pineapple chunks, milk Banana Bread Snack Cakes, pineapple chunks | June 7 Scrambled eggs, wheat toast Meatloaf with turkey, corn, closed pasta, milk Rice and Lentil with vegetable and carrot sticks | June 8 Vanilla yogurt, strawberries The Mango Cabbage Slaw and Gravy, tofu and cauliflower Wheat crackers, cheddar cheese |
| June 9 Morning muffins, mixed berries Cheese Omelette, sautéed mushrooms, milk Veggie Smoothie, applesauce | June 10 Dinner roll, mixed berries Spaghetti with garden herbs, apple slices, tomatoes, milk Cucumber, hummus | June 11 Multi-Grain Cheerios with milk Tasty Smoothie, green beans, applesauce, milk Pretzels, hummus | June 12 Smoothie, mixed berries Peanut Butter Sandwich, lettuce salad with veggie dressing, Mandarin oranges, milk Skewered peaches, string cheese | June 13 Peanut Butter Sandwich, lettuce salad with veggie dressing, Mandarin oranges, milk Skewered peaches, string cheese |



FAMILY STYLE DINING

Mangia! Mangia!

SVP provides a pleasant social atmosphere for our young children, where they can enjoy the company of their friends and educators while fostering prosocial skills and desired characteristics. The educators use an authoritative feeding style: Authoritative feeding style strikes a balance between encouraging children to eat healthy foods and allowing them to make their own food choices. Example: Reason with children and talk about the importance of eating vegetables, rather than using bribes or threats. SVP does not use food to encourage positive behavior, we provide PDA (Positive Descriptive Acknowledgement) statements throughout the day! When children eat less than half of a meal or snack, the educators will ask them if they are full or satisfied before removing their plates, including helping children determine if they are still hungry before serving additional food.

In addition, during our mealtime experience, children can develop self-help skills such as setting the table, serving themselves with child-sized serving equipment, clearing their plates, and handwashing before and after eating. We encourage children to eat independently according to their abilities.

Our mealtimes promote healthy habits, from creating taste testings to facilitating small cooking groups in the preschool program. SVP provides nutritional and positive experiences through meaningful mealtimes as a preschool family. The preschoolers will be responsible and proud to plant and prepare their food, from planting seedlings to harvesting vegetables and herbs.

[Resource: Tips for Family Style Dining](#)



Ms. Nicole's Great Grandpa Jack built the dish cabinet when she was a little girl. The cabinet stored her grandparents' homemade canned jam they made from their fruit trees.





KITCHEN HELPERS

We pepper our school with love!

The preschoolers love hosting their friends during mealtime, helping others, and practicing practical life skills. The children eagerly engage in our small group cooking experiences since they enjoy gathering around the table and helping prepare their meals. They learn how to work with others for a common goal, from helping decorate the tables for special celebrations with lovely tablecloths from the educator's childhoods to taking turns adding ingredients into the container. When we eat indoors, we use glass dishes and real utensils. From counting plates, measuring ingredients, and practicing self-regulation skills during spills, the children learn how to problem-solve and cooperate with their peers and adults guiding the group activity.



FOODS/BEVERAGES PROVIDED

- Fruit (not juice) is offered at least 2 times per day. Fruit served is always fresh, canned in its own juice, or frozen.
- Vegetables served are raw or cooked without added meat fat, margarine, or butter.
- Fried or pre-fried potatoes are offered less than once a week or never.
- Fried or pre-fried meats or fish are offered less than once a week or never.
- Protein is served every day and always consists of lean or low-fat meat or meat alternatives, including beans. Common proteins include beans, yogurt, eggs, skinless baked chicken, stir-fried lean beef, and chicken in soups or stews.
- Whole grain items are offered daily.
- Prohibited foods include candy, high sugar and/or highly salted snacks, fried or pre-fried potatoes, fried or pre-fried meats, and high-fat meats such as sausage, bacon, hot dogs, and bologna. Sweet or salty snacks are offered to children outside of meals and snack times less than once a week or never.
- Water is always available and children can serve themselves both indoors and outdoors.
- Our program uses a menu cycle of 3 weeks or greater that changes with the seasons and includes a variety of healthy foods.

FEEDING ENVIRONMENT & PRACTICES

- Educators always provide meaningful mealtimes and encourage children to choose and serve themselves.
- TV and videos are never shown during mealtime (or at school, in general).
- Educators join children at the table for meals and consume the same food and drinks.
- Educators enthusiastically role model eating healthy foods at every meal and snack time. Educators rarely or never eat or drink unhealthy foods or beverages in front of children.
- Visible support for healthy eating is achieved through the use of a variety of posters, pictures, and displayed books that are rotated/updated seasonally. Few or no materials promote unhealthy foods.
- Soda and other vending machines are not located on-site.
- Educators gently and positively encourage children (e.g., through praise) to try new or less-preferred food while encouraging them to make their own food choices.
- Educators help children determine if they are full before removing their plates, especially when less than half the food is eaten.
- When children request seconds, educators first help children determine if they are still hungry before serving additional food.
- Children are encouraged to try all foods but never forced to clean their plates.
- Educators never use children's preferred foods to encourage them to eat new or less-preferred foods.
- Educators never use food to calm upset children or encourage appropriate behavior.
- Educators praise and give hands-on help to guide toddlers and preschoolers as they learn to feed themselves.
- Educators offer beverages in an open, child-sized cup to all developmentally ready children.



DIETARY RESTRICTIONS & FOOD ALLERGIES

The program has a **NO NUTS** policy due to children with life-threatening allergies. Any foods brought into SVP must be nut-free. SVP respects the dietary restrictions and values families share with us. We follow all specific guidelines to ensure that the children are only eating the foods their parents want them to eat. The family can work with the director to create a meal plan with substitutions so that the children receive food that still meets the nutritional guidelines. To provide safety, all confirmed food allergies from a child's physician must be shared with the director and educators. If the family suspects a food allergy, the best practice is to have the child checked by their provider. Children with allergies need to be under the doctor's care.

HEALTHY CELEBRATIONS

Please help us encourage lifelong healthy habits among our children. We encourage parents to join us for their child's birthday or other special occasion and bring food to help celebrate. Please select or prepare healthier food options that your child enjoys. Suggestions include:

- Favorite fruits
- Lower fat baked goods (ex. Mini muffins with icing)
- Favorite dishes that aren't necessarily desserts
- Foods with special family or cultural significance
- Healthy foods in fun shapes

Also consider celebrating with favorite stories, music, games, or activities. Often the most important thing to your child is that you took the time to help plan something special. Please talk with the Director if you have questions or need ideas. We know that it's hard to break old habits like cake, ice cream, and candy, but give it a try! Sweetened treats will not be served; sweet treats will be stored in the school kitchen to return to parents to enjoy at home.



