

Welcome to the Toddler Room!



Interlake Child Care and Learning Center
(206) 632-6479
www.interlakechildcare.com

In an effort to make your experience and the experience of your child as fulfilling and successful as possible, we have compiled some important information about the routines, goals and practices in the Toddler Room. We feel the sense of community at Interlake is one of the unique strengths we offer, providing the children with a feeling of belonging in a comfortable and safe environment. To that end, we encourage parents to ask questions, spend time in the classroom with their child and become acquainted with teachers and parents in the Interlake community. *We have an Open Door policy for families to observe and participate in our program.* Children are more confident and independent when their parents and caregivers are also confident and well informed.

Toddlerhood is a very special time in your child's life. They are starting to become verbal as they also learn important self-help skills. (That's why they put their shoes on and take them off over and over again.) As they become independent, they say "No!" quite a lot. They are also practicing important social abilities and critical fine and gross motor skills. We strive to create a partnership with you to help your child put our mission into practice ... ***Interlake Child Care & Learning Center creates an inclusive and vibrant community with families and young children. Interlake's loving environment and anti-bias, culturally relevant curriculum inspires children to grow into competent, confident and compassionate citizens of the world.***

Please let us know how we can help bring your family values and culture into our school.

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We can be available to answer your questions during classroom hours, or in a conference if more extended discussion is required. Please let us know how we can help you! A good time for teachers to check in with parents is during nap time, 1:00-3:00 pm. You can call the center or ask teachers to call you.

TODDLER ROOM SCHEDULE

** The schedule is what we aim for, it may fluctuate from time to time meeting the needs of children, families and staff.*

- 7:30 Center opens and children begin to arrive
Free choice time
- 8:30 Second teacher arrives- diaper checks
- 9:00 Breakfast, served until 9:30. Children put away their dishes and wipe hands and face, wipe down their eating area
- 9:30 Outside time until about 10:15
- 10:00 Outdoor play & curriculum. Begin diapers and potty practices
*Waddler time/Pre-Preschool time if possible, approximately 10:00-11:00
- 10:15 Small group time (except Monday)
- 10:45 Large group movement
- 11:00 Free choice, inside and outside choices offered
- 11:40 Clean-up & wash hands, Circle Time
- 12:00 Lunch
- 12:20 As children finish lunch - diaper changes, nap time (approximately 12:30-3:00)
- -- As children wake up - diaper change, quiet choice
- 3:00 Music and free choice play in classroom
- 3:30 Wash hands & snack time
- 4:15 Outside time
- 5:00 Inside Choices, last diaper check
- 5:30 Late afternoon snack & stories, songs and felt board activities
- 6:00 Center closes

Morning Drop Off

(Having a smooth drop-off is an important start of your child's day.)

The classroom and morning teacher are ready for your child at 7:30am. The entrance doors will be locked until that time.

To help children feel secure about what to expect throughout the day and to participate in the varieties of activities offered throughout the day, we encourage families to have regular times for drop-offs and pick-ups. Of course there may be times that the routine may be hard to keep, so letting us know when this may happen allows us to understand your child's disposition in context of his/her life at home.

Please wash your and your child's hands upon arrival either in the bathroom or in the classroom sinks. Your child must be signed in per Washington State licensing requirements. The sign in sheet is located in the sign-in area in the front room. Always sign in with your full name, the time, and note who will be picking up your child. Fill out the Daily form with name, date and any communication about your child for the day (i.e. "early pick up today" or "didn't sleep well last night") or if your contact information changes for that day. **Remember to inform the office if your contact information changes permanently.** Please make your best guess about when you will be picking up, as we use that information to help keep the toddlers informed and having smooth

transitions. It can be a source of anxiety for our toddler friends to hear they are going home right after snack if they then stay all the way through the day.

We apply sunscreen during school between the months of May-September. Please apply sunscreen to your child upon arrival and put a check mark to the left of your child's name on the sunscreen log so we know it's been done. The teachers will re-apply during the day. Thanks for your help!

