



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

LEARN

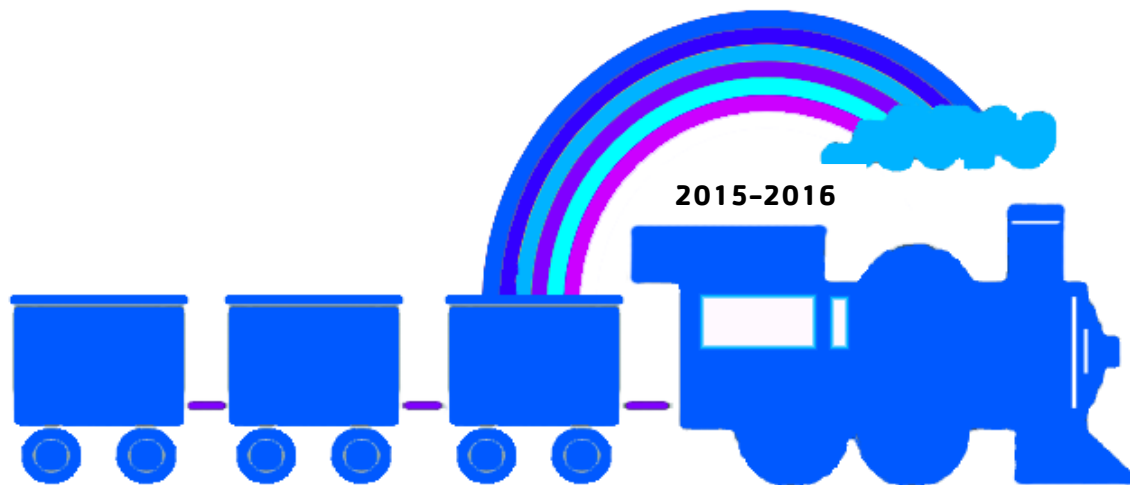
GROW

DISCOVER

THE ANITA & G. THOMAS HARGROVE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

RAINBOW STATION INFANT/PRESCHOOL CHILDCARE

PARENT HANDBOOK



NEW CANAAN YMCA

564 South Avenue, New Canaan, CT 06840

203-966-4528

WELCOME TO THE NEW CANAAN YMCA ANITA & G. THOMAS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER!

Thank you for allowing us to serve your child in our program. We look forward to the year ahead and hope this information answers many of your questions. If you need further assistance or wish to speak to myself or Carol, our contact information is below. As always, we appreciate your feedback and look forward to getting to know you and your family!

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NEW CANAAN YMCA MISSION

Enriching all people in spirit, mind and body... The New Canaan YMCA is committed to providing programs and services that promote the health and well-being of our members and our community. We are founded on Christian principles and are guided by our core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

YMCA FOCUS

The Y is a cause-driven organization that is for youth development, for healthy living, and for social responsibility. That's because a strong community can only be achieved when we invest in our children, our health, and our neighbors.

Our three areas of focus:

- **Youth Development:** Nurturing the potential of every child and teen.
- **Healthy Living:** Improving the community's health and well-being.
- **Social Responsibility:** Giving back and providing support to our neighbors.

STATEMENT OF CENTER PHILOSOPHY

The New Canaan YMCA Preschool programs operate on the premise that children's natural curiosity and desire to make sense of their world are used to motivate them to become involved in learning activities. A child's personal motivation is increased through self-esteem when they experience success, encouragement, challenges, no social barriers, and freedom of creativity. In such an environment, learning is enhanced and the foundation for all future learning is developed.

We offer children spacious, bright, age-appropriate indoor and outdoor space to explore and learn through play based curriculum. Our goal is to create a stimulating environment, with continuous opportunities and learning experiences for the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of the preschool child.

