



Parent & Me Handbook 2010 - 2011

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Welcome to St. Paul's Preschool Parent and Me Program

We are delighted to have you and your child enrolled in our Parent and Me program. *"It is our desire to offer the preschool age child an educational environment and an opportunity outside the home to develop a creative, constructive attitude toward themselves, others, and the world. The preschool is open for enrollment to all children of preschool age, regardless of race, creed, religion, color, sex, or place of birth."*

THE SPECIFIC PURPOSES OF THE PARENT AND ME PROGRAM ARE:

1. To offer a time for Mother/Father (or other significant adult) and child to enjoy being together.
2. To provide a positive first school experience in a structured, age appropriate environment.
3. To provide a support group - a chance for parents to discuss the common challenges and joys of parenting toddlers.
4. A time for children to interact and for parents to observe their children.
5. To develop language acquisition.
6. To provide an opportunity for your child to *begin* to learn about sharing with others and develop empathy.
7. To help develop a positive self image for the child through a relaxed and encouraging environment.
8. To create a stimulating environment for new experiences.
9. A time to share ideas and hints for making parenting easier and more enriching.
10. To have FUN!

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

St. Paul's Parent and Me program offers an age appropriate experience for children two years of age one day per week for one hour and 30 minutes per class session. The class structure is such that it gives the child a typical preschool experience in a bite size time frame. During a typical class session your child will be exposed to various activities:

Playground Time is structured to develop their gross motor development and motor planning.

Circle Time is introduced to increase their attention span and encourage group participation. It also exposes the child to respond to simple directions, uses oral language and builds self confidence and the ability to express themselves, recall songs, stories etc.

Toileting Time (although children do not need to be potty trained to participate in this program) this activity teaches simply hygiene and self - help skills.

Snack Time gives the child a chance to learn cooperation, waiting for a turn and socialization.

Art/ Free - Flow Time Children are exposed to a variety of simple media. They will be able to make choices, decisions and solve problems. Develop eye-hand coordination and use their 5 senses to gain information about the environment.

TUITION

The annual fee for the Parent and Me Program is \$800.00 or \$80.00 per month. Payments need to be turned into the school office or in the tuition drop box located on our staff workroom door by the first week of each month. **Tuition received after the 10th of any month will be considered late and subject to a \$10.00 late fee charge.** Checks should be made out to St. Paul's Preschool. If you are unable to continue attending we request that you give the school office a two - week notice.

REQUIRED REGISTRATION FORMS

Each child must have a completed Health Evaluation form on file, filled out and signed by their physician, which states that they have been immunized. This should include; D.P.T., polio, M.M.R., HEP B, VARICELLA, HIB AND T.B. Other forms required by the state include:

1. Identification and Emergency Information
2. Physician's Report
3. Consent for Medical Treatment
4. Parent's and Personal Rights
5. Health History

These forms must be turned into your classroom teacher on the first day of school. We also strongly suggest that you, the parent, also receive a T.B. test.

GENERAL RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. Please be prompt in arriving to school and leaving at the close of the day (your teacher has limited time between class to set up for the next class session). Remember that the habits you form now can last a lifetime for your child. Please feel free to visit with other parents outside the school's main gate before class begins.
2. **Siblings or other young guests are not allowed to attend the class session. We are limited by the State of California Community Care licensing as to our total enrollment and we can be inspected at any time. We cannot be out of compliance with this number for any reason.**
3. You as the parent are your child's first and most important teacher. The Parent and Me Program is set up so that with guidance from the classroom teacher you can model appropriate one-on-one behavior for your child's first learning experience.
4. Plan on participating with your child at all times. This means following your child on the playground as they choose from the variety of outside activities and while free flowing from each classroom activity.
 - a. During circle time for example it is extremely important that you, as the adult, are actively engaged in the activity that is taking place. We request that you sing along with the songs and be attentive during story time. We ask that you do not talk with the other adults during this time, as it is very distracting to all participants.
5. Be aware of where your child is at all times. It's easy to get distracted when interacting with other adults.
6. Please NO CELL PHONES
7. Please NO HOT COFFEE, glass or ceramic containers either on the playground or in the classroom.
8. HAVE FUN!