Each child has a basket labeled with their name for clean diapers and extra clothes located on the bathroom shelf. Please check this basket daily for soiled clothing to be taken home and to replenish your child's supply of clothing and diapers. Each child also has a nap basket for their nap items (sheet, blanket and snuggle or comfort toy). Please wash the blanket and lovey once a week.

Always check in with the teacher before leaving for the day. We are more than happy to help comfort your child when you are leaving, don't hesitate to ask for a hand when you are ready to go!

Tips for successful separations:

- Make sure your child knows the drop off routine ahead of time. Having a regular routine and drop off time is extremely helpful. This may include reading one book, playing together at one station for several minutes or simply giving your child "minutes" ("I'm going to leave in five minutes.") and of course washing hands.
- While it may be tempting to allow your child to bring in a toy from home to ease the home-to-school transition, please refrain. Books, music or story CDs are "sharable," and welcome anytime. Other toys from home become a distraction from the play, activities and materials we offer at Interlake. Toddlers have difficulty sharing their own toys (and Interlake's too), not to mention the risk of a child's favorite toy becoming lost or broken.
- Please make sure your toddler finishes any last minute snacks before entering the classroom, as we cannot have outside food in the room for the safety of all our friends.
- If you give your child a verbal warning about how long you can stay, make sure you follow through. This helps your child to trust your verbal statements, prepare for the separation and the day ahead, and shows your child that you are confident that they will be okay without you at school. While you may anticipate a few tears when you leave, always say your "goodbye and have a great day!" before you go. (If children sense that you don't think they will have a great day, they probably won't.) It can be helpful for some toddlers to be offered the opportunity to push their parents out the door.
- It's helpful to choose a time of day that will allow your child to find something engaging to do when entering the classroom. It's difficult for most children to join in at clean-up, transitions, meal times, or naptime.
- We strongly encourage parents to bring their children before 9am, since children will have a chance to involve themselves in free choices with their friends at drop-off time.
- Always feel free to call and check in on your child. Most children are able to join in play within five minutes of a difficult goodbye; we are happy to let you know how your child transitioned to the classroom after you left. We realize that goodbyes are often as stressful

for parents as for the children, if not more so. We are eager to support parents as well as children with the transition. (Feel the love.)

Pick-Up Time

- Remember to always check in with the teacher when picking up your child!
- Sign out legibly using your full name.
- Check the basket in the bathroom for items to take home. Soiled cloth diapers and clothing are placed in plastic bags, ready-to-go.
- Check diaper chart.
- Check parent pocket. These are located on the wall just right of the door leading to the toddler back room. Parents, teachers and the office communicate by putting notes or reports in these pockets. They are labeled with the child's first name.
- If your child needs time to transition out of the Center, to say goodbye to friends, or to show you their art, plan some time for that into your routine so that your child does not feel rushed, and the school-to-home transition can be smooth.
- If anyone new comes to pick up your toddler, please be sure that they are listed on your emergency contact form (or that you have called the office to confirm who is coming) and that they come with their ID for teachers to check. This is crucial to ensuring all of our friends go home safely with whoever is supposed to take them.

Children's Nap Baskets and Shelf Space

Each child has a nap basket labeled with their first name, in which to keep their nap time blanket, a lovey from home, and a nap time sheet (provided by the school). **Please send a blanket and lovey that will easily fit into the nap basket, as we have limited space.** Nap baskets are not accessible to the children throughout the day, but teachers will retrieve items as needed. At nap time the children put their shoes in their baskets, and when naptime is over they put their own belongings back into the basket.

If your child uses a pacifier, they will be given a school one at naptime only. Pacifiers are sanitized after each use. We always welcome pacifier donations. Teethers are used typically to comfort children when new teeth are coming in. They're also used as a transitional item during drop off times or if children get hurt. If your child uses a teether, it's helpful for them to have 2-3 at school (Interlake also has extra teethers). Teethers are sanitized after each use.

Each child also has a basket on the shelf space above the bathroom bathtub, labeled with their name. This space is not accessible to children. This is where diapers and extra clothing are stored. Please remember to check this basket daily for wet or soiled clothes. We use diaper wipes at school, and if you prefer us to use your brand from home, you may bring wipes and we will store them in the bathroom. Diaper cream is considered over-the-counter medication and requires parents/guardians to complete a medication form. Teachers document when they apply diaper cream during diaper changes.

