

TODDLE INN CHILD CARE

FAMILY HANDBOOK



WHERE CURIOUS MINDS EXPLORE

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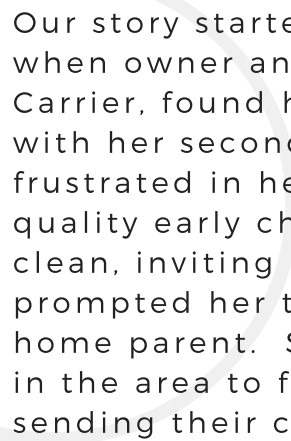
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TODDLE INN HISTORY

SINCE 1985



Our story started back in 1985 when owner and founder, Cheryl Carrier, found herself pregnant with her second child. She became frustrated in her search for safe, quality early child care within a clean, inviting environment which prompted her to become a stay-at-home parent. She wanted families in the area to feel secure in sending their children to a nurturing, safe environment so later that year, she opened her Scarborough home to children in the neighborhood. She soon opened her home to the community, which quickly grew to surrounding towns, as she found parents seeking similar expectations. Between the years of 1999 and 2008, Ms. Cheryl continued to meet this need for families in the surrounding communities by expanding to six locations with a combined capacity of 1,100 children.

Ms. Cheryl and many family members continue to operate six centers as Toddle Inn Child Care located throughout the Southern Maine areas of - Auburn, Cumberland Foreside, Gorham, Scarborough, South Portland, and Westbrook. At Toddle Inn, qualified early childhood educators work together with parents to offer a program of activities designed to facilitate the physical, cognitive and social/emotional development of children 6 weeks through school age. We invite you to schedule a tour and see how Toddle Inn has grown over the recent years! We are proud of our evolution and the strides we have taken to continue Ms. Cheryl's mission of providing high quality child care and early education - helping families feel secure as they look out for the best interests of their children.

Total capacity by location: Auburn (200), Cumberland (200), Gorham (180), Scarborough (265), South Portland (160), Westbrook (152)

VISION STATEMENT

We pledge to provide children and families a home away from home where children are safe, respected, and part of a community of learners. As a company we strive to provide top quality care for children while remaining well informed as to best practice in early childhood education. We understand that play builds the foundation for successful learning and we incorporate developmentally appropriate practices to engage children through play-based experiences. We aim to instill within children the values of curiosity, compassion, and enthusiasm for learning by promoting inquiry driven learning through emergent curriculum and intentional teaching practices. Through these efforts we support our mission to provide quality care and educational programming that serves the surrounding communities and aides in the healthy development of children as innovators for our future world.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

At Toddle Inn we believe in supporting the growth and development of children in a safe, engaging, and nurturing environment. Our educators guide the development of important skills through intentional teaching practices that meet the needs of the whole child. A responsive, play-based, curriculum connects children to the world around them and encourages children to wonder, gain confidence, explore interests, and discover a love of learning.

We focus on the process vs. product with regard to children's learning, understanding that for children to learn we must first create a safe and welcoming environment. Each time children switch programs the teachers spend time building relationships and assuring the children feel comfortable, safe, and supported as they adjust to a new room.



PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY - CONTINUED



When children have their basic needs fulfilled - such as food, water, rest, and warmth - they then look for safety and a sense of belonging. When children transition to a new classroom extra time is spent in fostering attachment and supporting these needs which allows teachers to later incorporate play-based academic, cognitive, and social learning experiences. Classroom routines are intentionally constructed to allow children to practice self-regulation and emotional literacy.

We allow children to explore materials through play and provide multiple opportunities for children to repeat and expand on their day-to-day activities. This process-based approach to learning helps develop confidence, competency, and mastery as children grow. As children discover many ways to explore their activities, teachers are able to closely observe children's questions, ideas, and evidence of growth and development. With these observations, teachers can plan to further the learning taking place by introducing new materials or co-constructing new experiences with children.

In all classrooms, art experiences are process oriented and clearly show the child's involvement in the activity. Craft projects, for our preschool programs, are intentionally planned to help build specific motor skills and are a way for children to practice following directions; however, these do not replace art activities and are not considered to be "art projects".



C U R R I C U L U M

Toddle Inn is a play-based early childhood education organization, which follows Creative Curriculum practices. Creative Curriculum uses classroom interest areas to present opportunities for content exploration. We believe that ‘in the early childhood setting, curriculum means ‘all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development*’. The curriculum at Toddle Inn follows seasonal themes as well as children’s interests while aligning with the Maine Early Learning Developmental Standards and the Maine Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers. Educators in all classrooms focus on the process of children’s learning and offer many opportunities to explore materials and concepts. Classrooms are rich with activities, sensory play, art, and materials to encourage pre-literacy and pre-numeracy concepts.

*[*ADAPTED FROM TE WHARIKI]*



S U P P O R T I N G S U C C E S S F O R C H I L D R E N



As children grow and develop they express their emotions through their actions and behaviors; young children are reactive and these expressions are how children communicate their needs. Teachers work to help children develop skills to recognize and understand their feelings and how to positively communicate with their peers and adults.

When children struggle with behavior challenges our teams work with families to help identify what skills require support and teachers make reasonable accommodations to classroom environments, shifts in approaches to teaching, and modification to curriculum and activities. Our goal is to provide opportunities for children to be successful which helps them build confidence and acquire new skills.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION WITH CHILDREN

All children want to be successful and therefore, we utilize positive redirection and positive phrasing when addressing children. Our goal is to help children become positive problem solvers through scaffolding and modeling problem solving strategies and empathetic language. To foster and enforce strong attachment with caregivers, teachers partner with children through challenges and work to become a resource for support. As such, we do not use time-out as a means of addressing challenging behaviors. Children are soothed and encouraged to calm and, when age appropriate, engage in discussions to identify the root emotions behind their behaviors. Even very young children are provided language about their feelings. Teachers can identify emotions in tones, body language, and reactions which validates feelings and supports the development of emotional literacy.



CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Our directors and teachers receive training in child development and monitor children's progress as they grow throughout the year. Each program works to help children meet developmentally appropriate goals and natural occurring milestones while also understanding that each child develops at their own pace. When teachers observe children, they look for these milestone markers and support their continuing development, helping children achieve their next steps.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

At times children need extra support to move through their developmental stages. When teachers observe an indicator that a child might benefit from additional support, our teams will meet with families to collaborate and discuss resources and measures that can encourage growth.



