

PARENT HANDBOOK



First Years Children's Center

An IRS 501©3 Non-profit
621 High School Road, N.W.
Bainbridge Island, WA

A Note from the Executive Director

Welcome, we are glad you have chosen our program. The following is our center "Parent Handbook". This handbook is an integral part of any early childhood program. It gives us not only the chance to state our policies and procedures but to provide you, the parents, with an understanding of our philosophies and ideas about how young children grow and develop. Please read it, so you may join with the staff as an informed parent in your child's care and education. This handbook should answer most of your questions regarding our center. Please feel free to talk to your child's Teacher or the Front Desk at any time. Once again, WELCOME!

INTRODUCTION

First Years Children's Center is a non-profit corporation formed in 2013. Before that it was privately owned for 18 years.

All new parents are encouraged to visit *FYCC* with their children prior to the first day of childcare and maybe do a few short days before starting on a full day schedule. This gives the staff and child an opportunity to meet & get to know one another but it also makes separating on the child's first full day a little easier for both parent and child. It is ultimately up to you how you want to start off your child, just let us know.

MISSION STATEMENT

First Years Children's Center exists to care for all children ages 4 weeks to 5 years, making sure they are safe and well cared for while their parent or parents are at work.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

We feel our Center is an extension of your home; since it is the home that is one of the most important factors in a child's development. We will communicate and work with you to support and compliment your family. Our goal has always been to make *First Years Children's Center* an environmentally peaceful and stimulating place where children feel safe, cozy, nurtured, and happy to be at. This environment will, in turn, promote your child's natural curiosity and desire to learn.

We also believe that the children deserve to have teachers and caregivers who are capable and caring people, whose values enable them to be excellent role models for your child. By loving, trusting, and respecting each child it makes that child capable of loving, trusting and respecting others.

We hope we can give you peace of mind and know that - - "while you are away your child will truly feel cared for".

PROGRAM

At *First Years Children's Center*, we focus on the individual developmental needs of each child. Our "Learning and Child Care Community" includes specific programs for Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers, and Pre-Kindergartners. The needs of your child will change as they grow and we will make sure our program responds in content and structure by using the best techniques in child development.

We use a mix of the Montessori Method and Emergent Curriculum mode which is culturally bias-free. We are a play & developmentally based program, focusing on the individual child's social/ emotional, creative, intellectual (cognitive), physical and nutritional development as they grow & change. All children are introduced to a balanced program of interaction with friends in both "teacher-directed" and "child-directed" experiences. Play is still an important part of these experiences; it is a way for the children to learn as they interact by listening, observing, and questioning.

The daily schedule includes breakfast, circle times, lunch, choice times, outside times, nap times, and three snacks. In the classrooms the children will have: a "**Choice Time**" which can be spent in many different learning centers, a "**Group Time**" also called "**Circle Time**" for: social/emotional development and language development (English, Spanish & American Sign), creative movement (dancing, tumbling, crawling in tunnels, ...), music (classrooms play different kinds of music from many different countries, sing songs, & play instruments), storytelling (books, rhymes, poems, ...), and dramatizations (acting out different stories or situations with the children). The children will also be going on some fun field trips to parks, aquariums, farms, the pool, library, and museums throughout the year.

Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident learners by teaching them how to learn, not just at *FYCC* but throughout their lives. By doing so, we are giving them good habits and attitudes, and a positive sense of themselves.

*Children will be accepted regardless of race, creed, national origin, or gender.

***FYCC** does not include any religious based topics in the center.

OBJECTIVES

Days are planned so the children will:

- be safe
- feel secure
- receive individual attention and affection
- develop satisfying relationships with other children and adults
- experience successes so they can develop a positive self-image
- learn to respect the personal rights and the property rights of others
- develop intellectual and physical skills
- develop self-discipline

ENROLLMENT

Forms to be completed: An *Enrollment Application*, the *Medical Authorization Sheet*, the *Background Information Sheet*, and the *Authorization and Agreement Form*. In addition, the State of Washington requires we have a complete, updated *Immunization Record* on file on the first day of your child's enrollment (**please notify the office when your child receives new immunizations**).

Registration Fee: There is a one-time \$75.00 registration fee, which covers the cost of record keeping. At this time there are no annual fees.

Tuition: Please see the rate schedule for *First Years Children's Center* tuition. Fees are paid in advance, either on a monthly basis on the **1st** of the month, or semimonthly on the **1st** and **15th** of the month. A semi-monthly tuition agreement must be completed if you would like to pay this way. Semi-monthly payments must be made on a 50/50 basis. Payments must be placed in the tuition box outside the office or mailed to *FYCC*. If payments are mailed on Bainbridge Island, they are usually received at the office the next day. Mail deposited at the Bainbridge Island Post Office before 8:00 am is usually delivered the same day.

Late Payments: Prompt payment of your child's tuition is necessary for us to maintain our operation. Payments are late after the 5th of the month for monthly payers or the 5th and 20th for semi-monthly payers. Late payments will result in a \$35.00 fee. Payment must be postmarked no later than the 5th and 20th. Please make checks payable to *First Years Children's Center* or *FYCC*.

Failure to pay tuition in full by the 25th of the month may result in your child being suspended until the balance is paid in full.

Any returned Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) check will result in a \$40.00 charge. Repeated late payments may result in suspension of services.

Attendance must be a minimum of 3 days per week, you pick what days your child will attend and those days may not vary. If you do want to change your days please talk with the front desk. If you do reduce your days *FYCC* cannot guarantee that you can increase them at a later time.