Our experience as participants has strengthened our quality care by implementing the 3-week cycle menus, homemade healthy and scrumptious meals, health promotion policies, and our hands-on garden to table-learning! We have had fantastic feedback from our families about the meals we serve the children, including fostering family engagement in promoting the health of our children. Families share and send pictures of the healthy food they are cooking at home because we introduced new ingredients and meals they had no idea their children would eat, yet request for mealtime! The most recent observation was in our Toddler's program when the young children tasted homemade kale chips. We captured the sensory exploration and the fostered healthy eating habits we have been modeling. We teach, "We can taste new things and decide if we like it or not yet. We are healthy!" The toddlers shared their dislike through babbling and facial expressions, and then through our taste testing activity, they shared positive remarks like "Mmm, crunch."



HEALTHY APPLE NUTRITION PROGRAM

Nutrition Education, Professional Development & Policy

- Educators engage children in nutrition education at least once per week through both planned and informal nutrition education for children (e.g. stories about health/nutrition/food, circle time lessons, gardening activities, cooking activities, talking about food/nutrition at mealtimes).
- Educators talk to children informally about healthy eating each time they see an opportunity.
- Professional development on child nutrition happens at least twice per year, including through attendance and participation at Healthy Apple workshops. Ongoing nutrition education takes place through participation in the Healthy Apple Program and using resources shared through the program.
- Professional development on child nutrition includes food and beverage recommendations, serving sizes, the importance of variety, creating a healthy mealtime environment, using positive feeding practices, and talking with families about child nutrition.
- SVP's written policy on nutrition and food service is available, followed, and includes food/beverages provided, a healthy mealtime environment, positive feeding practices, and education for educators, children, and families.

PARENT EDUCATION & WORKSHOPS

The Community Health Educator at the Center for Well-Being offers FREE online nutrition workshops for families of toddlers and preschool-aged children. They schedule a series at our program site if parents are interested. It's a wonderful opportunity as a Healthy Apple, to provide parents education about how to help their children and families with their nutrition.

They offer the 3-week series on the Food Smarts curricula developed by Leah's pantry. All workshops are 1 hour long with a food demo pre-recorded video. Topics they cover: Setting the Stage for Healthy Choices, Feeding our whole family, and Nutrition label and sugar.



Physical Activity, Nutrition & Garden

Healthy Apple is a program for child care educators to assess ECE nutrition and physical activity practices, get support to make improvements, and be recognized for meeting best practices. The goal is to empower and help our preschool promote and establish lifelong healthy habits for children.

- In an effort to provide the best possible environment for the children in our care, we implement nutrition policies. We appreciate the support from the families in promoting the health of our children.
- We are growing an edible garden to promote hands-on-garden to table-learning!
- We have created an outdoor play and learning policy that includes amounts of outdoor playtime, encouraging outdoor active play, sun safety, and education for our teaching staff and families.
- We offer families screen time information that includes recommended amounts and types of screen time, positive screen time practices, not using screen time to reward or manage behaviors, and our program's policies sharing that we do not allow screen time at preschool.





GARDEN

We're growing an edible garden

We grow an edible garden throughout the seasons to promote hands-on gardening to table learning. We garden by using the five senses and making real-life connections while the focus is all about the process, not the product. This hands-on learning promotes sensory exploration. The educators and children love tapping into their inner scientists and caring for nature. The garden is part of all learning domains, from reading books about plants and bugs to small cooking projects with herbs and vegetables. Gardening is promoting an interest in literacy to positive social interactions with rich language. The children enjoy using nature photos and drawings from their gardening experiences to creating class-made posters and books and other nature-based projects to share their ideas and predictions.

The garden has created a healing environment to explore and learn long-term strategies and coping tools while managing feelings. The garden fosters a calm and regulated emotional environment and a love for our earth, which children can share with their families.



"Why try to explain miracles to your children when you can have them plant a garden."

-Janet Kilburn Phillips





HEALTH & SAFETY

As partners in quality care with families, we promote the health of children and protect children and staff from illness and injury. Children must be healthy and safe to learn and grow. Programs must be healthy and safe to support children's healthy development. (NAEYC) Educators and families model safe behaviors for children. Our educators establish nurturing, positive relationships by demonstrating safe behaviors and encouraging other adults and children to try them.

HANDWASHING

Handwashing is the most important way to reduce the spread of illnesses. Studies have shown that unwashed or improperly washed hands are the primary carriers of the disease. Storybook Village Preschool requires parents/guardians to model healthy habits by washing hands together as a morning drop-off routine. Please consider this routine while planning morning scheduling and family needs. This routine will promote healthy habits and eliminate illnesses, including school and work absences.



The teacher helps make sure children wash their hands before snack time
Storybook Village Preschool in Santa Rosa, Friday, July 15, 2022. (Kent Porter / The Press Democrat) 2022

Handwashing can prevent 1 in 3 diarrhea-related sicknesses and 1 in 5 respiratory infections, such as a cold or the flu.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



Handwashing requires that both hands be washed with liquid soap and rinsed thoroughly under running water for about 20 seconds (we sing an excellent handwashing song!). Hands are dried with individual paper towels that are not shared and then used to turn off the faucet. Thank you for being a healthy member of our preschool family!

Handwashing: Keeping Your Family Healthy





WELLNESS CHECKS

Trusting & respectful relationships

As strong partners, we all have a moral obligation to learn, grow, and contribute to our preschool community. Families choose Storybook Village Preschool for many reasons, including to keep their children healthy. Families promise to do their part by not bringing their children to care if there are possible symptoms of illness. Our Program-Wide Expectations help everyone makes informed decisions to keep our preschool community safe, healthy, respectful, and kind. When it comes to illnesses and being partners in quality care, we lean toward gratitude rather than grievance and safety rather than risk.

Our teaching staff will rely on the family's description of the child's behavior to determine whether the child is well enough to return unless the child's status is unclear from the family's report. The program director or lead teacher will decide whether children with signs of illness may stay based on the program's exclusion policy, including the ability to care for the child without compromising other children's care in the program.

FAMILY RESOURCES

- Morning Health Check (Spanish)
- Morning Health Check (English)
- Morning Health Check (Chinese)

DAILY HEALTH CHECKS

Every day, our educators will conduct a health check on each child; the daily health check happens in a relaxed and comfortable manner that respects the family's culture and the child's body and feelings. It is also important to share with families that this is a licensing regulation and expected from the state. Daily health checks seek to identify potential concerns of a child's health, including recent illness or injury; ultimately, serving to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases in our child care setting by identifying children who should be excluded. The health checks are conducted as soon as possible after the child enters the school and whenever a change in the behavior occurs.

