



Preparing for the Pre-K Program

We're excited for you to join our Pre-K Program. In preparation for joining the program, here are some things that may be helpful to know:

- 1) **FOOD:** We all sit together at the table for meals. Kids are encouraged to try all the different foods before resorting to the consistent back up option (see monthly menu). We ask them to listen to their bodies to see when they are full or still hungry. We do not provide a space for a bottle or milk (like we do in the IT program). Kids are encouraged to drink water as often as they need. Please bring in a water bottle with your child's name on it to keep at the daycare. Water bottles are kept in a place that they can access themselves. The water bottles are washed in the dishwasher at the end of every day.
- 2) **NAPPING:** Kids are offered the opportunity to nap in the 3-5 Program. There are a lot of kids in the 3-5 Program that don't. Please communicate with the teacher if you would like your child to nap (and for how long). The Pre-K nap space is within the classroom while the non-nappers are outside. The rooms not dark but dimmed. We have a sound machine to help block out other noises. We will encourage your child to nap (if you request, they nap) but will not force them to. If they are continually disruptive to the other nappers, it may be best to transition out of the afternoon nap.
- 3) **USING THE TOILET:** Children should be potty trained by the time they join the Pre-K Program. We help children with wiping in the washroom but only if they ask. We give them independence and privacy with going to the washroom. If your child needs help with this, tell them they must ask/call for a teacher. If they are four or five, please start to teach your child how to wipe and when to ask for help wiping. Accidents happen, we get it. Please bring extra underwear and pants if your child has accidents frequently. If you choose to send your child in a pull up (as some parents do, even though they are mostly trained), please make sure you tell a teacher that your child is in a pull up each day they are in one.
- 4) **INDEPENDENCE:** We encourage more independence---with getting ready to go outside or coming inside, packing their bags, and going to the washroom. Practising these things independently at home help with this transition.
 - a. Giving them backpacks and/or containers that are easy to open and close helps with fostering this independence.
 - b. We have children open anything by themselves and allow them to use scissors. Have them practise with scissors at home.
 - c. Children clean up their own mess and throw out their own garbage. Have them practise cleaning up after dinner or cleaning up their toys at home.
 - d. Please provide your child with inside and outside shoes that they can easily take on and off themselves (Velcro seem to be the best). All children must have inside shoes for the 3-5 program.
 - e. We ask that children put on their own jackets, rain pants, and/or muddy buddies (but we prefer that they don't use muddy buddy's as it is more difficult to gain independence with toileting).

- f. Please dress your children in loose clothing that is easy for them to take on and off by themselves. This makes it easy for them to be independent in the washroom. While tights, jeans with buttons and overalls are cute, they do not allow your child to gain independence toileting.
- 5) **HEALTH:** It is important all children are taught how to properly wash their hands. Please practise this at home. Please talk with your children about germs and that this is not time to play in the water, but they have a job to do.
 - a. Get hands a bit wet and turn the tap off
 - b. Pump one pump of soap from the dispenser
 - c. Rub hands all over so that there are bubbles for at least 20 second (sing a song like Twinkle Twinkle)
 - d. Turn the tap back on and rinse the soap away.
 - e. Turn tap off.
 - f. Dry with a cloth or paper towel.
- 6) **RISKY PLAY:** We allow space for them to take risks. They may want to climb something high or challenge their body. We will spot them but will never help them do something risky. If the need our help to do something, their bodies are not ready for the challenge. Of course, they must always ask for help if they are stuck or afraid when trying something new.
- 7) **SOCIAL SKILLS:** They will learn a lot of new social skills as they are growing and developing. Here are some things they will working on while at daycare in the programs. We encourage you to help them with this at home too:
 - a. Tidying up after themselves. We do not do this for them (nor should you at home)
 - b. Asking for a turn and waiting until someone is done playing with something
 - c. Using words to tell someone that they are upset, frustrated, or do not like something
 - d. Getting consent before doing something to another person's body or thing they are playing with. We always ask before we touch another person's body—and practise this with hugs, fist bumps, and high fives sometimes at Together Time. Children can also choose to pass at this greeting time.
 - e. Understanding that if a child wants do something to their own body, that's ok as long as they aren't hurting themselves. If they want to touch or expose their private parts, that's ok too but they must do that alone in a private area (the washroom) and not around other children or teachers. We don't attach shame to these actions but do reinforce that private parts are private. As mentioned above, teachers will only assist with children having difficulties wiping after the using the washroom (upon the child's request).
 - f. Coming up with solutions to problems on their own. Teachers will be there for guidance but the children are encouraged to work out solutions
 - g. Learning boundaries of play with other children
 - h. Knowing that they do not have to play with everyone if they don't want to, but they do have to treat everyone kindly and with respect. We do encourage children to be inclusive but do not force children to play together.

There are so many other things that go on in the programs, but these are just a few things to prepare you. As always, if you have any questions about anything, please feel free to talk with the daycare manager or teachers. Thanks!