There is a "sibling discount" if two children from the same family are enrolled. There will be a 15% discount applied to the oldest child's tuition. If the sibling is an infant the discount is 20% off the oldest child's tuition. Parents are not entitled to a discount if their child does not attend the entire month. For example: the child enrolls in the middle of the month or leaves in the middle of the month.

Acceptance:

Your registration is complete when you; turn in the completed enrollment forms, pay the registration fee.

Discipline/Behavior Management

At **First Years** we view discipline not as a means of punishing a child who has acted inappropriately, but rather as a means to teaching a child how to maintain control over their bodies and how to problem solve for themselves in the event of conflict. The teacher's role is to facilitate problem-solving; we redirect the child toward more positive behavior through a change in activity (redirection) or by requiring them to deal with the natural consequences of their behavior (if they take off their gloves outside-they get cold hands). A positive tone is emphasized when redirecting behavior and/or helping the child make activity choices. Rather than controlling the children, the goal of redirection is to enable the children to learn to control themselves, and make appropriate choices. *Respect for each and every child is emphasized at all times.

Encouragement is the key! We feel the best approach to discipline involves creating a positive atmosphere and carefully planned activities. Positive discipline teaches children where the limits are set and is most effective when it follows logical consequences. The consequences for negative behavior have to make sense to the child: for example, if a child is throwing sand outdoors, it is logical to tell the child that the sand stays in the sandbox and if it gets thrown again the child will have to find somewhere else to play. An atmosphere where directions and choices are phrased in a simple, positive, friendly manner reduces the incidence of inappropriate behavior.

The children are also encouraged and reminded to show respect for others by using their words to ask for things they want or need, and to solve problems. If needed we will provide the children with the correct words to use and even role play with them so they can practice with each other. Teaching children to listen and verbalize feelings instead of acting out is done at all age levels.

If a child has been reminded several time about their negative behavior they are asked to sit for a short time, away from the other children, and have some "quiet time". This allows the child to calm down, regain self-control and think. We do not view it as punishment. If a problem persists, we will discuss it with the parents to determine a joint plan of action.

Limiting a child's choice of activities due to inappropriate behavior is an effective way to teach children to respect property, their teachers and one another.

If a child continues to hit, slap, kick, or spit at a teacher or fellow children, OR they are so out of control that they are not responding to any verbal commands from anyone at the center, the child's parents will be called to pick-up. If the parents are unable to be reached the "Emergency Contact Person" will be called to pick-up.

Should we feel a situation is beyond our expertise, we may seek the advice and assistance of other professionals. A meeting will be set up with your child's teacher and the Executive Director to discuss alternatives for your child.

Enrollment Termination

The Executive Director, the Director, the Program Supervisor and the teachers make every effort to build a positive relationship with the child and their family. Finding a remedy when concerns or problems arise requires communication and cooperation between *FYCC* and the parents. We reserve the right to dismiss a child if the child's needs cannot be met. A child's enrollment may be discontinued for any of the following reasons:

-Inconsistent and/or unusual behavior or physical and/or emotional problems which require supervision beyond our normal scope.

A child may be temporarily suspended from the program as a result of behavior problems. Five days' notice will be given to parents or guardians before a child is suspended from *FYCC*, except in extreme circumstances. *FYCC* also reserves the right to terminate enrollment for the following reasons:

- Late or nonpayment of tuition or fees
- Repeated requests of the *FYCC* staff to work directly for the parents (Other than occasional babysitting outside of work hours)
- The parent(s) develop an adversary relationship with a *FYCC* staff member or the Directors.
- A parent behaves improperly in the school environment and on school grounds such as, but not limited to, language or actions that are vulgar, sexually suggestive, abusive or dangerous to the safety of the children or staff members.

Under no circumstances will termination of enrollment entitle the affected family to a reimbursement of any tuition monies, or monetary credits. All refunds will be forfeited. There will be no exceptions.

Hours and Days of Operation

FYCC is open from 5:45am to 6:30pm, Monday through Friday. The Preschool and the Pre-Kindergarten programs operate from 9:00 am. to 3:30 pm., with childcare provided before and after the program.

We close promptly at 6:30 pm. and there are no staff scheduled to care for children after this time. If you arrive after closing time, you will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 for each minute after 6:30 pm.

If a child is still at *First Years* by 7:00 P. M., we are required to call the Bainbridge Island Police Department and/or Child Protective Services to take the child until the parent can be located. Please call us if you are running late, we can usually arrange something for you.

****If the WA. State Ferry is delayed or broken-down or if there is a weather problem or an emergency you should make sure there is a “back-up person” or “pick-up person” able to take your child if you cannot! We will have to charge you if your child is here longer than 5 minutes after closing and you have no “pick-up person”. Anything can happen so please make it a point to be prepared and have someone ready to pick-up! Anyone picking up late on a regular basis will be charged a \$1.00 per minute, and if it continues you will have to find care for your child somewhere else.**

Holidays

First Years Children's Center is closed for the following major, nationally observed holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day (2 days)
- Christmas Day

FYCC is open for a shorted day, until 3 pm, on Christmas Eve and until 4pm on Halloween. When holidays fall on Saturday, *FYCC* will be closed the Friday before. When holidays fall on Sunday, *FYCC* will be closed on Monday.

FYCC reserves the right to change the closing times before, during or after a holiday.