Families always have the option to go through their pediatrician to seek referrals for screenings or services. We also encourage families to take advantage of Child Development Services (CDS) which offer free screenings for children birth-5. Through these developmental screenings, specific needs and skills can be identified and children who qualify receive free services through CDS to provide specific therapies that promote skill development and growth. This is a great support for children's success in our programs and we often see positive results for children, families, and classrooms!

**WHEN A COMMUNITY SURROUNDS
A CHILD WITH THE GOAL OF
HELPING THEM SUCCEED, THE
CHILD BLOSSOMS.**

CDS provides screenings and support services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy as well as referrals for psychological evaluations which can provide additional therapies such as play therapy and emotional regulation support. Children develop the strategies and skills they need to help them communicate effectively, move confidently, achieve milestones, and develop positive social-emotional behaviors by receiving the additional benefit of CDS programming in their early years. The sooner we can identify children's needs and respond with effective support the more likely we are able to best meet children's developmental needs within our programming. With these skills they have a greater ability to participate in and enjoy their learning experiences both in our programs and in their later school years!

Our centers are structured to run at the state recommended ratios. We work with all families to support their children within our programs and many children do well in large group classrooms and centers. At times children are better able to develop their skills in a program with smaller ratios and we work to help families find the program that best supports their child's success.



ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Families interested in enrolling their child must schedule a tour and admission conference with the center. Families who decide to enroll must complete a full registration packet and provide a voided check to establish ACH withdrawal for registration fee and weekly tuition. The registration fee is withdrawn once the completed registration packet is returned to management. This secures your child's future position in the program. Families are also encouraged to schedule a visit day prior to starting care - this is where parents come in with their child to participate in programming for approximately 2 hours. A visit day could also be a 2-hour drop-in where you and your child can experience the separation process. Families will receive a welcome packet from the classroom and a form to fill out which helps provide more information about your child.

Families wishing to enroll in our Kindergarten Readiness and Pre-K programs will have their child screened by the teacher prior to acceptance in order to open a discussion with the family regarding which pre-kindergarten program would be the best fit for the child.



ADMISSION POLICIES



Toddle Inn is open from 7:00am - 5:30pm, Monday-Friday. Toddle Inn only accepts payment via ACH withdrawal connected to a specified checking or savings account. Program fees are withdrawn automatically on the Friday before the week of service. A returned ACH withdrawal attempt will result in a \$25 fee in the next scheduled withdrawal. Excessive returns (6 within a one year period) will result in a notice of termination of care. Full payment is required each week even when the center is closed for scheduled holidays, in-service workshops, days children do not attend care, and when the center cannot open due to pandemic, weather, or other emergency closures. A re-registration fee is applied each year upon the anniversary of the child's start date. Approved registrations must include complete contact information for primary caregivers, approved pick-up permissions, emergency contacts, signed photo release, signed health care policy, immunization records, ACH form with voided check, and signed agreement of all policies listed in the handbook.

Families who require a change in scheduled attendance must fill out a change form. Additional days must be approved by management to ensure space is available in the program. Families who wish to drop days from their program will be approved; however, these spaces will then become available to interested families or offered to waitlisted clients. If you wish to drop days from your schedule, and intend to add them back at a later date, please note that you will be offered first refusal should these days be desired by another family.

"TODDLE INN HAS NOT JUST BEEN A SCHOOL FOR US BUT REALLY AN EXTENSION OF OUR OWN HOME." - GORHAM FAMILY

It is recommended for consistency of the child's routine, as well as the program, that children arrive by 9:00 am to receive the full benefit of the programming offered. Please notify the center if your child may arrive past 9:00 am so we may prepare to welcome your child later in the day.



B R I G H T W H E E L



At Toddle Inn we use Brightwheel as a program management tool. By downloading the Brightwheel app, compatible with iOS and Android devices, families have access to their child's daily records and instant messaging service to the center. Brightwheel allows your center to share information with you and update families about upcoming events, closures, and monthly announcements. The messaging system is a great way for teachers and families to share photos, ask questions, and send updates to the management teams. Upon enrollment, all families receive a start-up code to register their child with Brightwheel and are able to select personal codes for approved family members which allows children to be checked in and out each day on the tablets at the welcome table.

S E C U R I T Y

The safety of your child while in our care is of the utmost importance to us. To ensure the safety and protection of children and staff, classrooms and building spaces are monitored by video and audio surveillance and recording devices. To preserve the privacy of children and maintain confidentiality, families are not allowed to view recorded footage. Recordings are made available only for legal protection, DHHS review and in-house observation for staff development purposes. All facilities are also equipped with a keyless entry system. Toddle Inn ensures ALL staff are CPR and water safety certified (when applicable).



All child records are confidential and are stored in a fireproof, locked safe. Only Toddle Inn management teams have access to children's personal files.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a state emergency, staff and students are equipped for an extended stay at each center. If it is necessary to evacuate, each center has a specified location for walking evacuations. In the case of evacuations that require further travel, we rely on the public safety departments to aid us and supply transportation to a secure site. Toddle Inn performs monthly fire drills and annual lockdown training. In the case of emergency, families are alerted via Brightwheel. Families are expected to confirm receipt of emergency or closure notice via Brightwheel. Cell phones are available at each site if land-line service is interrupted.

HOLIDAYS

Toddle Inn closes for each of the following holidays: Patriots Day, President's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Veteran's Day, Labor Day, and a one week closure for winter break. Additional days may also be applied and are dependent on when these holidays occur each calendar year. Regular rates apply during weeks where holiday closures are scheduled. Please see the holiday list at your center for a complete list of scheduled closures.



PUBLIC SCHOOL VACATIONS / CLOSURES

During public school closures, early releases, and delayed starts, enrolled before/after care students will have care provided at the center. Please provide appropriate weather gear for outdoor play and two healthy, nut-free, snack options for both morning and afternoon.



TEACHER WORKSHOP / INSERVICE DAYS

Toddle Inn closes quarterly for in-service days. These days allow for our teachers to attend professional development training and prepare their classrooms for incoming students. Regular rates apply during weeks where in-service days are scheduled. Toddle Inn also schedules quarterly professional development on Saturdays each year as to not always impact the care parents rely on. We appreciate your understanding and support for our commitment to quality early education and classroom environments.