Notes about clothing:

- Please be sure to keep 2 extra sets of weather appropriate clothes in the child's shelf space!
- BE SURE TO LABEL ALL CLOTHING, BLANKETS, LOVEYS, ETC.
- If your child comes home in borrowing clothes, we ask that you please wash them and return them in a timely manner.

Diapering and Potty Practices

Our morning diaper changes begin at 8:00 and then again at 9:30, after the third teacher arrives. One teacher changes diapers while the children are split into two groups playing in either of our toddler play yards. Diapers are also changed before nap, after nap, at 5:00, and when needed. Changes are recorded on the chart hanging on the wall above the changing table.

The potty is available to all children who want to use it. It is equipped with a child sized reducer seat, which is sanitized after each use. Let us know if you think your child is ready to begin potty training so that we can assist you by helping your child use the potty at school. We are happy to share potty training information with you at any time.

NOTE: Beginning potty training too early often ends in frustration and failure. Classroom teachers have experience helping many children learn to use the potty, and are very willing to help you assess your child's readiness.

Children wearing underwear may need to use the potty more than our scheduled diaper changing times. We always respond to a request to use the bathroom made by a child in underwear and often take children to the potty before going on walks and after lunch to avoid accidents. Let us know if your child needs frequent reminders or if he/she is able to tell a teacher that a potty trip is needed.

Notes on Potty Training:

- LEAVE LOTS OF EXTRA CLOTHES FOR YOUR CHILD DURING POTTY TRAINING.
- We change a child's diaper immediately when the child has had a bowel movement.
- Children and teachers wash their hands before and after each diaper change or potty use, and changing tables are sanitized to avoid the spread of germs.
- Teachers use the words pee and poop to refer to urine and feces, vulva and penis to refer to body parts when necessary.

Naptime

- Naptime begins around 12:30.
- Teachers help children settle onto their mats by tucking them in with their blankets and loveys then rubbing their backs or petting their hair to help them fall asleep. Let us know if your child has any special naptime routines.

- We play restful music during naptime, and discourage talking, saying, “it’s time for sleeping.”
- If your child wakes up before 3:00, they may join a teacher in the back room for some quiet wake-up time activities.
- Nap times are recorded on your child’s Daily.

Circle & Large Group Time

The Toddler Room has an informal circle time each day around 11:45 (before lunch). We learn the names of all the children through song, and sing simple repetitive songs with clapping and movements. Circle time tends to be shorter with younger children, especially when many of the children are less than two. As they get older circle time will get longer, including books, flannel board stories, puppets and games. The children are encouraged to join the circle, but are never required to. There are other available activities for them to do if they are uninterested.

Circle time leads to large group movement time when we pass out shakers or scarves to do creative movement to music. This time too will evolve into more elaborate activities as the children grow more accustomed to our routine, including yoga, animal games and parades.

Small Group Time

Small group time consists of activities planned by individual teachers, by means of emergent curriculum. This means that teachers plan activities; however we are adept at extending and improvising based on children’s interests.

Each teacher picks one area of development to focus on for the week (ie. art, self-help skills, math/science, etc), and toddlers are free to choose which activity they would like to explore. Often, friends will bounce from place to place at the beginning of the week and settle into one choice towards the end. These activities include and are not limited to: art, sensory, cooking, outings, books, dancing, building, fine and gross motor activities or simply exploring the classroom and going from there.

Tuesday and Thursdays small group is Spanish and Movement class, respectively. We do not have small group times or Spanish and Movement classes in the summer.

Our hope is to create a community with families and to meet that end, please feel free to share favorite activities from your home or plan a visit to our class!

Medication and Accident Logs

With proper authorization, we can administer prescribed, over-the-counter and homeopathic medication. Medication forms are stored on the freezer door in the kitchen area of the Toddler Room. The name of the medication, how much and how often to administer medication, and method of administration must be filled out. **WE CANNOT ADMINISTER MEDICATION WITHOUT THIS SHEET, COMPLETED WITH A PARENT’S SIGNATURE AND STOP DATE.** For over-the-counter and homeopathic medication, the dosage listed for your child’s age group must be on the package,

or we will need your doctor's written instructions before medication is administered. Any time we administer medications, it is recorded on the sheet that you have filled out. Parents must train staff to administer medications for asthma and rescue breathing or emergency medicine.