Power Outage

State regulations do not permit us to keep children more than two hours during a power outage. *FYCC* has limited emergency lighting that will last for only two hours and during the colder months there would be no way to heat the rooms.

If you are aware of an extended power outage, please call to let us know you are coming for your child. If you are not aware we will be calling you to pick-up your child ASAP.

At times we may lose power or not regain it when other parts of Kitsap County and the Island have power. Please understand we are doing our best to keep your child safe and happy.

Snow Policy

In the event of snow, **we follow Bainbridge School District policies regarding closure, late start or early closing.** Listen to the radio or television to check for closure information. Call the Center, at 842-6363 or you may reach us at our home # 842-6803. The Executive Director's cell # is (206)235-1175 or (206)235-1168. If snow starts to fall during school hours, please come for your child early.

If road conditions are dangerous, it may cause staff members to be delayed and cause a shortage at the Center (many of our staff live off-Island). During inclement weather the staff and you may also not want to risk driving. **Please call and let the staff know if your child will be absent or delayed.**

Emergency Procedures

We are required by State Law to have a “Disaster Drill” every quarter. At that time the staff and the children proceed outdoors. Once they are certain all outside, each staff member proceeds with the “job” they have been assigned. We have stored, in a special shed, staff and children's emergency kits, blankets, water, flashlights, radio's, first aid supplies, and more food and water. Our staff has First Aid and CPR training.

We also have regular monthly fire drills at our Center. We urge each family to plan what you will do if disaster strikes during the day when you are separated at work, school, etc. You can find helpful disaster planning information in your phone book.

The children are taught to listen to the teachers' directions. During an earthquake drill the children are instructed to go under the tables and shelves. When it is safe, they are told to leave the room and proceed outside. We will assemble and count everyone and give aid and comfort as needed.

If there is a real disaster we will care for your child and stay with them until you or someone of your choice can get here to pick them up.

****It is extremely important that you sign-in your child each time you drop them off. We use the sign-in sheets to check all the children assembled outside whenever there is an emergency.**

DAILY REQUIREMENTS

Signing “In and Out”, and Communicating

The Parent's/Guardian's full legal signature, date and time are required on the “Sign-In” and “Sign-Out” sheet when children are dropped off and when they are picked up. **Please do not let your children sign on the sheets, these are for you only.**

Your prior written authorization is required for us to release your child to someone other than those indicated on your registration form. These people must also sign their full legal names. If the teacher or caregiver does not know the person picking up your child, we will ask for identification.

Announcements, newsletters, bulletins, etc., will be placed in your child's file folder which is located next to the “sign-out” sheets. It is your responsibility to read notices, which may include important announcements regarding *FYCC* policies, your bill, or your child's classroom/ schedule.

Communicate important information to your child's teacher regarding napping, diet, medication, moving, or change in the family status (death, new pet or sibling, separation, etc...) or other important concerns. Important information should be in writing. **Any schedule changes, vacations or other information should be written and left in the office mailbox. *FYCC* will not be responsible for any miscommunication or errors from verbal directives to the teachers, aids, or other staff.**

Staff members' phone numbers are confidential. The office cannot give them out. If you would like someone's number, please ask that person directly or we can give them your number.

Parent Bulletin Board

A bulletin board is situated right above the sign-in sheets. It contains announcements for you to view and read. Please take the time to scan the "Parent Bulletin Board" regularly; this way you will be informed of the Centers happenings. The monthly menu will be posted there and copies of the menu are just underneath.

Clothing

FYCC does not provide diapers for your child so please bring disposable diapers or pull-ups. Please supply enough to last your child for the entire week, if possible. If your child is potty training please supply extra "pull-ups", "undies", pants, socks, etc..., there are usually accidents and extra clothes are a must. Make sure you put your child's name or initials on each item you bring to the Center; **we cannot be responsible for them if they are unmarked.**

Children should dress comfortably, simply and suitably for the weather. We do engage in a number of "messy" activities that, despite smocks, can get clothes dirty. We do not want to inhibit the children unnecessarily, so we ask you to send them in comfortable old clothes that they can play in without hesitation. Remember also that children will be playing outdoors, so be sure their clothing is sturdy and durable. It is our experience that children do best if they are dressed in layers on cold days! Please bring an extra set of clothes, **well labeled**, including underwear, socks, pants and a shirt. These items should be stored daily in your child's cubby; many parents leave the bag and take only what is dirty or soiled. Please remember to bring clean items back the next day.

Again, please remember that lost clothing is a problem most of us cannot afford. Help us and yourself by **marking your child's initials on everything you bring.**

Napping

For napping, you need to supply a crib sheet and blanket or a sleeping bag. A favorite nap time stuffed animal or doll is ok to bring for children over the age of 1 year, it will be kept with your child's sleeping items.

On the last day of the week your child is here, please take home their "sleep items", wash them and return them on your child's first day back to the Center. **Remember to check your child's cubby daily for soiled or damp clothing.**

Toys from Home

Children are not permitted to bring any toys from home other than for a specific sharing time or a stuffed animal for sleeping. These items are a distraction to the children and their friends. We are trying to build cooperation and concern for one another in our Center so **play/pretend guns, weapons, super heroes and other toys that encourage aggressive play are never welcome in our classrooms.**

Please do not put tiny hair clips in your child's hair when here at the center; they have a tendency to fall out and can be swallowed by another child. If your child does arrive with a small clip, hair band, coins etc, we will put them in a zip-lock baggie and return them to you when you pick-up.