TODDLE INN CLOSURES

While we strive to remain open during winter weather, the safety of children and teachers must be prioritized when determining safe travel conditions. Decisions are made for winter weather closure based on road conditions, storm tracking, and predicted accumulation. When appropriate, Toddle Inn may have a delayed start time or early closure rather than a full closure to allow families to work and also create opportunity for safe travel. Other conditions which may impact our ability to operate during our regular hours include power outages or damage to buildings caused by weather or other unpreventable causes. Regular rates apply during weeks where Toddle Inn closes due to weather, loss of power, or for other circumstances that prevent the centers from opening. Families will be notified of early closures, delayed starts, or full closures via Brightwheel messaging. Closures are also posted on local news stations and on our Facebook page - Toddle Inn Child Care; LLC. In the case of an early closure, families are expected to pick up their child at the specified closure time. Late fees will be applied for any child remaining at the center past the closure time and emergency contacts will be notified if we are unable to reach a family member at this time.

INFANT PROGRAMS

*A BABY IS
BORN WITH A
NEED TO BE
LOVED -
AND NEVER
OUTGROWS IT.*

- FRANK A. CLARK



Here at Toddle Inn, we understand that placing an infant in childcare can be an emotional experience. Our caring team of infant teachers are here to help and offer support along your baby's first step into group care. In these classrooms, children are introduced to their first peer social relationships and our knowledgeable and skilled educators are trained to respond to the unique needs of infants and guide them as they grow and develop.

The first year is full of exciting developmental milestones! Toddle Inn educators provide high quality care and responsive curriculum which serves to support the individual needs of each child. Experiences provided are designed to develop cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, sensory, and social/emotional skills. Early language and communication skills are developed through language modeling, imitation, and introduction of infant sign language. Infant's physical needs are met individually, and all classrooms and educators adhere to DHHS licensing regulations.

I N F A N T S

6 W E E K S - 1 2 M O S



You will find each classroom designed for the specific developmental needs of the children. We place great importance on the formation of strong attachments to promote healthy social development. Infants also follow their own specific schedule and teachers respect their needs by observing each child's feeding and rest rhythms. As young infants, children are developing over 700 neural connections every second!

While their first few weeks are often full of naps, they soon become more wakeful and take in the sights and sounds of the world. Educators provide exposure to a variety of songs, stories, and activities which allow infants to challenge their budding skills. As infants grow and become more curious about their world, they are eager to stretch out and explore. Mobile infants are provided opportunities to stand, crawl, climb, and reach new milestones. Infants are exposed to the outdoors and go outside to play, swing, and take buggy rides with their peers.



"TODDLE INN HAS A CURRICULUM FOR CHILDREN, EVEN IN THE INFANT ROOM. MY SON WAS PAINTING BEFORE HE WAS WALKING. I HAVE RECEIVED SO MUCH USEFUL ADVICE AND FEEDBACK, IT IS LIKE HAVING MY OWN TEAM OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS TO HELP ME GIVE MY SON THE BEST LIFE POSSIBLE."

- THE CREASER FAMILY

INFANT SUPPLIES TO PROVIDE

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Diaper cream/ointment (if needed)
- Two complete changes of clothes
- Bottles (One for each feeding - clearly labeled w/child's name)
 - **formula bottles must be filled with pre-measured water**
- Breastmilk and/or Formula
- Food for snacks and meals
- Adequate outdoor apparel
- Sleep sack or secure swaddle (if needed)
- Pacifiers (if needed)

***Toddle Inn is a Nut Free center!
Please do not bring in snacks/meals containing nuts or labeled as "processed in a factory that produces nut products". All snacks must display an ingredient label. All unlabeled snacks will be bagged and returned home.***

INFANT POLICIES

- A two-day minimum enrollment is required for infant programs.
- All formula and breast milk must be labeled w/child's name and dated.
- Unused frozen breast milk will be returned after two weeks.
- One bottle must be provided for each feeding - used bottles will be rinsed and sent home at the end of the day.

