

A Child's First Steps Preschool

We would like to welcome you and your family to preschool. Thank you for being a part of the First Steps Preschool family. Our preschool is dedicated to teaching your 2, 3-and 4/5-year-old children. We believe these early experiences will follow your child and set the example for future learning experiences. We welcome and encourage you to be an active part of your child's early childhood education during his/her time with our program.

We pride ourselves on having an open-door policy that simply means you and your family members are welcome into our classroom at anytime. We believe that parent involvement with their child's/children's education is extremely important and enhances your child's learning experiences. We hope to be instrumental in all aspects of your child's education; therefore, communication with you will be ongoing so that all questions and concerns may be answered as they occur.

A Child's First Steps Preschool will begin classes this fall, and we offer early childhood education for 2-, 3- and 4/5-year-old children. Our teachers are experienced early childhood educators that have ongoing training in the early childhood field. This enables us to be current in all aspects of early childhood education.

Please take time to read through this Parent handbook. This guide will serve as an important tool throughout your child's educational experience with us. There are many times throughout the school year when questions arise, and they may be answered for you right here in this valuable handbook. Otherwise, please feel free to contact us at any time. Our phone numbers are listed below.

Sincere Educational Beginnings,

Terrie Gehlsen	(253) 224-4828 (C)
Kimberly Kuntz	(253) 797-3721 (C)
Shannon Marceau	(253) 341-1214 (C)
Jennifer Nagy	(513) 255-0112 (C)
Jennifer Frick	(253) 350-5419 (C)

-Registration-

The registration fee is **NON-REFUNDABLE** and due at the time you turn in your registration application form. Tuition is due the first of the month no later than the **10th** of the month beginning in September, unless you have made prior arrangements with the school’s Director. It is for your convenience that we have broken our tuition down into ten (10) monthly payments. You may pay for more than one month at a time, or for the entire year (10 months).

An envelope will be provided each student to be used expressly for the transport and transfer of tuition payments, newsletter, and snack calendar. This envelope should be used each month so we can pass it back and forth. It is a safe and easy way to deliver the tuition. It is a handy reminder to be filed with other monthly bills. It is a record of payment for you and for the school.

The registration and tuition fees are based on the actual costs of operating our school. Fees for the current school year are as follows.

- REGISTRATION FEE\$160.00 Non Refundable**
- TUITION - 2’s class 2 days Tues. & Thurs. AM only. . \$210.00 per month.**
- TUITION - 3’s class 2 days Tues. & Thurs. \$225.00 per month.**
- TUITION - 4’s Class 3 days M/W/F\$265.00 per month**
- TUITION - 4/5’s Extension 5 days \$325.00 per month.**

MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: A CHILD’S FIRST STEPS PRESCHOOL

-If tuition is paid in cash, receipts will be given to you via the Tuition Envelope, per your request.

-TUITION POLICY-

Because our tuition is based on actual operating expenses, we are unable to make refunds or adjustments on monthly tuition because of school holidays, family vacations, etc. Consideration will be given to those students who are absent because of lengthy illness and extenuating circumstances. The Director and the Preschool Board will make all the decisions in these matters.

Tuition is averaged over a 12-month period. Some months will have more classroom days than others. This way you are not being charged for holidays or Dieringer District school closures. The average results are simplified by having the same rate each month for 10 months.

-Class Hours-

Tues./Thurs. A.M. only (2's class) ----- 9:00-11:30 A.M.
 Tues./Thurs. A.M. (3's class) ----- 9:00-11:30 A.M.
 Tues./Thurs. P.M. (3's class) -----12:15- 2:45 P.M.
 M/W/F A.M. (4's class)-----9:00-11:30 A.M.
 M/W/F P.M. (4's class)-----12:15- 2:45 P.M.
 4/5's Extension Class - M/W/F A.M. or P.M. & Tues./Thurs. P.M.

-Arrival at School-

We request that you do not bring your child into the classroom until the beginning of class. The staff needs the pre-class time to do their final classroom preparation for the day and may not be free to supervise your child.

In order to ensure your child's safety and also your peace of mind, we request that each child be brought into the building. This also provides an opportunity to check the parent information board posted outside and inside the classroom for any "special" information notices that might be posted.

-Dismissal from School-

The last few minutes of a school day are generally rather hectic ones. Getting coats, hats, show and tells, class projects, and children together in their proper order and places is not always a simple task. To help us in ensuring that each child leaves safely and happily, we request that you remain patient and know we will get your child to you as soon as we can. If it is necessary for you to pick your child up early, please let us know and come and get him/her when you need to.