Nutrition

FYCC serves peanut products including peanut butter. If your child has a known allergy to peanuts and peanut products please let us know right away. If a child brings a food from home they will not be able to share it with the other children in case of allergies. Anything your child does not eat at lunchtime will be returned to their lunch box so that you can monitor exactly how much your child has eaten.

Breakfast is available from 6:30am until 7:45 am daily. A healthy variety of fruits, muffins, pancakes, waffles and cereals are scheduled along with orange juice and milk. **We give “last call” for breakfast at 7:40 am. so please arrive before “last call”.**

Throughout the day we provide three to four nutritious snacks. They consist of a fruit or “veggie” along with a starch or dairy. Water or milk is served with each snack.

A nutritious lunch is served in each classroom every day. According to the State, our lunches are to vary each day and may not repeat for two weeks. We are also required to serve foods that contain vitamin C each day and Vitamin E 3x’s per week. Lunch menus are posted for your information and copies are available by the sign-in sheets. All lunches served at *FYCC* include milk. **Please inform us of any dietary restrictions your child has. If they have special diet needs you must bring a substitute for them, *FYCC* does not provide any substitutes.**

Children may choose to eat lunches supplied by the Center or you may, at your option, bring lunches from home. There is no credit for bringing your own lunch. You should let the office know 24 hours in advance whether your child will eat our lunch or bring lunch from home.

If your child brings lunch from home, please label the lunch box and drink container with your child's name. Lunches should include a dairy product, protein, bread or starch, vegetable and/or fruit. The Department of Health requires that the *FYCC* staff monitor lunches for nutrition. Please **do not include** sweets or desserts. We have handouts available on planning interesting, healthy lunches.

Field Trips and Transportation

As part of the *FYCC* program, the children participate in field trips. The beach, local parks, the pool, pumpkin farm, the *Washington State Ferry*, aquariums, the Fire Station, grocery stores, the library, pet stores and of course, the neighborhood are typical destinations. A Field Trip Permission Form must be completed and signed by the parents.

An authorized staff member will drive the *FYCC* Bus. We will make sure vehicles used are insured, safety-equipped vehicles with individual seat belts.

Classes generally leave *FYCC* at 9:00 am for most field trips. You will be advised if there are any nominal fees, please watch for notices. Spontaneous afternoon neighborhood walks return by 3:00 pm. If you want a call if we are going on a walk, please let us know.

Summer Programs

The regular program is slightly modified during the summer months. We will have some of our classes outdoors and sometimes combine classes when there are a reduced amount of children attending. More frequent field trips, picnics and walks are a big part of our class time too. We also take the children to the local pool for swim lessons and soccer camps during the summer months.

MEDICATIONS

The State of Washington *Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers* is as follows:

“You may give the following medications with written parental consent if the medication bottle tells you how much medication to give based on the children age **and** weight:

- a) Non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers;
- b) Antihistamines;
- c) Nonnarcotic cough suppressants;
- d) Decongestants;
- e) Ointments or lotions intended to reduce or stop itching of dry skin;
- f) Sun screen for children over six months of age; and
- g) Hand sanitizers for children over twelve months of age.

If your child brings in a medication that does not have a dosage chart according to weight or age and if you have not given us your child’s weight, the State of Washington Medication Regulations say:

“If the medication label does not give the dosage direction for the child’s age and weight you must have written instructions from a health care provider with prescriptive authority prior to giving the medication.”

Also, **“all medications must be in their original containers and have their original instructions on them.”**

Prescription medications may not be given past the days prescribed on the medication bottle even if there is medication left.”

If you would like your child to receive medication during their time at *FYCC* you must fill out the “Medication Authorization Sheet” on the counter at the front desk and please leave the medication for your child at the front desk, too. If the office is closed or if no one is there at the time you fill out the sheet, please give the medication to your child’s teacher. **Do not leave the medication in your child’s cubby.**

Any allergy medications that need to be administered here at *FYCC* must have a Doctors written order!

HEALTH & SAFETY

****Please notify us in writing of any allergies your child may have!**

Medical and Emergency Information forms must be on file before your child can start at *FYCC*. All immunizations must be current. We “do not accept children who have been exempt from immunization by their parent or guardian, unless that exemption is due to an illness protected by the *Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)*.”

We are concerned about the health of every child in our program. Unfortunately, *FYCC* cannot care for sick children nor provide your child with the comfort they would have if at home with you. So, **in order to keep all children as healthy as possible, we ask, in accordance with the *Department of Health*, that you to keep children at home if there are any signs of the following within 24 hours:**

- =Two or more instances of diarrhea;
- =A fever of 100 degrees or higher **AND** one or more of the following: vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, ear ache, cough or showing signs of irritability or confusion;
- =Severe cold or cough, difficult or rapid breathing;
- =Pinkeye (conjunctivitis);
- =Unusual or infected spots or rashes;
- =Dark urine, gray or white stool;
- =Severe itching of the body or scalp

If a child exhibits any of these symptoms at school we will call you to pick your child up. When called, you (or an alternate emergency person) are expected to pick your child up right away. There are no exceptions to this rule. Your child will be kept under adult supervision, in the Executive Director’s office, away from the other children, until someone can pick up the child. An “Incident/Illness” form will be filled out or we will inform you in writing, on the child’s “daily sheet”.

It is the parent’s responsibility to keep emergency telephone information current.

In the event of a dispute concerning the advisability of the child to remain at *FYCC*, the Executive Director or Director, in consultation with the *FYCC* nurse will make a final decision and the parent must abide by that decision. Backup arrangements for sick care are necessary for working parents.

