

**Discovery Children's Centre**

# **Infant and Toddler Program Overview**



# Welcome to the Infant/Toddler Program

We look forward to getting to know you and your child. This information is to help you become more comfortable with our program and to share the Infant and Toddler Program goals and objectives. We hope to answer some of the questions you may have.

## Primary Caregiver

To help infants and toddlers develop a feeling of trust and a sense of security we have implemented a "primary caregiver" system. Each child will be assigned a caregiver who will be responsible for the majority of the child's daily routine (feeding, diapering, napping, etc.). This caregiver will also be the contact staff for the parents and will ensure that information about the child is communicated on a daily basis.

In the absence of the primary caregiver an assigned secondary caregiver will care for your child.



## Infant and Toddler Communication Book (Journal)

Each infant and toddler will have a communication book that documents the routines, activities and events of the day. Parents are encouraged to read it daily.

Please check for messages from the caregiver that may require immediate attention. At the end of each week the completed form will be placed in a binder. When your child leaves our program you will be presented with this book as a memento of your child's early child care experience.



## Instagram

The infant and toddler room uses Instagram. This is a great way for staff to document the learning that we see each and every day. On Instagram you will find pictures of the children and a description of what is taking place.

## American Sign Language

We practice American Sign Language in the room and incorporate signing into the program. Studies have shown that children who learn to sign at a young age communicate much earlier, lessening some of the frustrations of not being able to communicate verbally. You will be given a copy of the signs that we are using in the classroom to allow you to work on them as a family.

## Nature

Our aim is to create an opportunity for children to develop a sense of wonder and appreciation for our natural world and experience the benefits of spending time outdoors. Studies have shown spending meaningful time in nature positively affects children physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively. Our hope is that this connection to nature will develop into a lifelong appreciation of our environment.

Nature has become a big part of our program and we spend a great deal of time outside. We are learning to enjoy the natural beauty that is around us everywhere. We go out rain or shine, sleet or snow. We work (play) and explore in our outdoor environment as much as we can. While outdoors, we catch bugs, jump in the puddles, dance in the rain, and let snowflakes fall on our tongues. In our outdoor playgrounds we have many gardening beds that allow us to learn gardening skills in the summer months and harvesting in the fall.



## Outdoor Week

In early June and late September we transition our indoor classroom to the outdoors. For one week, we spend the majority of our time outdoors. Our goal is to provide extended periods of “free play” time to connect the children with nature. A brochure is provided to help you prepare for the outdoor classroom experience. One item we request is a back pack or bag filled with the items to make your child’s day more enjoyable.



Children have the opportunity to sleep outdoors. The natural sounds of birds and other nature help to completely relax the children in a way that is different than being inside. Mosquito netting is used for the infants to keep a variety of annoying insects away for a peaceful rest. The older children sleep on cots.



## Transitions

From the infant stage to the toddler stage (beginning at 16-18 months) we help the children build on their self-help skills. Some of the transitions your child will experience in the room are as follows:

- Sippy cup to a regular cup
- Sitting in a low chair with a tray to a regular chair at the child sized table
- Sleeping in a crib to sleeping in a playpen or a sleeping cot

Each of these transitions is done over time and when the child is developmentally ready for the transition.



## Transition into Preschool

Another transition children experience with us is moving into a preschool room. Prior to the move we take the child into the preschool classroom to explore and become familiarized in the new environment. This is an important step, it allows for the child to feel safe and secure as they explore a new classroom. After several visits with the staff they will begin their visits into the room independently. There will be three visits set up with the ability to set up more if it is required. Your child will have a primary and secondary caregiver in their new classroom to allow for the safe and secure attachment until they are fully comfortable with the daily routines of their new room. We recommend that parents arrange a time and date that is convenient for them to meet the staff in their child's new classroom.

# Helpful Hints for Infant/Toddler Parents

## FOOTWEAR:

1. The children spend much of their time playing on the floor. To ensure a clean surface we ask parents and guests to remove their outdoor shoes before entering the play area.
2. Children who are walking are asked to have separate indoor and outdoor footwear. The child's shoes should be changed to the appropriate pair upon arriving and leaving.

## SIGN IN / SIGN OUT SHEET:

Parents are required to sign in when they arrive and out when the child leaves. A sheet for this purpose is located on a clipboard in the locker area.

## LUNCHES:

1. Parents are requested to supply nutritious lunches for their child.
2. Lunch will be supplemented with whole milk for those children who use a cup or sippy cup.
3. Please label all food containers to facilitate their return.
4. Staff will heat food for your child's lunch, but time does not permit us to cook their lunch. Please put food that needs to be heated in a glass container. We do not put plastic containers in the microwave.
5. Parents are discouraged from sending large cans of food, as we do not have containers to store leftovers.
6. According to center policy, children are not permitted to have potato chips, chocolate bars, candy or pop.

## SNACKS:

A morning snack and an afternoon snack will be provided for those children who eat table food. A menu is posted for your information and comments.

## BOTTLES:

Parents are asked to supply any beverage (breast milk, prepared formula, milk) that the child drinks from a bottle. This should be sent in an unbreakable bottle, labeled with child's name.

## SUPPLIES:

To help make your child's day as comfortable as possible, please provide the following items:

1. Three changes of clothing.
2. Footwear for indoors and outdoors.
3. Suitable outdoor clothing.
4. A bag of diapers wipes and diaper cream (if required).
5. A blanket and soother or comfort toy (if required) for nap time.
6. Infant Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen in the original container. Please label with child's name and give to a staff member for safe storage.

# INFANT/TODDLER DAILY SCHEDULE

7:15-8:30	Arrival and free play
8:15-9:00	Snack
9:00-11:00	Diaper Check Free play/ Outside/ Gym/ Play experience
11:00-12:00	Lunch
11:30-12:00	Diaper check, Language activity (Reading, finger plays, songs, felt board)
12:00-3:00	Naptime, diapering as children wake up, free play
2:45-3:30	Snack
3:30-5:00	Free Play/ Outdoors/ Play Experience
4:45-5:30	Diaper check, free play

This schedule is flexible and will be based on the individual needs and interests of the children. Children that nap in the a.m. and p.m. may do an activity mid-day.

Young infants will follow schedules based on their individual needs for bottles, food and naps. This will follow their home schedules as closely as possible.

Diapers are checked every 2-3 hours.

Discovery's environment is set up to consider the unique needs of each child. We make changes to our daily program so that all children can access areas, materials and activities in order to promote growth in all areas of his or her development.