Our staff is dedicated to taking care of the whole child. The staff provides a well-rounded curriculum and offers many different experiences in the classroom. This includes art, science, cooking, dramatic play, outdoor activities and more.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Encourage communication between parents and teachers about each child's overall development.
- Create an environment where children feel safe, secure, and accepted.
- Provide children with opportunities to collaborate with peers and develop meaningful relationships with YMCA teachers and caregivers, in an effort to promote a sense of community within the group.
- Develop each child's awareness of themselves and those around them—focusing on respecting differences, being responsible for their actions, being honest, and caring for one another.
- Create an environment and program where the child's natural desire to learn is stimulated through meaningful, appropriate, and playful learning experiences, one that meets the needs of each child as an individual.
- Provide opportunities for children to express thoughts, ideas and feelings; listen to and appreciate others points of view; and to be an integral part of a group—both as a leader and active member.
- Develop a curriculum and program environment that incorporates each child's natural interests, curiosities, and developmental levels.
- Encourage each child to solve problems independently.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES & CURRICULUM

The child development staff organizes a curriculum on a weekly basis with each week being planned around a specific theme. Daily plans are designed in a variety of curricular areas, each of which concentrates on developing specific skills.

Throughout the day, the children participate in various types of activities, including the following: large group activity, small group activity, and self-exploration and discovery through guided free-play activity. Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children, and materials.

Large group activities, such as gym games and outdoor play, are planned daily, so children can develop gross motor skills, learn about outdoor environments, and express themselves loudly and freely.

The children work in small groups with the teacher on daily projects and learning activities from among a variety of learning areas the teachers prepare. Children are provided concrete learning activities with materials and people relevant to their own life experiences. Areas may include blocks, books, dress-up, games and puzzles, housekeeping, music, etc. These activities provide the children with opportunities to develop important social skills, such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and problem solving.

Teachers move among the areas to facilitate children's involvement with materials, activities, and others, by asking questions, offering suggestions, or adding more complex materials or ideas to a situation.

A typical day could include Bouncing Bears (gymnastics), swimming lessons (4 year olds only), circle time, art, science and nature, health and nutrition, music, as well as free play and snack time.

Our preschool programs encourage young children to be:

- Explorers
- Communicators
- Thinkers
- Interactive
- Creators
- Problem Solvers
- Responders
- Socializers

OUR PROGRAM STAGES

Every age and stage of development is exciting and new. We embrace all milestones with you and have your child's positive development at the forefront of everything we do. Brief descriptions of the developmental objectives in each classroom are below:

Choo Choo Room (Infants):

The first year of life is a critical time of exploring and understanding a new world of sights, sounds, feelings and thoughts. Supportive, responsive, and knowledgeable staff members guide the children through these new explorations while supporting their physical and emotional needs. Each infant follows their own schedule based on their personal needs, which are coordinated closely with parents. Parents are highly encouraged to visit their children throughout the day for feeding or just to play.

Little Engine Room (Early Toddlers):

Transitioning from a developmental stage of being totally dependent on caregivers, our young toddlers are developing an increasing independence and need for social interaction. However, newly independent young toddlers still require lots of comfort and attention to physical needs. Our young toddlers nap just once during the middle of the day which we recognize can be difficult for some of the little ones. Teachers are constantly interacting with the children to encourage gentle and appropriate behavior between peers. Frequent outdoor time, singing, and rotating new and exciting toys are

just some of the ways we adjust the environment to meet the developmental needs of our young toddlers.

Circus Car Room (Toddlers)

Our toddler rooms focus on encouraging the children to engage in group activities. They are introduced to stories, songs and games through activities like circle time. Older toddlers are encouraged to practice their newly acquired language skills in working together on solving problems. Early concepts such as shapes and colors are introduced, as well as continuing to evolve self-help skills, social skill building, large and fine motor skills, and early literacy and counting experiences. Many children will be able to identify their name by the time they finish the school year. Teachers embrace the learning differences that come about with this age group and work to best prepare each child for success when they arrive in preschool the following year.

Potty training is emphasized in this classroom, as it is necessary for children to be out of diapers and potty-trained before they transition into our 3s classes.

Hopper Car (Threes)

Building upon their language, social, and logical thinking skills, preschool children are presented with a wealth of opportunities to cultivate their growing sense of independence. Preschool children are exposed to more classroom activities involving arts, music, cooking, science, pre-literacy, math, and fine motor skills in a play based format. Large motor skill building highlighted in during outdoor time in the morning and afternoon, as well as in physical education class, music and movement, and bouncing bears (swim lessons for Rainbow Station as well).

Social development is also highly emphasized and children are encouraged to make good choices, learning from their mistakes as they mature in their friendships with peers. Children are learning how to problem solve throughout the day in almost everything that they do. This provides a play based learning experience that is age appropriate and practical for three year old children.