The following contagious diseases must be reported to the school by the parent as soon the illness has been diagnosed, so that other parents may be notified of the exposure:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| -Chicken Pox or Scarlet fever | -Herpes | -RSV | -H1N1 |
| -Hepatitis | -Giardiasis | -“pink eye” | |
| -Head lice | -Hand, foot, and mouth syndrome | | |

When a potentially contagious illness occurs, notes will be sent home to parents of children who may have been exposed. Please tell us if your child is going to be absent for several days.

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether or not your child is ready to return to school:

- Mood, appetite, behavior and activity are again normal;
- No fever for 24 hours or more without fever reducing medicine;
- Antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for a full twenty four hours;
- Vomiting, diarrhea cleared for 24 hours;
- Frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge resolved;
- Pain (earache, cramps, headache, etc...) resolved.

Minor injuries will be treated with: soap, water, an ice pack, or Band-Aids and lots of love! Should there be a serious accident, parents or other persons listed on emergency forms will be contacted. If no one can be reached, we will call the physician you have listed.

Under the *Washington Minimum Licensing Requirements-WAC 388-295-5160*: *FYCC* “must post and notify all parents & staff of the use of Pesticides”. ***FYCC does not use any pesticides inside or outside of the building or anywhere on the FYCC property.***

Under the *WAC 388-295-5170*: *FYCC* “must notify the parents in writing that animals are on the premises and the potential health risks associated with the animals”. We do have a “center dog” named Bella which has all the clearance to be touched and has the ability to roam around the Pre-K #1 classroom. She sometimes will visit other classrooms too. Our center also has fish, a tarantula, a few fish, a gecko and 2 turtles which are never touched by the staff or children.

DESCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS:

The ages designated below are approximate and assignment of children to any group will be based on their individual levels of development, as well as the ratio and maximum enrollment allowed for each classroom by the *DEL*. Our Staff play a vital socialization role with the children.

Warm, positive relationships with our staff will help the children develop a sense of trust in the world and a feeling of competence. These interactions are critical for the development of the children's healthy self-esteem. The “trusted adult” (the staff), become the secure base through which the child explores their environment.

Infants

This stage is marked with the infants' need to develop as unique individuals with behaviors and growth changes constantly changing. Each infant has different schedules reflective of their own personalities. It is the staff's role to accept each infant's uniqueness and provide a safe and stimulating environment from which to grow. As they do grow and change, the environment will be rearranged to allow opportunities for the children to roll, crawl, explore and move about safely. Your child will be taught the “signs” for basic concepts so they can communicate to you,

the staff and to each other.

FYCC infant program offers quality care in a separate room that has been equipped for the needs of children 4 weeks through about 12 months of age.

Individual cribs are provided with sheets. Parents are to provide a blanket or bunting. Stuffed toys, dolls, blankets and bumper pads are not allowed in the crib as per the *Washington State Department of Health* **and** the *Washington State Department of Licensing*. Don't forget to label your items with your child's name or initials.

An individual schedule of eating and napping are followed for each infant. Please let the staff know what your child's schedule will be. Parents need to provide sufficient formula or breast milk for at least 3 days and juice and/or food should be provided for an entire day or longer. All foods and bottles must be labeled with the child's full name. Refrigeration is supplied in the classroom and a center freezer is provided for storing breast milk for longer periods of time.

Please provide at least 2 weeks supply of diapers or pull-ups and we can also store larger packages, labeled with the child's name. Please bring 1-2 extra changes of clothing each day. Be sure that the articles of clothing **and** the bag they are in are **labeled clearly**.

Everyone benefits from fresh air including the infants. We have a commercial 3-seat stroller and we will be using it often. The children as well as the adults enjoy going on walks. We also have a commercial grade air exchanger built into our air system that brings in fresh air throughout the day.

Toddler #1 & #2

This age group requires a different environment; the children are much more mobile, some are transitioning from crawling to standing and even more are walking. This age group no longer fits with the very young, non-mobile infants.

By physically moving around and through social interactions they are experiencing their environment even more now through their senses (seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling). As they grow they become more independent and begin to interact more and more with each other. We will encourage their independence & exploration, while recognizing their needs for reassurance.

Materials available encourage gross and fine motor development, as well as sensory stimulation. The children listen to music, as well as simple stories. They are encouraged to interact with each other and the caregiver in a variety of activities that stimulate their early language skills. The children are introduced to the concept of communicating/getting their needs met by using American Sign Language, combined with verbal cues. Once they learn these skills they will be able to convey their meaning, minimizing frustration, even before they can actually talk.

The classroom schedule includes a variety of fun activities, including "Circle Time" (reading stories, singing songs, learning letters/numbers....), simple arts and craft projects, and play times. During these "playtime's" the children learn how to use safe, challenging, and meaningful materials such as puzzles, blocks, toys, books, cars, etc.... While they play with these items they will learn to share and interact with each other.

Learning experiences are provided inside the classroom, as well as on the playground, where the Twaddlers have a separate play area. We will also use the 4 seat stroller the infants use.

FYCC provides food for those Toddler #1's that are starting to eat "table food". Please take a look at the menu and let us know if your child will be eating what we are serving, otherwise you are to bring formula/breast milk and any food they are eating; please bring a week's supply. Also, please make sure it items are already cut up and/or measured out, and labeled with your child's name. In this room we will start to introduce and encourage drinking from a "sippy cup" and sitting at a table.