Also, we encourage parents/guardians to inform the director or primary teachers of any other problems that may affect their behavior. This expectation will allow early detection of illness and prompt implementation of control measures or provide the educators with information to understand their emotional needs.



Daily Health Check & Emotional Check-in

Signs to Observe

- General mood and changes in behavior
- Fever or elevated body temperature
- Skin rashes, unusual spots, swelling or bruises
- Complaints of pain and not feeling well
- Signs/symptoms of disease (severe coughing, sneezing, breathing difficulties, discharge from nose, ears or eyes, diarrhea, vomiting, etc.)
- Reported illness in child or family members

Use your senses...

- LOOK - for signs
- LISTEN - for complaints
- SMELL - for unusual odor
- ASK - if the child has a fever (over 100.0) or has had medicine within the last 24 hours.



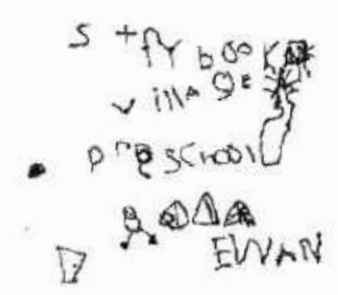
STORYBOOK VILLAGE PRESCHOOL

Family Arrival and Departure Routine

1. Sign/clock your child in school upon arrival.
2. Wash your hands with your child. Use "Handwashing" poster & song.
3. Help your child hang the jacket/backpack on his or her coat hook.
4. Greet and Check-in with the teacher for the child's daily health check.
5. Stay until your child feels comfortable, then initiate your individual "goodbye ritual," supported by the teacher.

1. Sign/clock your child out of the school at the time of arrival.
2. Wash your hands in the classroom, outdoor sinks, or adult bathroom.
3. Greet your child and child's teacher; allow time for your child to tidy up his or her play space or activity before leaving.
4. Help your child get his or her belongings, then hold hands while leaving the school building.

Help Us Have a Good Day!





ILLNESS POLICY

We're partners in care

Storybook Village Preschool provides a symptom-free environment for children and educators. If you are uncertain if your child can attend preschool, a good rule of thumb is to stay at home for each new onset of illness and ongoing symptoms. SVP does not provide care for children with illness symptoms, even for common colds, since they may be contagious. If your child needs medicine to feel better, they need to stay home to rest.

Regarding illnesses and being partners in quality care, we lean toward gratitude rather than grievance and safety rather than risk. Families are encouraged to have a backup plan for child care in the event of short or long-term exclusion because of illness.

If you have questions about the illness policy, please get in touch with the director. The educators' goal and responsibility are to promote a positive climate for the children, including themselves. We hold our educators and families accountable for providing an emotionally safe and healthy learning environment. We all want the same thing, for the children to be healthy, happy, and loved.



ILLNESS SYMPTOMS

If one or more of the following symptoms is present in your child, we will call you to pick up your child from school as soon as possible:

1. Common cold, sore throat, congestion
2. Runny nose (see 'Allergies' below);
3. Diarrhea;
4. Fever 100.0 or higher;
5. Vomiting;
6. Body rash (See 'Rash' guidelines)
7. Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye (Pink Eye or conjunctivitis);
8. Head lice or nits. Parents MUST have all nits (eggs) removed before a child returns to school;
9. Severe coughing or makes a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing;
10. A child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more care than we can provide without compromising other's health and safety in our care.

EXCLUSION POLICY

When a child becomes ill but does not require immediate medical help, a determination should be made regarding whether the child should stay home or be sent home. The educator should determine if the illness:

- Prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities;
- Results in a need for care that is greater than the educators can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
- Poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others;
- Causes a fever and behavior change or other signs and symptoms (e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, and diarrhea). An unexplained temperature above 100 °F.

If any of the above criteria are met, we will isolate your child in a comfortable, supervised place until they can be picked up. We use information from your child's Identification and Emergency Form to contact parents or another authorized adult if your child develops symptoms of illness while in school.

If your child is ill, or sent home for any illness symptoms, they must stay home until they are symptom-free and have been symptom-free for 24 hours without medication (the entire following school day) before he or she may return to preschool.

There is specific guidance for returning to care depending

on the circumstances. Please read the *Returning to Care* guidance for more information, support, health concerns, and planning purposes.

ILLNESS AT HOME

If children have any illness symptoms or a known common cold, they cannot attend SVP until they are *symptom-free* for 24 hours without medication. (e.g., If a child wakes up with illness symptoms, they will need to stay home for the day, including the entire following day; it would be the same policy as if they were sent home with symptoms).

REPORTING ILLNESSES

We will notify parents/guardians whenever children have been exposed to contagious illnesses. Parents must notify the school immediately if a child is diagnosed with any contagious illnesses, including COVID-19, flu, strep throat, pink eye, lice, or any other illness common to a school environment. The notification allows Storybook Village Preschool to take appropriate action and inform parents within your child's classroom. Please note that we will not release the name of the child or family involved.

Storybook
Village Preschool



DOCTOR NOTES

Storybook Village Preschool does not accept “return to child care” notes from health care providers while a child has persistent illness symptoms, is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention and care than we can provide without compromising the children's health and safety in our care. Please see the requirements for physician's notes for rashes and returning to care after a known outbreak within this illness policy. We see notes from health providers as a piece of the decision we need to make, but the director does not go solely on it to allow re-admittance. Suppose a doctor's note states they are unclear about what is causing skin irritation or illness symptoms but says the child is not contagious or states, “the child is unlikely contagious.” In that case, we can not accept the note - a child must be excluded from group care while there are illness-like symptoms of unidentifiable or persistent symptoms.

Parents should know two main things about notes from primary care providers: The required components on the letter and the child's current symptoms of illness.

A doctor's note must have the three following details:

1. **Diagnosis**
2. **Is the child contagious?**
3. **Treatment plan**

Storybook Village Preschool does not ask for a physician's opinion on whether the child can safely return to care. The director will make the decision themselves on a case-by-case basis since they know the population of children the child is returning to. If the health provider believes the other children have already been exposed since daycares are assumed to always have sick children present and most likely passed the illness to their patient they may feel it is okay for their patient to be with the already exposed kids. They can't possibly know our population, so this can be a critical error in thinking that brings illness back into our program, which has been proven true.