-Authorization for Pick-up-

No child will be released to a person or persons not authorized by a parent to pick up that child. We must have written advance authorization of change in this respect. In the case of single/divorced parents: If the parent given custody of the child wishes to restrain the other parent from picking up the child from preschool, we **MUST** have a copy of the **COURT ORDER** stating this, or we **can not stop the non-custodial parent from picking up the child.**

-Health and Safety-

Your child's health and the health of his/her classmates is a matter of great importance to us. Please use common sense when deciding if your child is well enough to attend school. Keep in mind that sending a sick child exposes the entire class. Please keep your child at home if he/she has a temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, constant cough, or other symptoms of a communicable disease such as a sore throat, reddened eyes, and stomachache. Most important, if a child has been exposed to a contagious disease, they should be kept at home. Strep throat, pinworms, viral/bacterial infection, infected ears, glands, the measles, mumps, and head lice are considered "highly" contagious.

Your child may be sent home if he/she appears to have symptoms of illness during class time. In such cases, we will make every effort to contact you first. We will then proceed to other emergency contacts you have listed.

In the case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the child's emergency contact number before seeking medical attention.

-Emergency Preparedness-

Earthquake, Fire Drills, and Lock Down will be practiced throughout the year. We will acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. Children soon become accustomed to the drills and know exactly what to do.

Included in this parent handbook, we recommended an emergency comfort letter and family pictures for your child/children in the event of a natural disaster. The Department of Emergency Management has stated that in the event of a natural disaster, they may not be able to reach us for 72 hours. We supply a 72-hour emergency kit for each child in a preschool class. We will supply at least 24 emergency kits to cover an entire class and teachers. Parents are required to provide a comfort letter and photo(s) of your family for comforting purposes, and we will keep these letters and family photos until the end of the school year. If your child has a severe allergy, we require you to provide an emergency kit along with any needed medical supplies. i.e., EpiPen.

Please keep your emergency information at school up to date!!!

-Ways we can Help-

When you enroll your child in our school, we assume the responsibility of giving assistance with special needs in relation to your child's school adjustment, growth, and development. We will look after his/her health, safety, and social/emotional being while he/she is in our care.

We would really appreciate it if you would keep us informed of any changes in your child's home situation during the school year. For example, the birth of a baby, an accident, a death, a separation or divorce, a traumatic experience, just to name a few. If we are kept informed of any such changes, we will be better able to deal with any changes in your child's behavior during class time.

-What to Wear-

Think of your child's comfort and provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Think of messy activities and provide clothing that is washable. Provide a sweater or jacket on sunny days; **you know how fast the weather can change in our area!!** We may go outside for an activity on any non-rainy day, so dress your child accordingly.

We enjoy as much as you are seeing the children in their newest fashions, however, we don't enjoy seeing the sad and worried faces when accidents occur, and they **do** occur. We will make every effort to keep your child's clothing in the condition in which it arrived but do remember "Little hands are fast and small bodies unpredictable."

-Potty Training Requirement-

Due to state requirements all children entering A Child's First Steps Preschool must be potty trained unless you are in the 2's class. Consequently, children must be able to utilize restroom facilities on their own while attending classes. However, it is understood that accidents can happen, and staff members will deal with such situations according to our policies: call families to come change child/children. Our 2's must have a Diaper Release Form signed, to attend our preschool.

-Newsletter-

To further strengthen the link between home and school, each month you will receive both a snack calendar and an At A Glance Calendar located on the back of the snack calendar. We will try to communicate as clearly as possible through them any information you may need to know in addition to sharing a bit of your child's preschool day with you. It will remind you of upcoming events and inform you of any school needs as well.

-Conferences and Observations-

First and foremost, our classroom is always open to parents. There will be a specific time set aside for parent orientation and open house for classroom observations, but you are welcome at any time during the year.

Separating is sometimes difficult for a child and/or parent at the beginning of the school year. To help this situation we encourage you to wait in our classroom for as long as needed until your child has an opportunity to become comfortable in their school environment.

Additionally, Kindergarten readiness conferences will be offered in the spring, but please let us know anytime you have a question or a concern about your child.

-Show and Tell-

Show and Tell is a very important time in the school day. It may well be your child's first opportunity for "Public Speaking." We encourage, as you might too, your child to bring in **one** item for Show and Tell. Please assist your child in selecting something to share with a thought; perhaps, for the curriculum we are studying that month. The most important thing, however, is for the child to be comfortable with his/her decision (even if the same decision has been made time and time again). We would appreciate a limit of **ONE** item per child per time to share. That's about all time and attention spans will allow.