Children in the Toddler #1 Room will transition from sleeping in a crib to sleeping on mats. You will have to bring your child a blanket and a sheet to cover their mat and these sleep items will be stored in the classroom. Again please take these items home at the end of your week, clean them and return them at the beginning the following week. If your child sleeps with a toy and/or a pacifier please make sure they are here each day.

The Toddler #1 & 2 Rooms are usually on a "sleep as needed basis" but eventually all the children will slowly transition into a schedule during the day; they eventually feel secure and develop a sense of trust, wanting to do what each other is doing.

In addition, there are specific aspects of the program that help prepare the Toddler 2 children's transition to the Toddler #3 classroom. For example: as they get older and are ready to transition they will be taught how to drink from a "regular cup", throw away their dishes and put their cups & utensils in a bucket for washing. They will also continue to use *American Sign-language*, along with verbal cues, so they can continue to communicate with each other and the staff.

The Toddler #1's have their cubbies up high in their classroom but and the Toddler 2's will have a cubby in the hallway labeled with their name. Please place your child's bag in the cubby each morning, and please check their cubby each evening for information about your child's day or any soiled clothes that have to be taken home. On your child's last day of the week, please take their bedding home to wash and bring it back on their next regular day.

This warm, safe, and loving environment will give your child the confidence to explore and grow.

Toddler #3 (the TWO's)

As children develop and change, the Toddler #3 classroom will offer an environment where the children may learn and explore more independently. This stage is typically seen as one of the most challenging but we believe it is one of the most rewarding. 30 to 36 month olds are very fun, mobile and active and they respond well to a regular daily routine with clear meal times, rest times, and play times.

Toilet training is a big part of this group's life, too. Here at FYCC we encourage the Two's to be independent while recognizing their need for frequent assistance and reassurance. This is especially noticeable when dressing and undressing. One of their most used phrase is, **"I can do it by myself!"**

The classroom is designed at their level and they are active participants in its care. They love to sweep, sponge up a spill and are learning to pick up their “work” (toys and materials). The

Two’s are beginning to learn important social skills and are introduced to the concepts of respect and caring for each other and themselves. These early manners, putty training and self-help skills prepare them for an easy transition to the Preschool Classroom.

The Toddler Classroom is designed to stimulate sensory development, as well as encourage small muscle skills development, hand-eye coordination, and large muscle development. We encourage them to explore all the classroom materials, helping them to make choices of activities on their own.

The class is also introduced to a variety of monthly learning themes and projects. Exploration of various art materials, Circle Times (with songs, sign language, stories, “finger plays”, music and movement), field trips and walks to local interest spots, and early childhood classroom materials & activities round out the Toddlers day. Please take a look at their individual schedules, monthly curriculum & their lesson plans posted on the bulletin board outside their classroom.

In this room your child will be required to wear either pull-ups or cloth underwear (with a rubber pant over them). This will increase your child’s independence and interest in using the potty.

Please bring at least 5 pull-ups per day.

Your child will have a cubby in the hallway labeled with their name. Please place your child’s bag in the cubby each morning, and please check their cubby each evening for information about your child’s day or any soiled clothes that have to be taken home. On your child’s last day of the week, please take their bedding home to wash and bring it back on their next regular day.

We will continue to provide nutritious snacks and lunches. In these classrooms the children drink from regular cups, and eat with spoons and forks. If your child brings food or milk from home, please label the food or drink containers with your child’s name.

A Typical Schedule for Toddler:

6-9 am	Breakfast, reading, “Choice time” and outside
9-9:30am	Circle Time
9:30-10am	Snack
10-10:30am	Potty Time
10:30-11am	Outside
11-11:30am	Lunch
11:30-12noon	Potty Time
12-2pm	Nap Time
2-2:30pm	Potty Time
2:30-3pm	Snack
3:30-4:30pm	Outside
4:30pm	Choice Time
4:30-5pm	Potty Time
5-5:30pm	Snack
5:30-6pm	Story Time
6-6:30pm	Children ready to go home.

Preschool

Our Preschool Program here at *First Years* applies a modified Montessori approach to the teaching of basic skills and concepts. Within an environment that is structured to provide for the specific developmental needs of each child in the classroom, the children may make independent choices from a wide variety of materials. The classroom is divided into learning centers. Each center contains different materials, provided to develop specific skills, or to provide for creative exploration. The learning centers include: Writing Center, Library, Math Center, Music Center, and Building Center, Painting/Art Center/Cutting Center and a Multicultural Center. There are also specific shelves that contain puzzles, sensory materials, and Practical Life exploration materials, as well as a separate area for a Sensory Table. All of the materials in the learning centers are available to the children during Choice Time.

During *Circle Times*, the whole class participates in teacher-directed activities designed to teach specific skills, or concepts. Activities are structured, yet fun, enjoyable and entertaining. Some sample skills and concepts covered are basic Spanish vocabulary, American Sign Language, English alphabet and number concepts, as well as the seasons, days of the week and months of the year. The Preschool curriculum is outlined in a calendar of monthly themes, around which developmentally appropriate activities are planned. Some **sample themes** are Seasonal Changes, Community Helpers, the Food pyramid and Plant/Animal Communities. Themes are explored through songs, craft projects, games and books. The Lead Teacher, along with our Program Supervisor, plans all the activities in the classroom.

The day consists of a balanced routine of indoor and outdoor activities, individual and group experiences as children work together throughout the day.