We require that all children entering the 3s classes are out of diapers and are completely potty trained (with the exception of naptime in Rainbow Station).

Caboose Room (fours)

The most important thing we want to teach children is the love of learning and self-confidence goes hand-in-hand with this. To build a child's confidence in oneself is our number one goal before each child graduates from our program. A confident child who finds learning fun will enter kindergarten prepared and excited for that next step in their education.

Our 4-year-old classrooms build upon each child's previous learning experiences, bringing skills and concepts together into a program that highlights a kindergarten readiness curriculum in a play-based and appropriate manner.

Using various methods of instruction while still emphasizing the importance of play, our preschool children participate in early literacy activities, as well as early mathematics, science,

music and arts, and fine and large motor skill building activities. Each activity involving kindergarten prep is paired with opportunities for building social skills and character values. Children are required to be fully potty trained in our 4s classroom.

The curriculum in our 4s class is enhanced with “special visitors” and/or field trips. Parents will be made aware of these opportunities in advance.

OUR STAFF

Our child development staff are experienced, trained professionals chosen for their warmth, creativity, experience with children, and commitment to excellence. We employ people who are nurturing, who understand child development, and who respect each child as an individual. We seek employees who value working as a team with parents, colleagues, and volunteers. Our staff environment encourages mutual respect for each individual’s personal characteristics and teaching style, opportunities for shared leadership, and provision for providing professional growth. The blend of their unique qualifications and personalities creates the best opportunity for a positive, educational, and nurturing early childhood experience for each participant.

Prior to working in our program, all staff participate in a YMCA New Staff Orientation, have a criminal background check, fingerprints checked through the State, Statement of Good Health Form signed by physician, as well as proof of a recent negative TB test.

We are committed to ongoing training and professional development of our staff, and all YMCA staff participate in yearly training and in-service workshops, including but not limited to: CPR, First Aid, Medication Administration; Child Abuse Prevention and Mandated Reporter Training; Effective Guidance, Appropriate Discipline & Transition Strategies; Workplace Policies, including Harassment; Child Development Behaviors; and Age Appropriate Curriculum Development.

WHY OUR Y?

Throughout your child’s experience in the Y’s Child Development programs, he or she will interact with many people at the New Canaan YMCA. Our programs are unique because of the rich diversity of our YMCA facility, members, staff, and the programs to which your child will be exposed. We believe these opportunities and special offerings enhance each child’s school/program experience.

“Weekly Specials”:

More Than Just Music (Rainbow Station 2s, 3s, 4s)-

Led by board-certified music therapist Judy Engel, children enjoy movement and singing as well as instruments and props for individual creativity and to enhance fine, gross motor and beat-sense skills. The structured curriculum provides music activities to increase each child’s developmental learning. By learning about many types of music and instruments, we hope to stimulate each child’s love for music.

Health and Nutrition (Rainbow Station 3s, 4s) –

At the Y, we're committed to children's development and well-being. The National YMCA has made a commitment to the Partnership for a Healthier America, a program created in conjunction with Let's Move, Michelle Obama's campaign to reduce childhood obesity. We are proud to be a part of this initiative.

Our program provides a unique curriculum for our participants, which includes physical education, nutrition and health lessons implemented into their daily routine. What makes our program different from the others is how we go about teaching and implementing these invaluable components.

Our physical education class centers around the whole child and correlate with what the teachers are doing in their classrooms that week or month. For example – If a preschool class is learning about caterpillars and how they turn into butterflies, PE teachers may use this as an opportunity to introduce the participants to yoga. Through yoga poses children can act out being a caterpillar, the cocoon and the butterfly. Every lesson learned in the classroom, with some creativity and thought, can be turned into a physical activity in our PE classes.

Why do we do this? It is a proven fact that when a child learns through physical activity they are engaging more of their brain than when they are sedentary. During our nutrition lessons, children learn about what their body needs to grow and be strong. They learn the basics of food groups are and how each food group has an intricate part in helping them grow. While the children learn which foods keep their bodies healthy, they also learn very basic lessons about the parts of their body. They learn how the heart is control of pumping their blood, and the 2 balloon-like objects under their ribs that help them breath are called lungs. By learning how our body works and what keeps it strong, children learn a lesson that reaches far beyond the child's time in our program. We hope it is a lesson that they carry with them forever and that their generation is healthier than the one before them.