***Note: A Child's First Steps Preschool teachers can and will handle - bugs, snakes, and other creepy crawlies so don't hesitate to share.**

Show and Tell Schedule:

Girls: First class day of each week: (Tues.) 3's, (Mon.) 4's
Boys: Second class day of each week: (Thurs.) 3's (Wed.) 4's
2's Class Tues./Thurs. both boys and girls

-Field Trips-

Outside classroom experiences can start at an early age. During the school year A Child's First Steps Preschool will be taking several class field trips. Transportation needs to be provided by parent/guardian volunteers. Notice of field trip plans will be given in the school At A Glance Calendar.

As a rule, field trips will be taken during the regular class time hours. Every attempt will be made to provide fun and educational learning experiences at "no extra cost". For each preschool child a **Field Trip Consent Form** and a **Release of Liability** is required. Both forms are due the first day of class and are good for the entire school year.

-Holidays/Snow days-

School will be closed on national holidays and vacations observed by the Dieringer school Districts calendar. Written notice of such closing will be made via the At A Glance Calendar and snack calendar. A Child's First Steps Preschool follows the Dieringer School District schedule and consequently preschool will close anytime the Dieringer School District closes. Check the website, listen to any radio, or TV station for school closure information. When there is a closure or an interruption of our schedule, we will try to contact each of you by phone and email. If there is a **1 hr.** delay, we will still have a.m. classes. If there is a **2 hr.** delay, we will **not** have a.m. classes. There **will be** p.m. classes if Dieringer School District does not close for the day. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

-Late Policy-

Our preschool has a late policy in place to allow Teachers the proper time before, and after class times to take care of various preschool tasks.

Our policy is: There is a FIVE-minute grace period after class is dismissed. If you are later than the five-minute grace period, there is a \$5.00 per minute late charge that will be billed to you at the end of that month.

-Nutrition and Snacks-

At A Child's First Steps Preschool the children take turns in bringing snacks to share with the class. At the end of each month a "Snack Calendar" will be sent home with your child indicating who will be providing snacks for the upcoming month.

In addition to encouraging the spiritual, emotional, and mental growth of your child this year, we hope to promote the principles of good nutrition that will aid in good physical development for your child.

Children, not to mention adults, eat far too much sugar. Snacks need not be sweet, expensive, or elaborate to be tasty and fun. A child's turn to bring in snack is very important to the child so suggest several ideas you think they might enjoy and then let them decide and help you with preparation. Use the monthly themes of color and shape to help you with your ideas. Enjoy being creative together!

Additionally, Natural beverages are more economical and nutritionally superior to imitations. Therefore, we would really like to encourage their use, also.

If we are aware your child is allergic to any foods, we will try to provide an alternate food for him/her in place of the prohibited food. Keep in mind we can only do this if we know about your child's allergies.

When it is your child's turn for snack, please supply enough snack, juice, napkins, and utensils, if necessary, for their entire class. The number of students in each class is provided on the Snack Calendars. Don't forget the teachers!

WE TRY TO BE A NUT FREE CLASSROOM:

The following are just a few snack ideas:

Crackers	Muffins	Kiwi fruit
Cheese	Carrots	Biscuits
Apple slices	Pickles	Orange sections
Grapes	Yogurt	Bananas
Olives	Banana chips	Celery
Dry cereals	Melon	Finger Jell-O
Pretzels	Granola	Deviled eggs
Popcorn	Trail mixes	Finger sandwiches
Rice cakes	Dried fruit	Oriental noodles
Fresh pineapple	Potato chips	Corn chip
Cream cheese	Cherries	Strawberries
Breads	Pizza	Plums

-Birthday Snack-

Birthday snack is very important to your child and to our preschool. Please allow your child to bring their favorite snack food (Yes cupcakes are just fine). Your child will be able to design his/her very own Birthday crown, and this is always a very exciting time for your child. We sing “Happy Birthday” during snack time and as usual, parents are welcome in at anytime for this very special celebration.

-Discipline-

The discipline policy of our preschool is designed to aid the child in developing inner control. Discipline is viewed as a process of the child’s learning appropriate behaviors. Positive reinforcement for “good behavior” in a warm supportive environment promotes the child’s self-confidence and leads to increased desirable behavior. The child is also challenged with learning and doing new things, thus preventing the discipline problems, which may occur from boredom.

When corrective discipline is necessary, a teacher will direct discipline in a POSITIVE consistent manner, appropriate to the situation. When the child’s behavior is unacceptable, the teacher will remove the child from the group; talk with him/her; discuss the concerns; discuss alternate ways to handle the concerns. If the disruptive behavior continues, the staff will then determine if a conference with the parent(s) is necessary. Brief: “Time Outs” will be used if necessary to aid the child in quieting his/her body and mind and allowing an opportunity to begin “anew” with more acceptable behavior.