Pre-Kindergarten (3.5-5 years old)

Pre-Kindergarten is a bridge between Preschool and Kindergarten experiences. The skills children develop encourage confidence in learning and interacting together. The curriculum provides for specific skills development in particular areas. We want to provide the kinds of experiences that will help your child enter school ready to succeed. In order to prepare children for Kindergarten we will expose them to the academic, communication, independence and social skills they need to do well in school. We will accomplish this by reading, talking and playing with your child. You as parents can do these same things at home and your child will be more than ready for school!

The following are some of the specific ways we teach your child in the Pre-Kindergarten but many of these items are introduced in the Preschool Classroom as well:

Language Skills:

The language skills area is divided into Pre-Reading/Reading and Communications.

Reading

- Letters will be introduced to the children in groups of three (D,E,F)...
- The children will orally match individual letters with their sounds
- The children will match words with the same letter
- The children will orally read their own names , as well as the names of classmates , as sight words

- The children will recognize/name orally the letters in their own names and the names of their Classmates.
- The children will visually discriminate/match “word cards”

Language

- The children will hear stories read aloud each day
- The children will explore the specific elements of the reading materials with individual and group craft projects, discussions & charts
- The children will sequence picture stories (2-3 parts), (4-6 parts)
- The children will retell stories in their own words
- The children will complete projects following specific 2-3 part directions (draw a red circle, cut it out and make a blue happy face on it)
- The children will use/create puppets and other manipulative to represent elements of stories
- The children will use dramatic play in thematic units, as well as independently
- The children will apply and use new vocabulary in songs, and “finger play’s”

Pre-Math

- The children will experience daily activities applying counting skills (1-100)
- The children will sort like quantities
- The children will match numerals to their quantities
- The children will compare quantities (more/less)
- The children will use a manipulative to explore addition of one to varied quantities(1+1), (2+1), (3+1) as a pattern
- The children will use a manipulative to measure, compare measurements (longer/shorter, wider/thinner, heavier/lighter)
- The children will match, extend and create their own 2-3 part patterns with colors, numbers,
- quantities, shapes, and classroom manipulative
- The class will create daily/weekly graphs comparing quantities (favorite dinosaur, favorite color, colors of clothing worn, ...)

Pre-Writing/Fine Motor Skills

- The children will finger-trace sand paper letters a-z
- The children will trace letters on paper a-z
- The children will trace their names
- The children will write their names independently
- The children will trace/write other sight words, including color words, and familiar words from the current theme
- The children will cut out 3-5 sided shapes independently
- The children will use a variety of media, including markers, crayons, colored pencils, and paints on a variety of surface textures and sizes (paper on easels, table tops, floor, ...)
- The children will use a variety of collage materials and skills, including tearing paper, cutting paper, and gluing different objects of different textures

- The children will use lacing cards
- The children will string beads in a variety of sizes

- The children will assemble puzzles
- The children will assemble jigsaw puzzles

Large Motor Skills

- The children will experience daily opportunities to encourage their development of balance, hand-eye coordination, agility, upper body strength and coordination
- The children will use a variety of materials for both indoor and outdoor movement activities, including scarves, balls, and parachutes.

Social/Behavioral Skills

- The children will learn and use specific phrases for taking turns and sharing classroom materials (-“can I have it please”, -can I play with you”, can I have it when you are done)
- The children will use specific phrases to express feelings;
 - “I felt _____ when you hit me”
 - “I do not like that you _____. Please stop.”
- The children will interact comfortably at play in the classroom
- The children will comfortably transition between activities in the classroom

Science/Social Studies

- The children will recall fact regarding specific science/social studies themes
- The children will explain specific science/social studies concepts in their own words
- The children will apply and use new vocabulary in songs, games and activities
- The children will create/use puppets, crafts and other manipulative to represent and explore specific science and social studies concepts
- The children will use dramatic play to explore specific science and social studies concepts

A Typical Daily Schedule for Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten (may vary with the Seasons):

6am-9am	Breakfast is served, reading and outside time.
9-9:30 am	Snack Time
9:30-10am	Circle Time
10-11:15 am	Choice time & Outside Time
11:00-11:45 am	Sharing Time/Story Time
11:30-12:30p.m.	Lunch
12:15-1:15 pm.	Nap Time until 2 pm (for those who nap) and the other children go Outside.
1:15-1:45 pm.	Circle Time for the Pre K
2-2:30 pm.	Snack Time
2:30-3p.m.	Project Time or Choice Time and individual work with the children.
3-4:30 pm.	Outside Time
4:30-5pm	Circle/Snack & then Choice Time
5:00-5:30pm	Snack Time Outside

6-6:30- pm

Story Time and get ready to leave.

Other Center Information:

Birthdays

At *FYCC* we believe in celebrating each child's birthday in a way that helps them realize how special they are. If you have pictures, your child will enjoy sharing these with the class.

Your child can experience the joy of giving by sharing with their classmates. A healthy, low sugar food item such as banana bread or some kind of muffin cupcakes can be shared at the afternoon snack. Unfortunately the *State of Washington* does not allow "home baked goods" so you will have to purchase them.

An inexpensive or "found" gift for each classmate (a sticker, a pencil, a shell, a rock or a feather) can be special if you wish.

If the birthday falls on the weekend please let the teacher know what alternate day to celebrate. Please keep whatever you do simple for the sake of the teacher and inexpensive for your sake in order to maintain the real meaning of the birthday.