Refrigerated medications are stored in the fridge and inaccessible to children. Non-refrigerated medications are stored above the fridge, in a box labeled "meds," out of the reach of children.

If your child has an accident during the day (bumps, scratches, bites, etc.) the time, place and nature of the accident are recorded, as well as the treatment and the name of the teacher who witnessed the accident and cared for the child. You will receive the original of this accident report; a copy will be placed in your child's file in our office. Toddlers are learning how to socialize and to avoid any child being labeled as "aggressive," teachers don't reveal the identity of the child who hurts another child. We may consult the parents of the child who hurts another, so that we understand more about the child and how we can help her/him develop better coping skills. Biting, scratching, hitting, etc. are behaviors that can occur in the Toddler Room. We work through this behavior in a positive way by having friends check in with one another, offering names for feelings and experiences, and providing alternative ideas for expressing those feelings. Any injury of the face or head will be called home immediately.

Serious injuries or illness will be reported to the parents immediately. If your child vomits, has two or more incidents of diarrhea, or has a fever of 100 degrees or more, a teacher will call a parent to arrange for the child to be picked up as soon as possible. A child must be fever free (without fever reducer) and have no incidents of sickness related vomiting or diarrhea (we realize that children may vomit from crying or coughing which is an exception to the rule) in the last 24 hours before being accepted into group care. Please have alternative childcare arrangements in place for your child.

Virginia Mason Medical Center provides the Tender Loving Care (TLC) program for children who are mildly ill and one year or older. The telephone number is (206) 583-6521.

Parents/guardians will need to fill out the Individual Child Health Care Plan for children with allergies, asthma, or other ongoing health concerns, including the need for any rescue medications or breathing treatments (albuterol).

Curriculum and Learning Centers

Teachers are responsible for planning weekly curriculum during their individual and team planning times. Interlake uses emergent curriculum, which is child-centered, age-appropriate and based on interests exhibited by the children in the classroom. For this reason, planned curriculum may be supplemented or replaced by something that the children find more engaging. Curriculum is age-appropriate and designed to help children learn vocabulary, develop muscle control and increase social and self-help skills while playing. The weekly curriculum plans are posted just above the whiteboard in the large toddler room, or on the wall above the coat hooks when webbing is used.

Play spaces are also designed to teach children important skills. For example, block areas help with skill-building in math (patterns, counting, measurement, problem solving), language and literacy skills (communication, vocabulary), hand-eye coordination, and social skills.

Each child has their own portfolio in which their work is kept. It is stored on the shelf in the main classroom. Each piece is labeled with your child's name and the date it was completed. The portfolios also contain pictures taken during their time in the Toddler room. Feel free to check these out with your child at any time. All teachers and parents are welcome to write notes in these about the child or something the child did or said. These portfolios are passed on as they leave the toddler room to the preschool room or another place, as a record of their time here. As new toddlers transition from the infant room, their portfolios are brought with them.

Toddler Room Goals and Opportunities

Our goal as teachers of young children is to provide them with important social skills, varied experiences that develop physical and cognitive skills, and prepare them to be independent and thoughtful adults all in a safe and nurturing environment. Our curriculum is child-centered, developmentally appropriate and allows children to participate at a rate that is both comfortable and challenging.