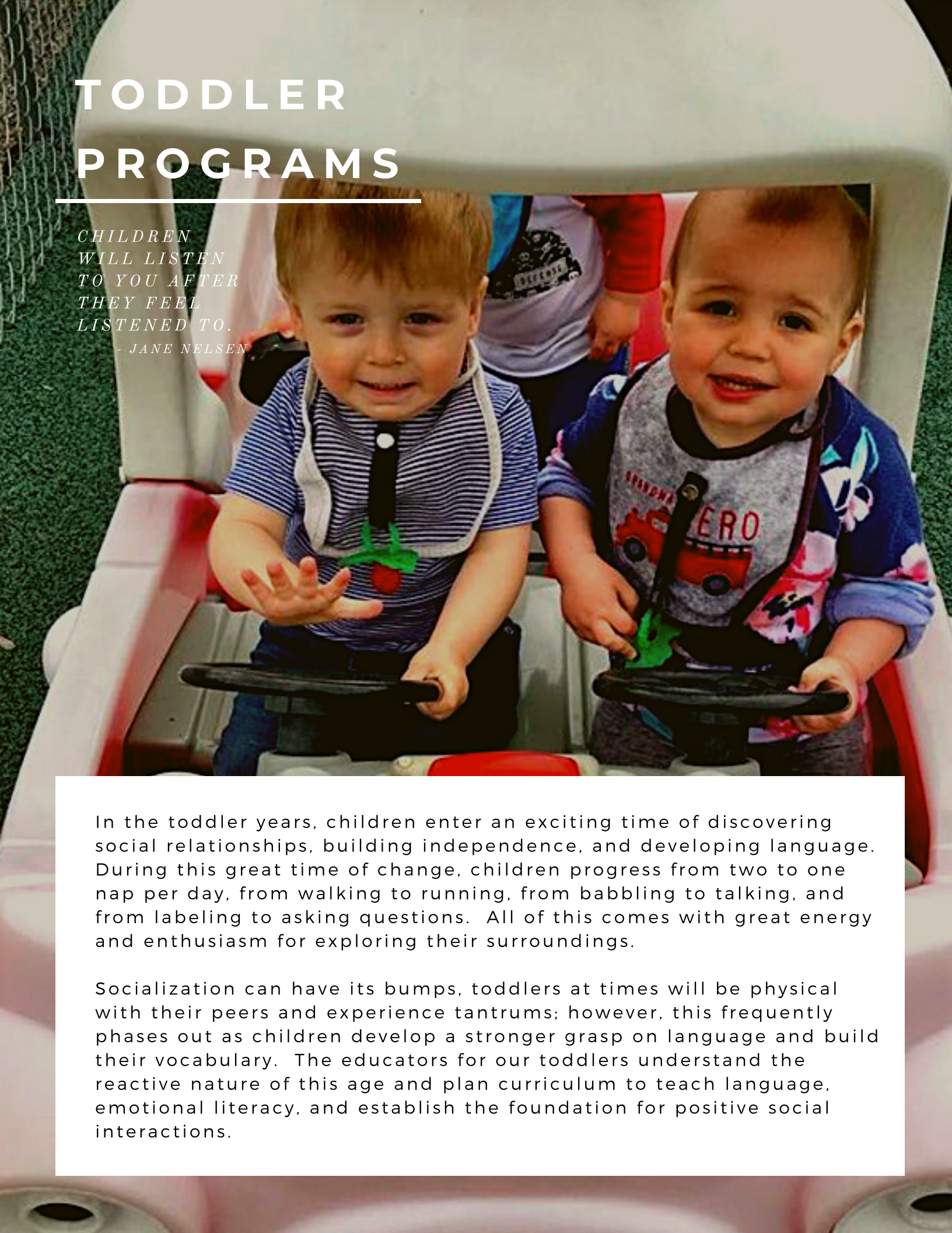
INFANT POLICIES

- Bottles should be washed and sanitized at home before the next school day.
- We follow safe sleep practices as recommended by DHHS and The American Academy of Pediatrics. When infants are placed in their crib or bassinet, they are placed lying flat on their backs in their sleeping space (crib/bassinet). Infants are often snuggled, rocked, and walked to help them fall asleep.
- Blankets, pillows, and stuffed animals are not allowed in infant sleep spaces until they are 12 months old.
- Our two infant programs typically begin and end their day together in the same classroom to allow infants to get to build attachment to infant teaching teams.
- All families are expected to adhere to our health care policy. If a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, we ask families to please arrive within one hour.
- In adherence to DHHS licensing regulations, we must respect the needs of the infants in our care. We cannot withhold food, water, force a child to be wakeful or wake a child who is sleeping.
- Children should be dropped off ready to enjoy their day. Please make sure they arrive fed, dressed, & recently diaper changed.
- Please label ALL of your child's clothing and nap materials.

TODDLER PROGRAMS

*CHILDREN
WILL LISTEN
TO YOU AFTER
THEY FEEL
LISTENED TO.*

- JANE NELSEN

A photograph of two young children, likely toddlers, sitting in a white and red toy car. The child on the left is wearing a blue and white striped shirt and a white bib with a red strawberry. The child on the right is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt with a red fire truck graphic and a floral patterned bib. Both children are smiling and holding the black steering wheels. The background is a green artificial turf surface.

In the toddler years, children enter an exciting time of discovering social relationships, building independence, and developing language. During this great time of change, children progress from two to one nap per day, from walking to running, from babbling to talking, and from labeling to asking questions. All of this comes with great energy and enthusiasm for exploring their surroundings.

Socialization can have its bumps, toddlers at times will be physical with their peers and experience tantrums; however, this frequently phases out as children develop a stronger grasp on language and build their vocabulary. The educators for our toddlers understand the reactive nature of this age and plan curriculum to teach language, emotional literacy, and establish the foundation for positive social interactions.



Fine motor and gross motor skills are developed through strength building, play based activities such as manipulating playdough, traversing obstacle courses, stacking blocks, and practicing yoga exercises. Cognitive skills are challenged through problem solving activities and games that explore cause & effect. Children thrive on routine and predictability and the days at Toddle Inn are structured to have a predictable rhythm. Activities are offered multiple times over the course of a week or longer to promote competency and build confidence. Children venture outdoors daily (weather permitting) and experience the sights, sounds, and textures of nature.

**MY CHILDREN LOVE TODDLE INN,
AND ALL THREE OF THEM HAVE
HAD AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE.
THEY HAVE MADE GREAT
FRIENDS, LEARNED A LOT
SOCIAALLY AND ACADEMICALLY,
AND HAVE THE SUPPORT AND
LOVE OF ALL THE STAFF!**

- THE FLANNIGAN FAMILY

Starting at 18 months old children begin to transition from a crib to napping mats for rest time. Toddlerhood is also the time many children begin to exhibit interest in potty training. At Toddle Inn we strive to follow the lead of children and families in support of positive potty training. Daily sheets and/or Brightwheel are used to communicate diaper changes, meals, and nap times with families.

**** Many children begin potty training at this time. Please provide diapers or pull-ups and wipes as needed as well as several extra changes of clothes. Thank you! ****



TODDLER SUPPLIES TO PROVIDE

- Diapers or pull-ups
- Wipes
- Diaper cream/ointment (as desired)
- Two complete changes of clothes (more if potty training)
- Seasonally appropriate outdoor gear
- Napping supplies: Blanket, Stuffed animal/lovie, and pacifier (if needed)
- Close-toed shoes (no crocs)
- Community Snack (This is typically a bi-weekly classroom request for two snack items which will be served to all children in the room.)
- Sunscreen

TODDLER POLICIES

- Please label ALL your child's clothing and nap materials.
- Toys from home are difficult to share with others. Please leave these special items at home.
- All families are expected to adhere to our health care policy. If a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, we ask families to please arrive within one hour.
- In adherence to DHHS licensing regulations, we must respect the needs of the children in our care. We cannot withhold food, water, force a child to be wakeful or wake a child who is sleeping.

TODDLER POLICIES

- All families are expected to adhere to our health care policy. If a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, we ask families to please arrive within one hour.
- In adherence to DHHS licensing regulations, we must respect the needs of the children in our care. We cannot withhold food, water, force a child to be wakeful or wake a child who is sleeping.
- Toddler classrooms frequently begin and end their day together in the same classroom to allow children to build attachments with all teaching teams.
- Children should be dropped off ready to enjoy their day. Please make sure they arrive fed, dressed, & recently diaper changed.

***Toddle Inn is a Nut Free center!
Please do not bring in snacks containing nuts or labeled as "processed in a factory that produces nut products". All snacks must display an ingredient label. All unlabeled snacks will be bagged and returned home.***



TODDLER POLICIES

BITING | TOILET TRAINING



Occasionally young and even older toddlers go through a period of biting as a means of communication. Typically, as children develop more competency with language, the biting will decrease and eventually stop altogether. It is a phase children get through with support, patience, and time. All bites are documented as both an accident and incident and confidentiality is upheld for all children involved. If a child does bite frequently during the day, they will need to be picked up to go home. This policy acknowledges that a child who bites multiple times is in need of a less stressful environment and allows the child to rest at home and start fresh the next day. As always, our educators work hard to create opportunities for success for all children and develop positive peer interactions. We appreciate your help and understanding.