While we trust and respect the health care providers' expertise, we have accepted back to care too soon; we hope to exchange information to help make a decision that keeps everyone healthy. There have been cases the director has not agreed with the Doctor and had called and gotten and given more specific information from them. It is important to have a signed medical consent allowing the director to talk directly to the Doctor should there be a return note that goes against our policies. When we can share our history of the illness and our current children's health status and attendance, they often reconsider the return and assist us with working with the parent to understand why the return note won't be acceptable.

INCIDENTAL MEDICAL SERVICES (IMS)

Please ask for more information if your child needs an individualized IMS plan.

It is our goal to be as inclusive as possible, including providing care for children with various ongoing medical conditions. The following plan outlines our procedures for the conditions we currently accommodate:

1. SVP does not administer medication except for recognized common types of IMS.
2. **Medication** must be in the original packaging with instructions to administer the medication with the child's name and expiration date.
3. **Storage requirements include:** Label and written instructions must be clear. SVP will lock medications in the “Medication Lock Box,” either in the kitchen or infant room. We store refrigerated medicines in the kitchen. We send expired medication home.
4. **Training requirements require the parent will train the teaching staff. They are certifying that he or she has personally instructed the teachers on how to administer the medication.**
5. **Staff requirements** include participating in the parent training on administering the medication and reviewing/completing the school emergency procedures with the director.
6. **Safety precautions:** Always wash hands before and after using the medication. Examine the medical devices and medicines for damage, missing parts, or foreign objects before each use. Check the expiration dates monthly, then log on to the form. Use Universal Precautions, such as wearing gloves when there is blood present. Follow the use instructions and cleaning instructions provided with the medication.
7. **Transporting:** During emergency drills for disaster relocation, including planned field trips, the assigned teacher will carry the emergency backpack with medication.
8. **Reporting Incidents:** If any teacher deems a medical emergency, the school will call 911 first. Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible. The school will call the parent/guardian if any IMS is provided to the child by the teacher who administers the medication.
9. **Reporting Requirements:** The staff person who administers the IMS will document using the Medication Chart on LIC 9221. These forms and medication are stored together. Licensing requires the school to keep the IMS Plans for three years following the child's departure from SVP.



RETURNING TO CARE

1. All illness symptoms are gone after 24 hours (the entire following school day), without any medication given;
2. He or she has been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours;
3. If a child is excluded because of a reportable infectious disease case or outbreak, a letter from the child's physician stating the child is no longer contagious or providing instructions for when the child can return to school is required and must be implemented;
4. If a child is absent for three consecutive school days due to illness, then we may request a doctor's note to determine whether the child is a health risk to others, depending on lingering symptoms;
5. After 72 hours, if there is a lingering symptom such as a cough, sneezing, runny nose, etc. a doctor's note is required with the required criteria.
6. RASHES: If a child has a rash without fever and behavioral changes, he or she may return to school the same day with a doctor's note identifying the inflammation and stating that the rash is not an infectious disease;
 - a. Suppose a doctor's note states he or she is unclear about what is causing the skin irritation but says that the rash is not contagious. In that case, we can not accept the note - a child must be excluded from group care while there is an illness like symptoms of an unidentifiable rash.
 - b. If a doctor's note states he or she is unclear about what is causing the skin irritation and recommends an allergist referral or seeing an allergist for testing and possible treatment, parents/guardians must follow through for the child's health. A note to show proof of allergy testing is needed to keep a doctor's note on file for future health concerns.
 - c. If there is an infectious disease, then symptoms must clear up, and the child recovered completely. Also, please see #3 above.

ALLERGIES

Children must have an updated Physician's Report, recognizing their allergies. We must have a doctor's note on file as a preventative measure for symptoms in the group care setting that can be confused for illness rather than seasonal allergies. Updates will be shared in the classroom logs, so teachers know how to support each child's health with uninterrupted care. We understand through continuity of care, and we will learn together how to keep the children healthy and safe as they show us their individualized needs and developmental changes.

The following two items are required to honor a child's illness symptoms as allergies:

1. Physician's Report ([LIC701](#)) with the 'Allergies: medicine' completed.
2. A doctor's note to document the diagnosis/allergy and why the child is experiencing allergies outside the regular season.

For each new onset of symptoms, the child can return after 24 hours (the entire following day to ensure it is not a common cold) with improvements to the runny nose.

If a child is showing discomfort from allergy symptoms, we will notify their parent/guardian.

[A Parent's Guide to Allergies in Children](#)

ASTHMA

Each child with asthma or allergies has different needs, triggers, and plans for treatment. Health and safety are our focus, while being aware of additional needed to support their emotional well-being. We use literacy-rich experiences and books to teach peers about different abilities and health promotion. Our friendship-driven approach fosters empathy within a caring community of learners.

- [Healthy Breathing at Home](#)
- [Asthma and COVID-19](#)
- [Asthma](#)





MEDICATION POLICY

It is our policy **NOT** to give children any type of medication.

Parents cannot bring any medication into the school or their child's backpack (this includes Tylenol). If a child has a chronic medical condition that requires ongoing medication, parents can discuss accommodations with the director. Storybook Village Preschool's educators will NOT administer medication to children, except for a prescribed EpiPen, an Asthma treatment, and sunscreen. Parents will be responsible for completing the necessary medication forms and creating an Incidental Medical Services (IMS) Plan with the director before attending school. Ask for the IMS Plan for more information regarding how the school keeps children with a chronic medical condition safe.

Children must be medication-free for 24 hours before returning to school; if a child needs medication at home to feel better, they are not healthy enough to be at school.

Our policies for illnesses, fevers, and exclusion are based on the most current, recommendations as stated in Caring for Our Children (CFOC), National Standards for Health and Safety (AAP et al., 2011), which can give parents/guardians confidence that they can communicate honestly about their child's health. Our goal is to build trusting relationships with up-to-date health policies that are clearly communicated to parents/guardians.



PHYSICALS & VACCINATIONS

All children must have a completed physician's examination form with a TB clearance and all immunizations up-to-date at enrollment. Immunizations must kept up-to-date after that following the California guidelines schedule. A physical exam is required every year, beginning of the school year. Immunizations are an important public health policy affecting young children.