Social/Emotional

- Awareness of feelings, ability to label them and appropriate emotional response
- Problem solve creatively with some impulse control/substitution of language for physical actions
- Seek new experiences
- Interact with children and adults cooperatively and respectfully

Language

- Communicate with adults and children verbally and/or sign in a range of contexts
- Listen to directions with one or more steps and follow through
- Recognize and identify adults and children by name
- Name familiar objects in the environment and ask questions about unfamiliar objects
- Expand use of American Sign Language (children continue to add to their list of ASL words)
- Begin to understand words/phrases in Spanish

Gross Motor

- Climb ladder and climbing furniture using hand over hand motions
- Walk through neighborhood while holding hands
- Run with increasing confidence
- Throw balls with improved aim
- Explore moving through space with dance

Fine Motor

- Turn pages in a book
- Draw with pens and crayons
- Work a 3-10 piece puzzle
- Build with Lego's and stack blocks in a tower

Self-help

- Put away toys, dishes and personal items when requested
- Feed self with spoon, drink with cup without lid
- Gain knowledge about body functions and relation to the potty and possibly have experience using the potty successfully
- Wash one's own hands and wipe face clean after eating messy foods
- Show care for one's own property and the property of others
- Exhibit an understanding of safety rules and their application

Cognitive

- Discriminate between different shapes and colors, identifying some by name
- Identify body parts
- Understand that actions have consequences
- Sort objects by appearance or use

Child Observations & Assessments

Teachers keep ongoing assessments of each child's developmental progress, which enable us to plan programs to meet the individual developmental needs of each child. Teachers collect and analyze data from formal and anecdotal (informal) observations and conversations with parents, and other teachers and staff. Our curriculum is geared to support individual children's development and interests. Conducting observations and completing the assessment tools ensures that the curriculum is appropriate for each child.

Our program uses The Ages and Stages Questionnaire and The Teaching Strategies Gold Developmental Assessment in each classroom. This research-based assessment tool kit aids teachers in gathering data relevant to physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and language development, as well as special abilities and interests of infants, toddlers and preschoolers. During the parent/teacher conference, teachers and parents share information about the child and together, they collaborate on developing curriculum and providing practice for building specific skills. The completed conference form is signed by the parent and the child's teacher, at the end of the conference. The family takes a copy of the report with them and the signed copy remains in the child's file. Assessment portfolios are confidential and stored in each child's file in a locked cabinet. Parents can access and review the assessment tool upon request. Assessment and other sensitive child and family information remain confidential.

Parent Participation

One of the ways we build the Interlake community is parent participation. Parents are asked to participate one – two hours per month (one hour per parent per month). Families help in a variety of ways, including gardening, painting, sewing mat covers, repairing books, and participating on one of our committees (Facilities, Community Building, Fundraising, Diversity and Technology). Parents/guardians can attend work parties, participate in classroom activities (reading stories, holding infants, playing a musical instrument), or become board members! Based on what you

indicate as interests on your “Parent Participation” form at enrollment, you will be added to a contact list for one of the above committees.

Family Style Dining

Here in the toddler room, we work on family style dining during breakfast and lunch time. Family-style dining requires friends to make their own choices about what food they will eat, as well as requires a more independent approach to mealtimes. This includes scooping their own food, passing the bowls to the next friend, and pouring their own milk. The children enjoy getting a chance to do it themselves and working with teachers to learn how to do things just like they will do in the preschool room. At least 2 teachers will sit with the kids to model passing bowls and taking servings of food.

Toothbrushing

All of the children participate in toothbrushing after lunch. Before lying down for nap, all children gather with one teacher. They will sit on the floor while the teacher hands each child their labeled toothbrush. The children then brush their teeth for two minutes with the teacher singing and encouraging them to brush all around! We do not use toothpaste until the children transition to the preschool room. After the two minutes are up, children hand their toothbrushes back to the teacher to place in their labeled toothbrush basket. All toothbrushes are replaced every 3 months, or sooner if necessary.

Songs and Stories

There are lots of opportunities for singing, storytelling and flannel board stories. Below is a sample list of songs and flannel board stories children grow to learn and love. Feel free to share family favorites that we might use too!

Songs:

Slippery Fish
Welcome song
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
Hokey Pokey
Itsy Bitsy Spider
Orca Whale
Row, row, row your boat
Ring around the Rosy
The Fire Truck Song
3 Little Monkeys
I’m a Little Teapot
The Elephant song
And many more!

Flannel Board Stories:

Ocean animals
5 Little Hotdogs
5 Little Jack O Lanterns
Brown Bear, Brown Bear
5 Little Speckled Frogs
5 Balloons
5 Enormous Dinosaurs
3 Little Ducks
And many more!

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