"WE WERE LOOKING FOR THE SAFEST, MOST CARING AND FORWARD-THINKING SCHOOL THAT WE COULD OFFER OUR CHILDREN. WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY WILL GET THE BEST START AT BEING INDEPENDENT LITTLE PERSONS WHO LOVE LEARNING AND LIFE. WE FOUND IT!"

- THE WICHMANN FAMILY

Potty training begins as children begin to show awareness of the toileting needs of their bodies. We work alongside families to support the children's process. When children begin to actively potty train accidents will occur, and parents are required to provide multiple changes of clothes. While training in underwear can be successful for many children, we reserve the right to request pull-ups if there is significant concern regarding maintaining a hygienic learning environment for the entire class.



PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

2 1/2 - 4 YEARS OLD

CHILDREN ARE NOT ONLY INNOCENT AND CURIOUS, BUT ALSO OPTIMISTIC AND JOYFUL AND ESSENTIALLY HAPPY. THEY ARE, IN SHORT, EVERYTHING ADULTS WISH THEY COULD BE.

-CAROLYN HAYWOOD

In the preschool years children become deeply invested in furthering their independence, developing close relationships with their peers, and asking (many, MANY) questions to better understand their world. Teachers at Toddle Inn guide children through their learning with activities and explorations that engage children through play. Our educators understand that children learn through multiple methods and provide opportunities for children to learn in a manner that best suits their style. Curriculum is responsive to children's developmental readiness and incorporates children's interests which helps children mature socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally. Children follow a predictable rhythm in their daily routine and participate in community jobs in their classroom - developing confidence, independence, and positive self-esteem.



This is a great time where children begin to expand their awareness from a very egocentric perspective to a realization of a more complex relationship between themselves and others. As young children begin to develop their identities, they start to identify their favorite things - colors, toys, games, friends - and to associate these and other symbols with their own identity. Towards the end of this preschool time many children begin showing more representation in their artwork and also show interest in writing using scrawling scribbles, symbol-like letter forms, and eventually letters. Special interest is given to the most important letters of all - those in their names. Toddle Inn teachers gently help children expand their interest in these pre-academic skills, without rushing or pushing children too quickly and allowing their learning to blossom authentically.

"FOR ME THE GREATEST PIECE OF MIND IS KNOWING THAT WHILE I HAVE TO BE AWAY FROM MY DAUGHTER, SHE IS WITH AN AMAZING GROUP OF TEACHERS HELPING HER LEARN PRESCHOOL SKILLS AND ENCOURAGING HER TO GROW INDEPENDENTLY AND CREATIVELY." - THE MITCHELL FAMILY

Preschool children at Toddle Inn participate in a hands-on learning process throughout the year - planting flowers, problem solving, digging in snow, splashing in water, sorting colors, and creating art. Classrooms are grouped by developmental readiness and age: 2½-3-year old or 3-4-year old.

** Many children are potty training at this time. Please provide diapers or pull-ups and wipes as needed as well as several extra changes of clothes. Thank you! **



PREPARING FOR KINDERGARTEN

4-5 YEARS OLD

*WHEN YOU CHOOSE TO
VIEW THE WORLD AS IF
THROUGH THE EYES OF
A CHILD, WITH PASSION
AND CURIOSITY, THE
WONDERS OF THE
UNIVERSE ARE
REVEALED TO YOU
OVER & OVER AGAIN*



As children prepare for entering Kindergarten Toddle Inn provides two distinct programs designed to best meet the unique needs of all children. Teachers and directors thoughtfully evaluate the whole child for readiness in order to place them in a program where they will be most successful and have positive learning experiences. Decisions are based on an academic screening as well as a thorough review of each child's social/emotional development, independence skills, ability to transition through daily routines, and their approaches to learning.

All kindergarten preparation programs meet the needs of children by responding to the different modalities in which children learn while also pursuing their academic goals and building their social/emotional skills. These programs are all led by CDA or degree holding educators, some of whom are also state licensed teachers who have a 0-5 or early elementary teaching endorsement and/or master's degree. Each program targets a different approach to learning and provides authentic, innovative learning experiences for children which readies them for a successful start in Kindergarten. By providing these programs for Toddle Inn families we are able to continue our mission to meet readiness goals for children while respecting every child's unique learning needs.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS



Our Kindergarten Readiness program is designed to prepare children by developing skills in problem solving, independence, emotional literacy, and self-regulation while introducing children to literacy and numeracy concepts through play.

This program is best suited for children who work best in a flexible and responsive setting which allows for individualized and group learning experiences. Teachers skillfully present academic concepts through play and by incorporating children's interests into the curriculum. Both strategies are proven to promote children's natural curiosity and motivation to learn.

Part of the curriculum is also focused on building children's capacity for successfully managing transitions and communicating their needs. These skills are reported to be the most essential for children's success in public school.

Our Kindergarten Readiness program allows children to mature socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally while preparing them for the programming present in most Kindergarten classrooms. Children follow a predictable rhythm in their daily routine and participate in community jobs in their classroom - developing confidence and positive self-esteem. Your child will take pride in the accomplishment of learning new skills and concepts and start their journey into formal schooling with a positive experience! All children at Toddle Inn participate in a hands-on learning process throughout the year - acting out stories, planting flowers, problem solving, digging in snow, splashing in water, sorting colors, and creating art.



P R E - K



Our Pre-K program is designed to prepare children for Kindergarten by developing skills in problem solving, independence, emotional literacy, and self-regulation while introducing children to literacy and numeracy concepts through play.

This program is best suited for children who are ready for a program with a bit more structure and can successfully manage numerous transitions. Teachers design curriculum which allows for individualization as well as group learning experiences and skillfully present academic concepts while incorporating children's interests into the curriculum. Children learn best through play and our teachers present many concepts in a play-based structure which is a strategy proven to promote children's natural curiosity and motivation to learn.

In Pre-K there is a continued focus in developing children's skills in problem solving, communication, self-regulation, and emotional literacy. These skills are reported to be the most essential for children's success in school. Teachers focus on community building throughout the year promoting teamwork, compassion, and respect for others. Children follow a predictable rhythm in their daily routine and participate in community jobs in their classroom - developing confidence and positive self-esteem.



P R E - K



Children also explore the Handwriting Without Tears curriculum throughout the school year which is included along with school supplies as part of the Pre-K program fee. Your child will take pride in the accomplishment of learning new skills and concepts and start their journey into formal schooling with a positive experience.