As a matter of state law, children in the program must:

- Be fully immunized OR
- Be in the process of becoming fully vaccinated according to the approved schedule

Young Children and Vaccines
CDC Immunization Schedules

Shared School Expectations

- We Are Kind
 - We plan family time & play together
 - We help people in the community struggling
 - We feel our feelings & practice self-compassion
- We Are Safe & Healthy
 - We wear facial coverings (adults and older children when feasible)
 - We keep 6 ft distancing
 - We use healthy handwashing habits
- We Are Respectful
 - We read school emails, updates & policies
 - We follow county & state health orders
 - We lean towards gratitude rather than grievance and safety rather than risk
 - We honor each others time when managing time for the temporary pandemic pickup procedures and school hours

→ **Pandemic**



Storybook Village Preschool
(937) 843-7794
www.storybookvillagepreschool.com





POTTY TRAINING & LEARNING

Storybook Village Preschool's partnerships with families and readiness for adults

Children do not need to be potty trained to attend our preschool. We understand there is no one "right" way or one "right" age for young children to learn how to use the toilet; however, we believe it can be successful when we follow the child's lead and both the school and home create supportive learning environments. Check out our Toilet Learning & Training Packet for more information about families partnering with SVP.

When parents feel their child is ready for potty training, we ask that they begin potty training and learning at home during a weekend or vacation. Storybook Village Preschool will follow through and encourage the child while at school. Potty training will be done in a respectful and peaceful manner with the cooperation of the family.

We require that the child show signs of readiness (please read our potty training

readiness resources for developmentally appropriate approaches). Positive reinforcements and consistency must be continued at home. The child must wear pull-ups or potty training pants/waterproof covers over cloth underwear at all times. Please keep in mind that the activity level at school can distract the child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at his or her home, so this is a learning process.

The child will use the pull-ups or underwear covers until he or she can and will announce that he or she needs to use the restroom and can control his or her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement. All toddlers and preschoolers need to be dressed in "user-friendly" clothing as much as possible to promote self-help skills. It is required that parents provide pull-ups, diapers, wipes (until the child is ready for pull-ups only), and a few extra changes of clothing.



Toilet Learning: Families and Early Childhood Teachers as Partners

"It is important to understand that using the toilet is in its own way a 'gift' from the child to the adult she loves and trusts."

—Claire Copenhagen Bainer,
Young Children



A potty-trained child ...

- Will tell the teacher he or she needs to go to the bathroom.
- Is able to go to the bathroom (either urinating or a bowel movement) on his or her own. This includes being able to remove clothing, sitting on the toilet, wiping himself or herself (without using an enormous amount of toilet paper), putting clothing back on, flushing the toilet, and washing and drying his/her hands.
- Is aware of the need to use the toilet without reminders from the teachers (although, teachers do make requests of children at various times of the day, for example, before or after meals, before going out to the playground, etc.).

- Will not be in diapers or pull-ups at all. He or she must be in regular underwear; pull-ups during nap or rest time are okay.

Our teaching staff is aware that accidents happen. That is why we ask families to keep a couple of changes of clothing at school; however, if the child has accidents every day they are in school, the child is not considered to be potty trained, and continued potty training support is needed from both school and home.





SUN SAFETY

Educators ensure sun safety for themselves and children under their supervision by keeping by limiting sun exposure when ultraviolet rays are most vital and applying sunscreen after rest time with the written permission of parents/guardians. Manufacturer instructions should be followed.

- Daily activities include at least two hours (120 minutes) of active playtime for preschoolers and 90 minutes for toddlers.
- Outside of nap and mealtimes, the longest that preschool children and toddlers are expected to remain seated at any one time is less than fifteen (15) minutes.
- Portable play equipment (including wheeled toys, balls, hoops, ribbons) that is diverse and available for children to use at the same time is provided at all times.
- The toddler outdoor play space is 1/2 to 3/4 shaded by structures or trees, with an open area large enough for all children to run around safely.
- Physical activity is never withheld as punishment.
- SVP provides adult-led physical activity at least 60 minutes each day.



A parent's written permission on the licensing medication form is required, and our educators follow all labeled instructions. If a child's skin is broken or an allergic reaction is observed, educators will discontinue use and notify the parents. If necessary, parents are responsible for applying sunscreen before a child is dropped off at school. Educators will apply the child's broad-spectrum sunscreen (meaning it blocks both UVA and UVB rays) with an SPF of 30 at a minimum after rest time. The best practices are to apply sunscreen 20-30 minutes before outdoor play.





OUTDOOR PLAY EVERYDAY

OUTSIDE EVERY DAY IN ALL SEASONS

When children are outdoors, they are protected against cold. To protect against cold, we ensure that children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth. A saying goes like, "there's no such thing as bad weather, just bad weather attire," so please dress your child accordingly. Children will not get sick by being outdoors during the fall or winter seasons. The fresh air and outdoor classroom will strengthen and support their growth and development.

CHANGE OF CLOTHING

Each child must have two complete clothing changes appropriate for the current weather at all times in their backup supply kept in the children's bathroom. Five sets of clothes are needed if a child is actively potty training.

We provide rain suits for each child to use while in care.



DRESSING FOR COLD WEATHER

We are collecting extra rain boots and cold-weather clothes, so if you have spares, we would love them so we can share them with families who could use them or have appropriate backup clothing for the colder seasons.

- Children should wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing. Outer garments, such as coats, should be tightly woven and be at least water repellent when rain is present.
- Children should wear a hat/beanie, coat, and gloves/mittens kept snug at the wrist.
- There should be no hood strings or neck strings.

SHOES

Waterproof shoes are required on rainy and cold days; for safety reasons. Please dress your child in shoes without laces as they often come untied and pose a trip hazard. Please remember that closed shoes are required year-round; flip-flops and sandals are not appropriate for our preschool setting.

Outside Play

Outside every day in all seasons

When children are outdoors, they are protected against cold. To protect against cold, we ensure that children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth. There's a saying that goes something like, "there's no such thing as bad weather, just bad weather attire," so please dress your child accordingly.

Children will not get sick by being outdoors during the fall or winter seasons. The fresh air and outdoor classroom will strengthen and support their growth and development.

- Change of clothing: Each child is required to have two complete changes of clothing appropriate for the current weather at all times in his or her cubby. If a child is in diapers, pull-ups, or potty training, five sets of clothes are needed.

Dressing for Cold Weather

We are collecting extra rain boots and cold-weather clothes, so if you have spares, we would love them so we can share them with families who could use them or have appropriate backup clothing for the colder seasons.

- Children should wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing. Outer garments, such as coats, should be tightly woven and be at least water repellent when rain is present.
- Children should wear a hat/beanie, coat, and gloves/mittens kept snug at the wrist.
- There should be no hood strings or neck strings.
- Shoes: Waterproof shoes are required on rainy and cold days; for safety reasons. Please dress your child in shoes without laces as they often come untied and pose a trip hazard. Please remember closed shoes are required year-round; flip-flops and sandals are not appropriate for our preschool setting.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

In an effort to provide the best possible environment for the children in our care, we have adopted the following policies. Children and families will be provided visible support for physical activity through the use of a variety of posters, pictures, and displayed books that are rotated or updated seasonally; including, offering families information and community resources. The administration and staff appreciate the support from the parents in promoting the health of our children.