Bouncing Bears (Rainbow Station 3s and 4s) –

Bouncing Bears, our movement education program, provides participants with a safe, fun, child-oriented environment; full of challenges for growing muscles and minds. Gross motor skills are enhanced as participants experience a variety of bouncing, tumbling, swinging, balancing, rhythm, and body awareness activities, with gymnastics skills developed along the way. The curriculum for this all-around coordination program combines the imagination of creative weekly themes with age appropriate activities that will enhance strength, balance, body movement and control. Social and emotional growth, direction following, and fair play are also developed. Through this program, it is our goal to increase each child's physical and creative confidence.

Swim Lessons / Free Swim (Rainbow Station 3s and 4s) -

Under the direction of our trained and certified YMCA aquatic staff, our preschoolers work to become confident and comfortable in the water; ready to make advancements to learn to swim independently. They learn swimming basics, stroke development, and water safety in a fun, safe, and instructive environment, providing them with a foundation for great swimming/water safety.

40 Developmental Assets

Developed by Search Institute (a Minneapolis-based non-profit organization with over 20 years of research based statistics on youth development), the 40 Developmental Assets are composed of positive experiences and personal qualities that young people need to grow up to be healthy, caring, and responsible. These assets are the building blocks – relationships, values, attitudes, and attributes – that all children need for success. Studies indicate that the more assets a child reports having, the more likely they are to also report patterns of thriving behavior.

A description of the 40 Developmental Assets and a tri-fold flier are included in your “welcome folder” for your review. The developmental assets are commonsense things, and we all likely use many of them in our everyday interactions with children. Our goal is to help your child grow in these skills through stimulating lessons and activities within our daily routine. We also hope to build adults’ awareness of the techniques we can all use to help young learners succeed, and introduce new and different ways to promote healthy development in young children. Even though the assets are practical, everyday things we do, they have the power to transform children’s lives.

As adults, we have a responsibility to take advantage of every opportunity we have to build children up, because every interaction we have with them has an impact. In our everyday activities, we strive to make a difference by building on these essential assets. Children look to us to learn about who they are and how they fit into the world. The job of raising healthy, caring, productive, and happy children doesn’t belong to families, schools, or community resources alone – it belongs to all of us.

To learn more information about the 40 Developmental Assets, visit their website at <http://www.seach-institute.org>

At the YMCA, we are more than just a preschool!

In addition to all of the above, the Y is a place for the whole family! Stop by the Y Front Desk for a tour of our entire facility at any time. You can also visit our website at <http://www.newcanaanyymca.org> to learn about the many things we offer for families and people of all ages.

Parent Communication

In order to provide the most beneficial program for everyone – children, parents, and teachers – it is important that we work together and have open, effective communication. Understanding that everyone communicates differently, we do our best to share information in a variety of different ways. However, based on feedback from families, a large part of our communication will be done via email. Please let us know right away if you are not receiving communication in a way that you feel is beneficial. That way, we can work together to find a way that works for all parties. We strive to treat each child and family as individuals, and we work with each family to implement a plan that meets everyone's needs.

As an opportunity to build community, and get to know other families and staff, Family Dinners are planned several times through the year. You may also choose to be included in our Family Directory, another way to connect with other program participants and their families.

Each classroom has a bulletin board for parents and distributes a weekly and/or monthly newsletter to help keep you informed of classroom activities, Y and community events, as well as articles and information pertinent to parenting. They will serve as one communication tool between the program and the home throughout the year.

Parent/Teacher conferences are held two times per year in our preschool programs. In addition, teachers in all of our programs are always happy to schedule informal conferences and meetings throughout the year. If you feel at any time that a conference is needed or desired, please contact the Director to make arrangements.

Please let us know about problems or concerns right away. Of course, positive feedback is always appreciated as well.

Parent Involvement

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate. Feel free to visit at any time. Volunteers are the heart of the YMCA and enrich all of our programs. Volunteering in your child's classroom and/or at the YMCA is a wonderful way to get to know the YMCA and our creative and enthusiastic staff and volunteers. As a volunteer, you will play an active part in your child's early education, enrich our program, and provide extra time for the teachers to work with the children individually. Please let us know if you have any special skills, talents, family traditions/heritage that you would like to share. We understand that by working together, we can best meet the needs of your child and your family.