All children at Toddle Inn participate in a hands-on learning process throughout the year - acting out stories, planting flowers, problem solving, digging in snow, splashing in water, sorting colors, and creating art.

Additional Pre-K activities:

Pre-K students participate in a Soccer program presented by trained coaches for two 8-week sessions, fall and spring. This program is included in the Pre-K fee and does not require any specific Soccer gear. (Soccer may be substituted for Yoga programming depending upon scheduling requirements.)



PRESCHOOL | K-READINESS | PRE-K SUPPLIES TO PROVIDE & POLICIES

Supplies:

- Two complete changes of clothes (more if necessary)
- Seasonally appropriate outdoor gear (See outdoor policy)
- Napping supplies: Blanket and Stuffed animal/lovie
Close-toed shoes (no crocs)
- Community Snack (This is typically a bi-weekly classroom request for two snack items which will be served to all children in the room.)

POLICIES

1. Please label ALL of your child's clothing and nap materials.
 - Toys from home are difficult to share with others. Please leave these special items at home. (Special "share days" may be scheduled by classroom teachers.)
 - Teachers communicate verbally with families daily and will post notices for needed supplies on cubbies, in mailboxes, or via Brightwheel.
 - A minimum of one hour resting period is required by DHHS licensing regulations. All children will be provided with a rest time after lunch.

- All families are expected to adhere to our health care policy. If a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, we ask families to please arrive within one hour.
- In adherence to DHHS licensing regulations, we must respect the needs of the children in our care. We cannot withhold food, water, force a child to be wakeful or wake a child who is sleeping.
- Preschool classrooms frequently begin and end their day together in the same classroom to allow children to build attachments with all teaching teams.
- Children should be dropped off ready to enjoy their day. Please make sure they arrive fed, dressed, & prepared for playing outside.

***Toddle Inn is a Nut Free center!
Please do not bring in snacks containing nuts or labeled as "processed in a factory that produces nut products". All snacks must display an ingredient label. All unlabeled snacks will be bagged and returned home.***



SPECIAL ACTIVITIES



Dance:

Starting at age 2½ families can register children for Dance Class each fall. There is a separate fee for this program and a charge for costume/professional photo. Recitals occur each spring.

Karate:

For all children ages 3 - Pre-K our Karate program runs during the academic year. We contract with Dragon Fire Martial Arts. Their program introduces children to the basics of the sport while having great fun! All “graduating” preschoolers will be included in a belt ceremony each spring.

Swimming:

All water programming is offered through Swim Time by owner Joe Seely and his team of experienced instructors and lifeguards. At Toddle Inn, children ages 3+ participate in open swim during our summer program which is included in the summer activity fee. Swimming Lessons are offered weekly as a separate program during summer session at an additional cost. For children enrolled at our Westbrook and Scarborough centers, Swim Time also offers the open swim and swim lesson programs year-round as these centers host our indoor pools. (Swim Time programming is also open to the public at our Westbrook and Scarborough locations. Please contact Swim Time for public access cost, hours, and programming.)

Field Trips:

Children ages 3+ participate in field trips offered during the academic year and summer session. Annual field trips include apple picking, pumpkin picking, a farm visit, Maine Wildlife Park, as well as many others! Children who are not yet potty trained must be accompanied by a family member if there are no diaper changing facilities at the location. A family member may also be required to attend and transport their child for field trips if the child presents with behavioral challenges that could impact their safety during field trips. Volunteer chaperones are welcome to join us for field trips! Please see your center director for more information for chaperoning.

** During summer camp, Junior campers (3-4yr old) have 3 off-site field trips & 2 on-site field trips. Super campers (Pre-K & School age) have 5-6 off-site field trips. On-Site Visitors: Children ages 3+ enjoy visits during the summer session from wonderful entertainers, educators, and community partners.



SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS

5- 12 YEARS OLD

*WHAT ONE
LOVES IN
CHILDHOOD
STAYS IN THE
HEART
FOREVER.*

- MARY JO PUTNEY

Our school age program gives children a safe, supervised space to play in the hours before and after school. This is a multi-age program that allows children to continue building their academic and social skills in a comfortable, nurturing environment. During school vacations students participate in engaging activities which help to support their academic and social growth. Teachers draw upon children's interests and abilities when designing curriculum and incorporate opportunities for active play through structured games outdoors and in the gym.

BEFORE & AFTER CARE SUPPLIES & POLICIES



School-Age supplies to provide:

- One complete change of clothes (more if necessary)
- Seasonally appropriate outdoor gear
Close-toed shoes (no crocs)
- Snacks (During school vacations/summer please provide 4 snack items - two for morning snack and two for afternoon snack. These snacks MUST support the 5210 Let's Go Program, as well as our Nut Free policy.)

AS A WORKING PARENT, IT IS SUCH A RELIEF TO KNOW THAT MY KIDS ARE NOT ONLY SAFE AND HAPPY, BUT THEY ARE MAKING GREAT FRIENDSHIPS. THE STAFF MEMBERS TAKE AN INTEREST IN EVERY CHILD AND GREET MY CHILDREN WARMLY EVEN IN PASSING IN THE HALLWAY. IT PUTS ME AT EASE KNOWING THAT THEY ARE SO WELL LOVED DURING THE DAY.

- THE FERRIS FAMILY

School-Age policies:

- Please label ALL of your child's clothing.
- Toys from home are difficult to share with others. Please leave these special items at home. (Special "share days" may be scheduled by classroom teachers.)
- Teachers communicate verbally with families daily and will post notices for needed supplies on cubbies, in mailboxes, or via Brightwheel.
- A minimum of one-hour quiet time is required by DHHS licensing regulations. All children will be provided with a rest/quiet time after lunch with low-light, quiet activities, and individual reading or art activities during full day programming.
- All families are expected to adhere to our health care policy. If a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, we ask families to please arrive within one hour.
- Families must notify Toddle Inn if a child will not attend after school programming due to illness, special activity, or school pick-up. We will assume your child is missing if not notified.
- Electronic devices are not permitted unless specifically required. Toddle Inn is not liable for broken, lost, or damaged devices.
- Children should arrive ready to enjoy their day. Please make sure they are fed, dressed, & prepared for playing outside.

***Toddle Inn is a Nut Free center!

Please do not bring in snacks containing nuts or labeled as "processed in a factory that produces nut products". All snacks must display an ingredient label. All unlabeled snacks will be bagged and returned home.***

SUMMER ADVENTURES



The summer adventure camp is an 8-9 week program open to children ages 3 years through school-age which offers structured programming along with special events such as field trips, in-house adventure visitors, bounce houses, swimming, and outdoor adventures. An annual summer activity fee is charged for this program which covers the additional costs for transportation/busing, field trips, open swim, and special guests.