OUTDOOR PLAY & LEARNING TIME

- Educators provide at least three outdoor play sessions every day.
- Educators provide at least ninety (90) minutes of outdoor play opportunities for preschoolers and (60) minutes for toddlers every day.
- Educators to incorporate field trips, seasonal outdoor activities, structured learning opportunities, and free play outdoors. All field trips are planned and need the parent or guardian's permission.
- The outdoor play space has many play areas and a variety of portable play equipment always available for all children to use at one time.



- Daily activities include at least two hours (120 minutes) of active playtime for preschoolers and 90 minutes for toddlers.
- Outside of nap and mealtimes, the longest that preschool children and toddlers are expected to remain seated at any one time is less than fifteen (15) minutes.
- Portable play equipment (including wheeled toys, balls, hoops, ribbons) that is diverse and available for children to use at the same time is provided at all times.
- The toddler outdoor play space is 1/2 to 3/4 shaded by structures or trees, with an open area large enough for all children to run around safely.
- Physical activity is never withheld as punishment.
- SVP provides adult-led physical activity at least 60 minutes each day.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Daily activities include at least two hours (120 minutes) of active playtime for preschoolers and 90 minutes for toddlers.
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- Portable play equipment (including wheeled toys, balls, hoops, ribbons) that is diverse and available for children to use at the same time is provided at all times.
- The toddler outdoor play space is 1/2 to 3/4 shaded by structures or trees, with an open area large enough for all children to run around safely.
- Physical activity is never withheld as punishment.
- SVP provides adult-led physical activity at least 60 minutes each day.
- Educators regularly encourage children to be active both indoors and outdoors.
- Physical activity is included in every opportunity, including daily routines, transitions, and planned activities.
- Educators provide planned lessons for children focused on building gross motor skills at least once per week.
- Educators talk with children informally about the importance of physical activity each time they see an opportunity.
- Professional development on children's physical activity includes recommended daily amounts, encouraging physical activity, limiting long periods of seated time, motor skill development, talking with families about encouraging physical activity.
- SVP offers families information on children's physical activity that includes recommended daily amounts, encouraging physical activity, limiting long periods of seated time, motor skill development, outdoor play and learning 2x or more per year that includes: amounts of outdoor playtime, use of outdoor play space to encourage active play, and their child's program outdoor play and learning policy.
- Educators complete professional development on children's physical activity and on outdoor play and learning at least 2x per year.





INJURIES & ACCIDENTS

If any teacher deems a medical emergency, 911 will be called first. Parents will be notified as soon as possible.

- Emergency phone numbers are clearly posted in each room.
- The parents provide, in writing, the names and phone numbers of persons to contact if they cannot be reached.
- In case of an emergency, an educator may go with the child to the emergency room and remain until their parent arrives.
- Educators report in writing any injuries that may occur while the child attends Storybook Village Preschool. Parents will receive an Incident Report by the end of the day.
- Educators notify the parents of any injury requiring first aid treatment.
- Educators report serious injuries to the Director immediately, and parents are notified as soon as possible.



Vivian White spends a pensive few minutes during snack time at Storybook Village Preschool in Santa Rosa, Friday, July 15, 2022. (Kent Porter / The Press Democrat) 2022

HANDLING URGENT CARE OR THREATENING INCIDENTS

Storybook Village Preschool has a written plan for reporting and managing any incident or unusual occurrence that is threatening to the health, safety, or welfare of the children, staff, or volunteers. Our educator's training procedures include the how, when, and who. The management, documentation, and reporting of the following types of incidents are addressed:

1. Lost or missing child;
2. Suspected maltreatment of a child (also see the state mandates for reporting);
3. Injuries to children requiring medical or dental care;
4. Illness or injuries requiring hospitalization or emergency treatment;
5. Mental health emergencies;
6. Health and safety emergencies involving parents/guardians and visitors to the program;
7. The presence of a threatening individual who attempts or succeeds in gaining entrance to the facility.



GENERAL SAFETY PRACTICES

The following list includes general safety practices implemented throughout our daily routines and in the events of emergencies:

- Background screenings are conducted for all teaching staff.
- Educators, children, and volunteers are required to have a TB test on file.
- All staff members are mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse/neglect.
- Children are supervised at all times, and appropriate child: staff ratios are maintained.
- Authorized pick-up information is on file and in the emergency directory.
- If a teacher is not familiar with the authorized pick-up person, we will ask to see identification. We will match the person's ID with the emergency directory information the parent(s) provided.
- Each room is equipped with a first-aid kit.
- Educators take headcounts and monitor the number of children in their care.
- Educators move throughout the play yard to ensure adequate and appropriate supervision.
- The play yard is monitored closely for safety and improvements through our supervision zoning.
- Safety mats are used under climbing equipment indoors.
- Staff is trained in First Aid and CPR training.
- IMS medications are stored out of children's reach; administered only in case of emergency with the written permission of parent/guardian.
- Individuals who serve food wash their hands thoroughly.

- Cleaning supplies are stored out of children's reach.
- Educators fill out the documentation for accidents, behavioral incidents, and health-related situations. Parents receive copies of accident/incident forms.
- Educators follow universal precautions for blood-related accidents and incidents.
- Choke tubes available to test if toys are too small.
- Latex "free" and powder-free gloves are available in each room for emergencies.
- Toys are checked frequently, and broken toys are discarded.
- Parking lot safety tips are shared with parents.
- Emergency numbers and first aid kits are included in the staff bags for walking and field trips.
- Parents are informed in advance of all field trips.
- The teacher-child ratio is adjusted for field trips to ensure a higher ratio of adults to children.

- During field trips, children must stay where teachers can see them at all times and vice versa.
- Health and safety information incorporated into the curriculum and taught to the children regularly, such as Promoting earthquake safety





SAFETY

AUTHORIZED PICK UPS

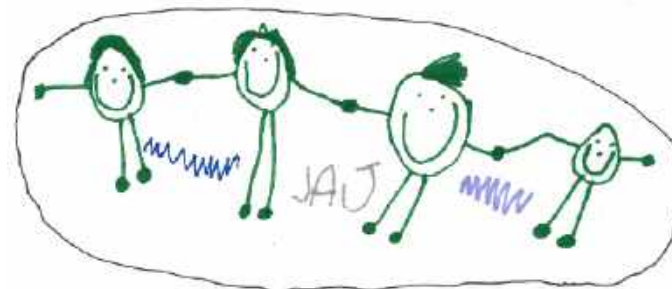
- Anytime someone other than the typical pick-up person picks up your child, please let the educator know. We will require proof of identification the first time someone new picks up your child.
- If your child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent or the “Approved Pick Up” (listed on your child’s Emergency Form), you must provide written notification via note or Procure message in each instance. Give the person’s full name and inform this person that the school will require proof of identification before releasing your child.
- Persons on the authorized list must be at least 18 years.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

- Under the laws of the state of California, both parents may have the right to pick up their child unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent, who chooses not to include the child’s other parent on the authorized pick-up list, must file an official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody decree, a divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document, SVP may release the child to either parent, provided that the parent provides a certified copy of their custody agreement.