Here are a few ways you can get involved:

- Guest speaker or storyteller
- Field trips (4s Class)
- Assisting with Bouncing Bears and/or swim instruction

- Participating in YMCA family events, such as our Halloween Party (October), Visit with Santa and Holiday Crafts (December), International Festival (March), as well as additional monthly family events. Volunteers are always needed for preparation prior to the event, as well as hands-on help that day.
- Parent Committee

Please let your program's Director know if you are interested in getting involved!

Dress Your Child For Play

Children should be dressed for active play in washable and comfortable clothes. Daily activities may include messy arts and crafts, cooking, gym, swim, and outdoor activities. Clothing should be appropriate for the weather, so that outdoor play can be enjoyed year round.

For our Preschool participants, it is especially important that children are dressed appropriately on gym and swim day.

Gym Days:

Sneakers are a must. Boys and girls should be dressed in comfortable pants or sweatpants so that they can climb, swing, roll, crawl and jump easily. A t-shirt (layered with a sweatshirt or sweater in colder months) is recommended, as the children can get very warm in the gym.

Swim Days:

Please help your child (and his or her teacher) by sending them in easy-to-manage clothes on swim days. Pull-on tops and bottoms are best. Shirts with lots of buttons, overalls, and tights are very difficult for the children. We want to encourage independence, a feeling of accomplishment, and self-confidence; easy-to-manage clothing helps us do so.

General Policy Information

All of these policies have been carefully written to ensure that each child is safe, healthy and happy in YMCA programs. We are proud of our high standard of care, our enriching programs, our dedicated staff and our attention to each child and family. It is our belief that a physically and emotionally safe environment facilitates a higher degree of learning and fun. If you should have any questions in regard to our policies, please contact the Director of the program in which your child is enrolled or the V.P. of Family Services at the Y. While we have tried to list our most important policies and procedures, please note that the YMCA reserves the right to make decisions not covered in this handbook as deemed necessary for the safety and welfare of all children and the program. It is our expectation that these policies and procedures will be followed by all families enrolled, and if not, may be grounds for dismissal from any of our Y programs.

Y Membership

Participants in each of the Y's Child Development programs must have a current YMCA membership for themselves and/or be part of a Family Membership. If membership is new, it must be paid prior to the start of the program. YMCA memberships must remain active throughout the program year.

Days/Hours of Operation

We are open from 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM, Monday - Friday, year round.

Rainbow Station Program Closings

Labor Day - September 7, 2015

Thanksgiving break - November 26 and 27, 2015

Christmas break - Closed Dec. 24 and 25, 2015

New Year's Eve - Early closing (3 PM) Dec. 31, 2015

New Year's Day - Jan. 1, 2016

Good Friday - March, 25, 2016

Memorial Day - May 30, 2016

July 4, 2016 - Independence Day

August Maintenance Shutdown (will be announced in January 2016)

Registration, Tuition & Billing

REGISTRATION FEES

Required upon enrollment: \$ 50.00 non-refundable registration fee.

\$150.00 deposit which is applied to the last month's tuition with 30 day advance written notice of withdrawal.

A New Canaan YMCA Preschool or Family membership is required throughout enrollment.

TUITION

Tuition is divided into monthly payments for your convenience. Tuition is due and payable monthly on the 15th of each month for the following month. It is your responsibility to pay the tuition on the 15th of the month. After the 25th a finance charge of \$25.00 per month will be charged on past due accounts. If payment is still not received by the first Monday of the following month, the child will not be allowed to attend until payment is made. Tuition assistance may be available. Contact the YMCA for further information. (Tuition is required, regardless of absence due to illness or vacation, because we are guaranteeing the child's spot in the program.)

Monthly Tuition Rates(as of August 15, 2015):

\$1,995.00 Infant / Toddler monthly tuition

\$1,540.00 Preschool monthly tuition

Withdrawal Policy

30 days written notice of withdrawal must be submitted to the YMCA in order to terminate responsibility for monthly payments, and for tuition deposit to be applied to the child's last month.