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES



Our playgrounds and outdoor spaces provide opportunities for children to play, develop physical skills, discover nature, and participate in curriculum explorations. At Toddle Inn, children go outside with their teachers at least twice a day for a total minimum of one hour. However, classrooms often go outside for longer periods of time to dive into outdoor curriculum activities. We firmly believe that time spent in our 'outdoor classrooms' is beneficial to the healthy development of young children.

OUTDOOR POLICIES

- Children DO NOT go outside if the “feel-like” temperature is below 20 degrees (wind chill included) or if the temperature is 100 degrees or higher (heat index included).
- Gym spaces are used for gross motor activities during inclement weather.
- All families are expected to provide well-fitting outdoor gear so children can safely participate in outdoor adventures year-round. PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL ALL GEAR.
 - Winter: Snow boots, complete snowsuit, two pairs of waterproof mittens, winter hat, extra socks.
 - Spring/Fall: Jacket, rain boots, rain pants, raincoat, extra socks, lightweight gloves/mittens or rain mittens.
 - Summer: Bathing suit, close-toed water shoes (no crocs), lightweight clothing, sunhat
- Families must sign a permission form annually for teachers to apply sunblock and bug spray.
- Families must provide non-expired sunblock and/or bug spray for their child and are required to apply the first dose each day at drop off. Teachers will reapply sunblock every two hours as needed prior to going outside.
- If families drop-off or pick-up their child while the class is outside they must check in with a classroom teacher before leaving.
- Classrooms that share common outdoor, playground, or gym spaces combine at the lowest child:teacher ratio and adhering to the maximum group size for the youngest child present.



FAMILY INVOLVEMENT



At Toddle Inn we enjoy gathering and celebrating with our families throughout the year! Some of our favorite events include:

- Seasonal Potlucks
- Open-house events
- Annual Harvest Feast
- Annual Summer BBQ
- Meet-and-Greet outdoor events
- Scholastic Book Fairs
- Family Story Share
- Pre-K Graduation
- Collection drives for charities such as local food pantries and Toys for Tots.
- Teacher Appreciation Week

We also encourage and welcome family members to volunteer with their center! Opportunities to volunteer include:

- Assisting with Scholastic Book Fairs
- Chaperoning on Field Trips
- Sharing special talents such as musical skills, cooking projects, or reading stories.
- Helping with center garden projects.

Each center may host their own special events for families - such as fun festivals, Halloween parade, Art walk, and Drop-off brunch!

We also encourage parents to be active leaders for their center by helping recruit needed volunteers for events and acting as classroom or center representatives for other families!

Check in with your center director about ways to become involved with your Toddle Inn Community!



LUNCH PROGRAM



At Toddle Inn we strive to instill healthy habits and promote good nutrition. We partner with the 5-2-1-0 Let's go program which recommends children follow the healthy living guidelines of:

- 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day
- 2 hours or less recreational screen time
- 1 hour or more of physical activity
- 0 sugary drinks

The Toddle Inn chef prepares healthy lunches in our commercial kitchen and distributes to all centers. All meals adhere to 5-2-1-0 Let's Go! requirements and we purchase produce through Native Maine to provide children with fresh, local, organic food and dairy products.

We also contribute to a healthy environment by participating in the EcoMaine recycling program and We Compost It! for disposing of leftover food.

LUNCH POLICIES

- Lunch is provided by Toddle Inn for children starting when they are 12 months old. Families may choose to provide alternate options if desired. Our chef may sometimes be able to provide alternate options for egg allergies; however, parents may be asked to provide other meal options for specialized nutrition requirements or other allergies such as wheat, soy, dairy, or fruit.
- Our classroom teachers encourage children to try new foods, but do not require children to eat items they do not care to try.
- In certain circumstances teachers may ask families to provide alternate options if a child consistently refuses the Toddle Inn lunch. Our goal is for children to have their nutritional needs met and respect the sensitive tastes and sensory experiences of children.



HEALTHY CELEBRATIONS



Celebrations and holidays are exciting and important for children. Birthday and holiday celebrations provide a unique opportunity to help make healthy eating fun! As part of our efforts towards health and wellness, we ask that anytime families celebrate a holiday or birthday they are welcome to provide healthy options to share with the class. In lieu of cupcakes, cookies, or ice cream, we recommend real fruit popsicles, muffins, fruit kabobs, or providing your child's favorite healthy snack to share with the class. (Please provide recipe for allergen purposes.) Families are also welcomed to come in and share a special activity/book with the class or provide materials for an activity/story if families are unable to attend. This opportunity allows children to experience the joy of celebrations without needing to associate these events with food or non-food rewards. We thank you for helping us support healthy habits for your children!

AQUATICS

Swimming lessons and open-swim sessions are available through the Swim Time program, owned and operated by Joe Seeley. Our Scarborough and Westbrook centers are equipped with indoor, heated pools which allow them to offer these swimming opportunities year-round for children ages 3+. Our other locations offer swim lessons and open-swim as part of the Summer Adventure program in July and August for children ages 3+ either in an outdoor, heated pool or by busing to the indoor, heated pools at Scarborough or Westbrook Toddle Inn.

Swim schedule and availability is subject to change based on center programming.



AQUATICS



Every pool is enclosed with a fence and locked doors/gates. Toddle Inn pools are only open when a certified lifeguard is present poolside. In the event a lifeguard has to leave the pool area, the pool is vacated, and doors/gates are locked. Prior to entering the pool area, children are instructed on all water safety requirements. A water safety certified Toddle Inn staff member is present on deck for all swim sessions and DHHS teacher:child ratios are maintained at all times. A Toddle Inn water safety certified teacher is also present in the pool during open-swim sessions for 3-year old groups to help children feel safe and comfortable in the water. For swim lessons the certified Swim Time instructor is in the pool with children. During lessons, a water safety certified Toddle Inn staff member is also on deck with the certified Swim Time lifeguard. DHHS teacher:child ratios are exceeded during these times.

Swim Policies:

- All age-eligible children are required to attend their open-swim session.
- Toddle Inn does not provide additional staffing in classrooms on swim days for children whose families do not wish them to swim.
- Children are more than welcome to sit on the stairs until they feel comfortable entering the water.
- Families must provide “Little Swimmers” water diapers for children who are not yet fully potty trained.
- Any child not adhering to described water safety rules will be required to leave the pool area.
- Repeated instances of unsafe pool behavior may result in termination of swim lessons and/or require parental supervision during open-swim sessions.