CAR SEAT SAFETY & LAWS

Children transported in vehicles must be buckled securely into car safety seats/seatbelts that meet state requirements. Parents will take whatever steps are necessary to maintain and use car safety seats. Another person on the authorized list will be called if this requirement is not met.



CURRENT CALIFORNIA LAW:

- Children under 2 years of age shall ride in a rear-facing car seat unless the child weighs 40 or more pounds OR is 40 or more inches tall. The child shall be secured in a manner that complies with the height and weight limits specified by the manufacturer of the car seat. (California Vehicle Code Section 27360.)
- Children under the age of 8 must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat.

MANDATED REPORTING

Educators are educated on child abuse and neglect to establish child abuse and neglect prevention and recognition strategies for children, caregivers/teachers, and parents/guardians. The education addresses physical, sexual, and psychological or emotional abuse and neglect. Our educators are mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect and trained in compliance with the California child abuse reporting laws.

The following is required of all employees under California State Law: ‘Section 11166 of the Penal Code requires any child care custodian... who has knowledge of or observes a child in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been a victim of abuse, to report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately or as soon as practically possible...’

ATTENDING SCHOOL EVENTS

While we are hosting a school event, parents or authorized adults are responsible for looking after the safety of their own children and following the Program-Wide Expectations. Following these guidelines, we can all know the expectations and enjoy our party knowing that we have done everything possible to protect our preschool community.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES & DRILLS

Drills & Emergency Kits

Disasters come in many forms and can occur at any time. Storybook Village Preschool has emergency plans and policies for disasters caused by natural events such as severe weather, earthquakes, and fires, including wildfires and smoke, as well as human-caused events such as an active shooter or a hazardous material incident. Families must plan for school closures and rapid communication during emergencies or disasters. We meet in the preschool's parking lot for emergency drills. Each child has a Ready-to-Go Kit with 72-hour emergency supplies. Families are encouraged to share a family photo and to create a customized comfort note to cope during an emergency.



The children participated in a fire drill and enjoyed songs and activities teaching safety skills. 2020.

“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.”

—John Dewey

Child Emergency Information

It's crucial to have emergency forms for each child that give us access to all the correct information to help children get through an emergency effectively and notify parents or guardians.

Here are the five things we include on our child care emergency forms:

1. Child & Family Information
2. Child Medical History
3. Emergency Contact Information
4. Family Physician & Insurance
5. Parent Acknowledgment & Consent

Families must update the Child Emergency Information form for changes in names and phone numbers if needed.



DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR FAMILIES

An emergency or disaster will likely disrupt our normal business operations. Planning will allow Storybook Village Preschool to provide child care services as soon as possible after a disaster occurs.

1. Receive a copy of our school's Emergency Disaster Plan. (LIC600)
2. Hold onto a wallet card with important information to help reunite with your child in the case of relocation.
3. Review and update your child's emergency information.
4. Create a comfort note with a family picture for your child to help them cope in an emergency.
5. Check out community resources provided by the school to create a disaster plan at home and help your child and family thrive after a disaster strikes.
6. Learn how to communicate with our program before, during, and after a disaster.

COMMUNICATION DURING A CRISIS

Not all channels of communication may be available in an emergency. To help families stay informed, we have set up the ability to send emergency updates in more than one way. We will send a mass text and email through the Procure app and then use social media sites to connect with our online preschool community.

- Shelter-in-Place: Like severe weather or hazardous outdoor air, we will stay indoors. There are policies when it is too unsafe to operate, and we will notify parents or guardians to pick up their children.
- Lockdown: We will keep everyone inside because of a potentially violent situation. The school's door will be disabled, so the family codes will not work. SRPD must confirm the neighborhood is safe for parents to pick up before we open the door for anyone.
- Evacuation & Relocation Sites: We are familiar with what is around us if we can't re-enter our center. We have a backup location to go to and walk there safely with safety walking ropes and evacuation plans. We have developed a process for reunifying



"Watch the video together, then explain to kids that an emergency is when something happens that we don't expect, and we have to act quickly to keep ourselves safe." *Planning Together* video.

the children with their authorized person to pick them up.

- Fire drills are practiced once each month and other drills every three months, to prepare children in the case of an emergency. Shelter-in-place (lockdown) drills are held at irregular intervals throughout the year.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each room, the hallway, and outside the office.
- Parents pay \$20.00 for the emergency kit fee upon enrollment and provide a family picture and note.

EVACUATION & RELOCATION SITE

We chose a safe place at the end of the court near our facility to gather in case of an evacuation. If needed, below is our relocation Site:

Lakeside Pet Hospital
4331 Montgomery Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95405



EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURES

To ensure the health and safety of the children and teaching staff, Storybook Village Preschool will be closed during emergencies, such as loss of water, a *PG&E* outage affecting the temperature required for indoors, natural disaster, or weather conditions, including an illness outbreak. Parents will be called for immediate pick-up. SVP has an emergency plan which requires families to keep their contact information up-to-date; including having access to communication through email.

If necessary, the school policies may change due to county and state guidance, without much notice. Tuition is still due during emergency closures. Please share with the director if your family needs change, so you have access to community resources and support

PROTECTION FROM AIR POLLUTION

SVP and educators check the air quality index (AQI) daily and use the information to determine whether children should be allowed to play outdoors. We believe in protecting children from air pollution by adjusting the daily schedule to eliminate outdoor play while there are health concerns. Storybook Village will be closed when the air quality level is “Very Unhealthy,” with the AQI reaching 200.

The school will have portable HEPA filters in the classrooms, and the portable filters will be sized correctly for each area. The teachers will ensure doors and windows are closed, which limits natural ventilation.

GUIDELINES FOR WILDFIRE SMOKE

When a wildfire occurs nearby, the decision to close or evacuate the school is straightforward. However, as we have seen in Sonoma County, wildfire smoke can settle within our community when a wildfire is hundreds of miles away and impacts students’ health and school operations. Our goal is to keep the children and teaching staff healthy and safe while partnering with the families and community.