COMMON PROBLEMS

1. Most children are just developing their attention span at 2 years of age. Part of our program's goal however, is to increase their ability to sit and to become joyfully engaged in the offered activities. This is especially true during the 'quiet / cooperative' activities of circle time.
 - a. If your child is not yet able, or chooses not to 'attend' during this time it is best to have them sit in your lap. Close physical contact or soothing activities like rubbing their back can help them relax and in fact encourage their participation and concentration.
 - b. Please refrain from allowing your child to roam around the room, playing with toys or generally disrupting the group.
 - c. Make sure to let your child know when circle time is coming. Prepare him/her for what is happening next ("In 5 minutes we are going inside to listen to a story" etc.) This allows them time to transition from an outside activity and helps prepare them for a successful experience.
 - d. Sometimes a favorite transition toy from home (something soft and noise-less is usually best) aids them in understanding what the expectations are. We prefer that you refrain from using a pacifier during this time as it prohibits their ability to develop their language skills and limits their participation.
 - e. Children at this age generally have a difficult time with sharing. It is something they will learn with help and example. However, it is usually easy at this age to redirect a child to another toy or activity.
2. If your child is feeling fussy or irritable feel free to step outside with him/her for a few minutes in order to calm him/her down. A few minutes of quiet time can do wonders!
 - a. Help them to regroup and then re-direct their actions. Give him/her a choice of what activity they wish to engage in and then gently help them re-enter the play.
3. Lastly, remember that your child is just 2 years old. Much of what you are experiencing is very typical. The good news is that you have a built in support group. Always remember that you can seek the advice from the classroom teacher, additional support staff and your own peer group.

DO NOT BE DISTURBED:

- **IF YOUR CHILD IS SHY IN THE GROUP**
- **IF HE/SHE REFUSES JUICE OR SNACK**
- **IF HE/SHE DOES NOT JOIN IN AT GROUP TIME**
- **IF HE/SHE REFUSES TO SHARE OR TAKE TURNS**
- **IF HE/SHE HITS**

ONCE AGAIN, MUCH OF WHAT YOU ARE OBSERVING IS AGE APPROPRIATE FOR A 2 YEAR OLD. HELP TO 'CORRECT' BEHAVIOR BY MODELING A MORE POSITIVE RESPONSE OR ACTION, IN A CALM, MODULATED VOICE. REMEMBER ALSO THAT WATCHING IS A FORM OF PARTICIPATION FOR THE TYPICAL TWO-YEAR OLD. LOOK FOR CUES FROM THE TEACHER AND OTHER PARENTS WHEN WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

While this program obviously is set up with parent involvement in mind, there are other ways for you to become involved in the total preschool picture. Below is a partial listing of our parent involvement activities. For detailed information please contact your classroom teacher, director or school office.

1. Fall Fundraiser
2. Spring Fling
3. St. Paul's Gardening Committee / children's garden parties
4. Staff Appreciation Breakfast
5. Parent Work Days

COMMUNICATION

Your classroom has a communication file box and each child has their own file folder inside. We ask that you check this folder each week that you attend school. Newsletters and other pertinent flyers will be placed in this box periodically to keep you informed of school happenings.

A class directory with all participants addresses and phone numbers will be available to you the first month of school. If you do not want to have this information published, please contact the office.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR THE 2010 - 2011 SCHOOL YEAR

Because of your participation in the Parent and Me program this year you are already assured of a placement for the next school year for your child. **What we cannot guarantee is whether we will have morning (9:00 - 11:30) or afternoon (12:00 - 2:30) openings.** Church members / School board members as well as returning families will have a priority registration date before you. You will have priority over anyone else (i.e. wait list families or community members).

Registration typically occurs during the month of March. All Parent and Me participants will be notified when registration will take place by your classroom teacher or school director.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

The best choice for dress at school still are sturdy, inexpensive, washable play clothes. Because we are a developmental preschool, children will be getting messy! Painting, playing with sand and water, pudding and playdough is an active part of the preschooler's day. Tennis shoes or other sturdy, non-slippery shoes are the best choice for footwear. Order forms for our St. Paul's Preschool t-shirts were included in your registration packet. Please check that flyer for specific ordering details and deadlines.

BIRTHDAY AND THE BIRTHDAY BOOK CLUB

You may wish to celebrate your child's special day or even an "un-birthday" while at school. Please check with your teacher to set a date. While bringing in a special snack or drink please check for any food allergies. We ask you NOT to bring in party favors, balloons etc. "Simple" is best when working with 2 year olds.