-Diversity-

Preschool children are active eager learners who want to know all about the world around them. This age is the perfect time to introduce them to different cultures.

A Child's First Steps preschool will be looking for your ideas, in hopes your family can share their heritage. We would like to include your family experiences, cultural foods, music, language, clothing etc. Our young Preschool children need to learn about and understand the world around them first. We would like to teach them about our families with whom they are classmates within these early years. Your help is needed.

A special "blessing" is sung at the beginning of each snack time. Our day at A Child's First Steps Preschool is begun with and ended with prayers. If you have a prayer, we can teach the children we certainly welcome it.

-Curriculum-

A Child's First Steps Preschool offers an exciting, challenging, and age-appropriate curriculum. In our program the children will have experiences in cultural awareness, music, language, mathematics, science, cooking, arts and crafts, gross and fine motor activities, field trips, and MORE! They will learn to play and work together as a group, to share experiences with a group, and to pick up toys and materials they have used, unassisted. We feel that all of this will provide a well-rounded curriculum that will further your child's development.

Specific areas of emphasis change from month to month and year to year. We will keep you informed of those areas we are specifically studying at any given time via our Newsletter and Calendar.

**-Daily Schedule-
2's Class**

A.M.
 9:00 – 9:25 a.m.
 Welcome, choose a cubby
 Welcome Parent/Teacher time
 Free Play
 9:25–9:30 Songs/Movement
 9:30–9:50 Calendar Wall
 9:50–9:55 Library Time
 9:55–10:40 Learning Activity
 10:40–10:45 Clean up
 10:45–10:55 Colors, Shapes, Counting
 10:55–11:10 Sharing
 11:10–11:20 Snack
 11:20–11:30 Last Circle
 Good-bye Song, Dismissal

**- Daily Schedule -
3's & 4's Class**

A.M.	P.M.
9:00 – 9:25 a.m.	12:15–12:40 p.m.
Welcome, choose a cubby	Welcome, choose a cubby
Welcome Parent/Teacher	Welcome Parent/Teacher
Free Play	Free Play
9:25–9:30 Hello Song/Movement	12:40–12:45 Hello/Movement
9:30–10:00 Calendar Wall	12:45–1:15 Calendar Wall
10:00–10:40 Learning Activity	1:15–1:55 Learning Activity
10:40–10:45 Clean up	1:55–2:00 Clean up
10:45–11:10 Sharing	2:00–2:25 Sharing
11:10–11:20 Snack	2:25–2:35 Snack
11:20–11:30 Last Circle	2:35–2:45 Last Circle
Good-bye Song Dismissal	Good-bye song Dismissal

“A Child’s First Steps Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, and athletic and other school-administered programs.”



RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORM
2024 – 2025

During the school year, A Child's First Steps Preschool will be taking several class field trips. Transportation needs to be provided by your family or parent volunteers. Students will be always supervised. However, the school assumes no liability beyond that of reasonable caution and care in conducting the transportation of preschool students to and from field trips. Below is a form granting permission for your child to be transported to and from these special learning experiences with release of liability to both the parent volunteers, and A Child's First Steps Preschool, and families.

I hereby grant permission for _____

(Child's Name)

Class _____

To be transported to and from field trips by our family or parent volunteers for the school year 2023 - 2024. I release all liability of parent volunteers, and A Child's First Steps Preschool Staff and personal families. Accepting the conditions stated above.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date



Ten-Month Tuition Contract
2024 - 2025

Because our tuition is based on actual operating expenses, we are unable to make refunds or adjustments on monthly tuition because of school holidays, family vacations, etc. Consideration will be given to those students who are absent because of lengthy illness. The Director and the Preschool Board will make all the decisions in these matters. Tuition is averaged over a 10-month period. Some months will have more classroom days than others. This way you are not being charged for holidays or Dieringer District school closures. The average results are simplified by having the same rate each month.

I have read and understand these terms regarding the 10 monthly payments due A Child's First Steps Preschool between the 1st and 10th of each month September through June unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Child's Name

Class



Release of Liability
Diaper Changing
2024 – 2025

During the school year the children in the 2's class may require a diaper change. If for any reason during your absence, your child has a potty accident, this form gives the other parent/guardian/friend permission to come to the preschool and change your child.

A Child's First Steps Preschool is not licensed for diaper changes, and technically because we are in a public building, we cannot have anyone changing diapers in the restrooms or hallways.

Please sign and date:

_____ **Date** _____

Child's Name _____ **Class** _____

Person's available to change my child's diaper if I am unavailable:

Person #1 _____ **Phone#** _____ **Text#** _____

Person #2 _____ **Phone#** _____ **Text#** _____