Typical Swim Lesson Experience:

- Up to 7 children in the pool per lesson (based on age and ability)
- One water safety certified Toddle Inn staff member on deck at the pool.
- One Swim Time certified swim instructor in the pool.
- One Swim Time certified lifeguard on deck at the pool.

Typical Open-Swim Experience:

- Maximum of 10-12 children at each end of the pool.
- One water safety certified Toddle Inn staff member in the pool (3-year old only).
- One water safety certified Toddle Inn staff member on deck at the pool per every 10-12 children. (DHHS ratios are always maintained and depend upon age)
- One Swim Time certified lifeguard on deck at the pool.

ILLNESS POLICY

It is required that any child be kept home or should be sent home if he/she displays any of the symptoms described in our illness policy which is included in our enrollment packet. For our complete policy, please see your center director. Directors and families take time to specifically review all health policies in detail prior to enrollment and families are expected to sign and adhere to our policies should their child become ill while attending our programming.

***Please keep in mind that our illness policy is used as a guideline. If we feel that your child cannot fully participate in the program, you will be notified to pick him/her up.**



Additional policies are listed below:

- Children who present with listed symptoms or who are non-participatory must be picked up from care within one hour of our request.
- Parents will be notified of any unexplained rash, complaint or ailment.
- Children will not be allowed to attend until any unexplained rash is seen and/or treated by a physician.
- Anything not specifically included in our illness list we would refer to our medical consultant and/or the CDC for guidance on appropriate exclusion policy. (i.e. Scabies)
- As is best practice, we attempt to give a “heads-up” phone call to alert families of potential illness (rash/ear infections) or injury that is under ongoing observation (head injury).
- If your child is prescribed new oral medication, they must be observed at home for a full 24 hours before returning to care. This applies to all new antibiotics that may be prescribed for diagnosed illness or ear infections.
- If your child is exposed to a contagious disease, we ask that you report this to the center for the protection of others, especially pregnant mothers.

MEDICATION DISPENSATION

In the event that a child must receive medication while at the center, we require the following protocols are observed:

- Families must fill out a medication form for each individual medication supplied to the center. Center staff cannot provide the first dose of any new medication.
- Medication will be dispensed by certified team members. Each dosage will be recorded and witnessed by classroom teachers.

INOCULATION POLICY

Per state licensing regulations, licensed child care facilities must have records for each child of immunization against the following: measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis, polio, tetanus, haemophilus influenza Type b*, Hepatitis B, pneumococcal conjugate. Currently DHHS regulations require that all families must provide updated and current vaccination records for their child. As of September 21, 2021, children who are not medically exempt from receiving vaccinations must provide updated and current vaccination records.



*(*Haemophilus influenza Type b is a bacteria responsible for severe pneumonia, meningitis and other invasive diseases mostly in young children, according to the World Health Organization.)*

In the case of an outbreak of an inoculable disease, we must adhere to state policy which helps protect any unvaccinated or immuno-compromised children, teachers, and families in licensed care facilities from exposure to highly contagious and potentially life threatening diseases. The policy states that should an outbreak occur of an inoculable disease, any child who has not received scheduled vaccination of the diagnosed disease must be excluded from the building for the incubation period of the disease. This policy covers illnesses such as chicken pox, whooping cough (pertussis), measles, mumps, hepatitis, and others commonly treated proactively with inoculation.

Full tuition is required to be paid during the incubation period to secure your child's spot in the program.



L I C E N S I N G

As a state licensed child care facility, Toddle Inn is required to uphold all regulations set forth by DHHS. All team members respect and adhere to the rights of children as set forth by these licensing regulations.



R I G H T S F O R C H I L D R E N

Children receiving Child care from Child Care Facilities have the following rights.

1. Children must be free from emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation.
2. Each Child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the Child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the Child.
3. Each Child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule.
4. Each Child must be provided Child care services without discrimination to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.
5. Children must be treated with dignity, consideration and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the Child Care Facility.
6. Each Child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that Child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the Child Care Facility.
7. Each Child has the right to Developmentally Appropriate activities, materials, and equipment.
8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to Child Care Facility policies and practices.



M A N D A T E D R E P O R T I N G

All employees of Toddle Inn are mandated reporters for suspected child abuse and/or neglect. By law, any suspected case of abuse or neglect must be reported to DHHS through the Child Protective Intake Hotline. Depending on specific circumstances surrounding suspected abuse or neglect, families may or may not be notified that a report has been filed. As always, our number one priority is the care and safety of children.

S E R I O U S I N J U R Y / D E A T H R E P O R T I N G

As required by the licensing rule, any injury to a child while in the care of Toddle Inn will be reported to their guardian. A written copy of a completed Accident/Illness/Injury Report will be kept in the child's file. Where necessary under law the report will be forwarded to the appropriate governing agency. Guardians and state licensing staff know children are active and no amount of child proofing and supervision can prevent all injuries. However, reporting injuries can help prevent them in the future by identifying injury patterns specific to the child care's environment, and/or with a child who may need help with difficulties associated with balance, vision or foot positioning.

*Medical attention is a guardian decision. When a guardian cannot be reached Toddle Inn will act in their stead when a decision on immediate medical attention is needed.

Serious injuries will be reported to the Child Care Licensing Unit at 287-9300 within 24 hours.



A M M E N D M E N T S

The owner reserves the right to amend policies under special circumstances, as well as tuition rates, with appropriate notice to parents.



T E R M I N A T I O N A G R E E M E N T

I (we) hereby agree not to terminate this contract prior to the stated ending date. Should the contract be terminated by the client(s), a minimum of two weeks' notice must be given in writing to management. I (we) further agree that any other termination by us of the contract other than for the above stated reasons will not release the client from responsibility for the contract balance due, including any reasonable costs which may be incurred in the collection of said balance due. Toddle Inn reserves the right to disenroll a child if it is in the best interest of the child and/or the program. Cause for dismissal could include, but is not limited to: aggressive behavior, physical/emotional harm to self or others, incidents requiring a child to be sent home three times within a 3 month period, need for one-on-one or high level support not provided by our program, refusal by families to attain developmental screenings or qualified support services for children, non-payment of tuition, and any harassment or abuse from family members (which can be in the form of written, verbal, physical, or sexual misconduct) towards our employees or other families.





Where curious minds explore.
Toddle Inn Child Care