Below is our school’s guidelines to share how SVP makes decisions from the data collected by the state when addressing if the school closes, remains open, or modifying school events:

AIR QUALITY INDEX LEVELS OF HEALTH CONCERN (WITH NUMERICAL VALUE):

- **GOOD (0 to 50): No Restrictions;**
- **MODERATE (51 to 100):**
 - **No restrictions for preschoolers;**
 - **Toddlers will stay indoors;**
- **UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS (101 to 150): All children will stay indoors;**
- **UNHEALTHY (151 TO 200): All children will stay indoors;**
- **VERY UNHEALTHY (201 TO 300): SCHOOL CLOSED**
- **HAZARDOUS (301 TO 500): SCHOOL CLOSED**

These guidelines are based on the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the Centers for Disease Control’s Air Quality and Outdoor Activity Guidance for Schools and Wildfire Smoke: A Guide for Public Health Officials. The guidelines assist in the California schools’ decision-making process.

Storybook Village Preschool will monitor local air quality conditions using air quality tracking tools recommended by the county or state.



PANDEMIC POLICIES

Storybook Village Preschool implements guidelines that provide information and procedures on how our program can safely provide care during a pandemic. Our school's guidance does not supersede applicable federal, state, and local laws and policies for child care programs. If guidelines differ from local health ordinances and Licensing, then SVP will follow the stricter guidelines.

We have unique Shared School Expectations for everyone during a pandemic since we thrive as a preschool community with program-wide expectations. There may be temporary procedures and routines to get us through the pandemic, so we appreciate each family doing their part to stop the spread. Parents are responsible for keeping up-to-date with pandemic policies by reading visiting our website, reading school emails with shared community resources, and visiting the [Sonoma County Emergency & Preparedness Information](#) website.



For more information and resources about our Family Handbook, visit our school's website or contact the director.



STORYBOOK VILLAGE PRESCHOOL POLICIES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Storybook Village Preschool has been operating in-person learning with layered prevention strategies in place since March 2020. The CDC Early Care & Education guidance emphasizes implementing layered COVID-19 prevention strategies (e.g., using multiple prevention strategies together) to protect children and adults who are not fully vaccinated. While we are amid the pandemic, we require families, teachers, and visitors to follow any applicable federal, state, or local laws, rules, and regulations.

UNIVERSAL MASKING

CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status. In addition, **Storybook Village Preschool requires indoor and outdoor masking for all adults and children enrolled in the Preschool & Pre-k Room.** Preschoolers will have the ability to be maskless outdoors when there is no longer an increasing or substantial or high COVID-19 transmission within our surrounding community.

To monitor Variants of Concern around us, visit: [COVID-19 Integrated County View](#).

ILLNESS POLICIES & QUARANTINE

Storybook Village Preschool must exclude or isolate any child, parent, caregiver, or staff showing symptoms of a contagious disease or illness as required under Title 22 in [CCR section's 101216\(h\)](#). **See the most updated SVP Illness Policy for exclusion guidelines.** We must report epidemic outbreaks to the CDSS Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) through the [local Regional Office](#).

Parent Education for Promoting Health: Stress Relief Tips for Families, My Child is Showing Signs of COVID-19, When & How to Wash Your Hands

SCREENING & FAMILY ROUTINES

All individuals entering the preschool will participate in a health screening; **teachers will perform a visual and thermometer check on children when arriving for the day.** We have specific family routines for child arrival, drop-off, and pick-up times and locations by primary groups and prioritize outdoor drop-off and pick-up when possible. We have provided physical guides, such as wall signs or floor markers, to help maintain distance between classrooms and families in common areas. **Families should plan for additional time for arrival by picking up the children at least 5 minutes before their scheduled pick-up time.**

TRAVEL & RESOURCES

Families who are traveling outside of California with children must follow CDC's [recommendations for unvaccinated people](#). **Plan additional days to have your child quarantine after they travel, and before returning to school:**

- Get tested with a [viral test](#) 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel.
- Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days
- If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.

Family Flyer: How to Protect Yourself and Others Visit [vaccines.gov](#) to find out more about vaccinations.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Families initial the Admission Agreement form acknowledging they have received and read our family handbook. The family handbook may be updated, and families will receive notices of those changes via email. We look forward to building relationships with you and your family. It is your responsibility to understand and acquaint yourself with the school's culture and its policies, procedures, or information contained in Storybook Village Preschool's Family Handbook. Thank you for choosing Storybook Village Preschool to be a part of your village!

GRIEVANCE & COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Parents or other concerned adults who have a complaint or concern regarding SVP should follow the following procedure:

1. Meet with the classroom teacher initially to resolve any classroom-specific conflict.
2. If you are uncomfortable or unable to resolve the issue with the teacher, contact the center director.



Boone Davis three wheels it over a small bridge at Storybook Village Preschool in Santa Rosa, Friday, July 15, 2022. (Kent Porter / The Press Democrat) 2022

RECORDS REQUEST

Any requests for information from the child's file must be made in advance (at least five business days) and in writing by the parent/legal guardian. Written requests can be emailed to the director or submitted to the school office in person.

REFERENCES

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*. 4th ed. Itasca, IL; American Academy of Pediatrics; 2019.

American Academy of Pediatrics. "Toilet Training Guidelines: Parents: The Role of the Parents in Toilet Training," *Pediatrics* 103: June (1999).

Department of Social Services (2022). Child Care Licensing. [<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/child-care-licensing>].

Garboden-Murray, Carol. *Illuminating Care, The Pedagogy and Practice of Care in Early Childhood Communities*. Nebraska: Exchange Press, 2021.

Hemmeter, Mary L., *Unpacking the Pyramid Model: A Practical Guide for Preschool Teachers*, Brookes Publishing, 2020.

Mangione,, P. L., Lally, J.R., Harkins, D. M. & Morabito, A. O (with Paxton, A. R.). (2021) The PITC curriculum. WestEd.

Malaguzzi, Loris. "History, Ideas, and Basic Philosophy." In C. Edwards, L. Gandini, and G. Forman (editors), *The Hundred Languages of Children: Education for All the Child in Reggio Emilia*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation, in press.

NAEYC (2011). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8* [Position statement].

Wurm,, Julianne. *Working in the Reggio Way: A Beginner's Guide for American Teachers*. Redleaf Press, 2005.

TRAINING SOURCES:

- PITC Partners for Quality Training Binder: Infant & Toddler Group Care (California Department of Education and WestEd's Center for Child and Family Studies)
- The *Teaching Pyramid* Training Binder: Promoting the Social-Emotional Competence of Young Children (California Department of Education and WestEd's Center for Child and Family Studies)



"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude."

—Maya Angelou