Injury Policy

The staff will administer first aid and complete an Incident/Accident report for minor injuries. In case of an emergency, the parent and the child's physician will be contacted immediately. If necessary, we will administer first aid and call 911. When appropriate, the EMS will transport the child to your doctor, clinic, or hospital.

Outdoor Play

Children are more alert and feel better when they get fresh air and physical exercise. In poor weather recess time is short, however all children do go outside.

A child well enough to come to school should be well enough to go outside. Please dress your child appropriately for the outdoors (mittens and hats in the winter, shorts and sun block in the summer). Layers and extra clothes are always a great idea.

Child Abuse

FYCC staff members are all aware of the signs of abuse and are required **by law** to report suspected cases to CPS.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION

The *Directors* have the overall responsibility for the daily operation of *First Years Children's Center*.

The *Program Supervisor* is responsible for the Early Childhood Program content and Curriculum used in each classroom as well as helping with conflict management and child assessments.

Many of our staff have years and years of working with young children in “group settings” and also have an education in *Early Childhood Education*.

Teaching assistants work in the classroom under the supervision of the teacher to obtain experience in early childhood development. Some of them also have prior group care experience and some course work.

Teacher aides provide child supervision under the guidance of the teacher, both in the classroom and on the playground.

We expect and encourage our staff to participate in “in-service training”. Teamwork is encouraged and program consistency is enhanced through staff meetings. *FYCC* financially supports professional advancement. The State requires that all staff members maintain current

CPR (including child & infant), First Aid certification, have HIV/ AIDS training and each staff member has a background check done by the State Patrol. Lead Staff have to take an initial 20 hour course in *Early Childhood Education* and then they have take 10 hours per year of certified *Early Childhood Education Classes*.

Staff are available to “baby-sit” for you after hours. *FYCC* is not responsible for the safety and care of your child outside of the Center.

EXTRACURRICULAR

Volunteers

FYCC encourages parents to participate in as many of our activities as they can. We do realize the majority of you work, so if you are able to donate items or time on any given weekend that would be great too. We may need help with painting, raking wood chips or any number of other projects. It would also be very interesting if you would like to come into your child’s classroom and give a presentation of the work you do, or talk about a subject we are studying.

All those that volunteer on a regular basis must have a background check by the *State of Washington* and a negative T.B. Test done before they may work in the classrooms.

Parent-Teacher Conferences and Meetings

We will schedule informal conferences between parents and your child’s teachers in the spring and fall. Please call and arrange a time. An announcement will go out to you when these conferences are available. If you feel you need to talk with your child’s teacher sooner please call and arrange a time to meet with her.

Parent Resources

FYCC makes a continuing effort to inform parents of seminars, books, videos, counseling and information in the community regarding early childhood education and information

PET POLICY

First Years Children's Center now has a "Center Dog" named Bella. Bella belongs to Jodi Williams, our Lead Teacher in our Pre-Kindergarten #1 classroom. **Bella will only be in contact with the Preschool and Prekindergarten #1 & #2 children.** FYCC also has 1 tarantula, 1 gecko, several fish and two turtles. The following is our new *Pet Policy* in accordance with the *Washington Administrative Codes* (WAC) for pets and animals.

In accordance with WAC 170-295-5170

- (1) When animals are on the center premises you must:
 - a) This is FYCC's official notification to you the parents, in writing, that there are animal's on the premises. There are no potential health risks associated with Bella but the other animals may be dangerous because they can infect a person or child with Salmonella. These animals named above will not be touched by the staff or the children **at any time.** If a child from the Pre-K #1 class has a dog allergy, the dog will only visit on occasion and said child will be put in another classroom for a short time while the other children interact with the dog;
 - b) FYCC will have a signed document from each parent stating they understand the potential risks of the animals on FYCC's premises;
 - c) FYCC will not hang pet containers or cages in corridors, entryways or over where children rest, eat, sleep, and play;
 - d) Handwashing signs will be posted in areas where pets are housed;
 - e) The container for Bella and the other animals are not in the corridor, entry way or where children eat and play;
 - f) Jodi Williams will clean-up after her dog, Bella. Doug Hartley is the only one who cleans/handles the other animals;
 - g) Animals are not in food prep areas and sinks are not used to clean pet supplies;
 - h) Animal are not allowed in rooms that are used by infants and toddlers;**
 - i) FYCC has proof on file of rabies vaccinations for Bella;
 - j) FYCC meets local requirements for immunizations, vaccination and licensing requirements for animals;
 - k) FYCC will organize children in small groups for supervised activities when handling Bella;
- (2) The following are policies and procedures for management of FYCC animals:
 - a) Children with allergies will be put in another classroom when Bella is visiting;
 - b) Bell's pet container will be cleaned and managed by Jodi Williams and Doug Hartley will clean and manage the other animal containers;
 - c) Jodi Williams will feed, water & groom Bella during nap time or on her breaks when Bella is at the center;
 - d) There is curricula posted in the Pre-K classroom for children and staff regarding safety & hygiene when handling Bella;
 - e) Bella will be removed from the center if she shows signs of sickness. She will see, treated and given approval by a veterinarian. Written proof of Bella's veterinary visits will be maintained in her file.
- (3) Reptiles and amphibians will be in an aquarium or other totally self-contained area at all times. None of the children, not matter their age, will have contact with the reptiles or amphibians.
- (4) FYCC will not allow any animals on the premises if they are known to bite or be aggressive.
- (5) FYCC will make sure that the children wash their hands after touching Bella.