Medical Paperwork

State law requires that your child's current health form be on file prior to the first day of attendance and at all times thereafter. The examination must have been received in the last 12 months for it to be considered current. If your child's medical form is due to expire within the year, please make an appointment with your physician to secure an update. No child will be admitted to the center without the completed medical form. A written authorization statement must be provided by a physician and the parent, if you wish our staff to administer medication to your child.

Medication Administration

In order for medication to be administered at the center, a signed Administration of Medication form must be filled out and signed by a physician and parent, indicating the dosage, and times the medication is to be administered. Prescribed and over the counter medications must be brought by the parent or guardian only, and handed directly to the program staff.

Administration of Medication forms are available at the center and extras may be requested to keep at home, so they can be taken to the pediatrician when the child has an appointment (at which medication may be prescribed).

Toileting and Diapering Policy

DIAPERING CHILDREN

Diapers are checked frequently, and children are changed as often as necessary. Changing tables are available for diaper changes. Diapers, wipes, and cream are provided for each child from home. These can be stored in reasonable quantities at the center. Parents also provide two extra sets of clothing for the child, in case of accidents. Disinfecting and hand washing procedures are used after each diaper change.

TOILETING CHILDREN

Bathroom facilities are located in each classroom and children may use the bathroom whenever they request. In addition, they will be offered the opportunity to use the bathroom every two hours (or more if training). Children will be taught to flush the toilet and wash their hands after using the bathroom.

The center staff will cooperate with the parents in toilet training, when the child shows emotional and physical readiness. Above all, the staff will be positive and pleasant during the child's attempts. Center staff will work hard to maintain close communication with the parents, to insure consistency between the home and child care environments. Parents

are requested to bring an ample supply of clothing to the center during the training process, as switching back to diapers can be confusing for the child.

Toileting accidents will be handled calmly and matter-of-factly. The child will be given assistance in changing his/her clothes, and will be thoroughly cleaned. Clothing will be sent home in a sealed plastic bag.

Disinfecting and hand washing procedures will be used by the child and teacher, after each toileting session.

Pick-Up Procedure

Participants in all of our CDC programs must be picked up by the end of their program day by an authorized person from the "Pick Up/Emergency Contacts Form" filled out and submitted prior to starting the program. Authorized persons will be asked to show photo identification before a child is released to him or her.

Late Pick Up Policy

A late pick-up fee will be charged to any parent/guardian arriving after the end of the program day. The late fee will be \$5.00 per child, per 5 minute interval or any part thereof. If possible, as a courtesy, please call and let the teachers know if you anticipate being late on any given day. Parents/guardians who are consistently late may be requested to find another program which better meets their schedule.

Field Trips/ Special Visitors

To supplement the learning experiences of our curriculum themes, field trips may be scheduled and/or special visitors may be invited into our classrooms. Parents will be notified in advance, in writing, of all field trips, and permission slips will be distributed. Permission slips signed by the parent/guardian must be on file for participation in each field trip.

Snacks/Birthdays

BIRTHDAYS

Parents are welcome to provide a special snack for a party on their child's birthday. Parties will be held after the afternoon nap period. The parent should check with the child's teacher to find out how many children are in the class. Of course parents are welcome and encouraged to come and participate in this special event with their child.

SNACKS Due to our commitment to the Partnership for a Healthier America, we strive to provide all participants healthy snacks two times per day.

Children love to be the "snack helper". The classroom teachers develop the snack helper schedule monthly.

Please note: Birthday party invitations may not be distributed at the YMCA and should be mailed to home addresses.

Illness Policy

The New Canaan YMCA staff strives to maintain a healthy environment for your child. In order to maintain a healthy environment for all the children and the staff, the following policy was established using licensing requirements and by consulting with a pediatrician.

The child will be sent home from the program if he/she shows evidence of any of the following:

- Is unable to participate in usual daily activities (must be able to go outside and engage in all activities)
- Excessive crankiness or irritability
- Auxiliary temperature (under the arm) of 100° or more
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea, defined as an increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern, with increased stool water and/or decreased form
- Persistent cough
- Open sores that cannot be covered
- Any contagious disease or infection including; a rash, drainage from the eye and head lice

The child may return to the program when:

- Temperature has been normal (child has been fever-free) for 24 hours (without the assistance of medication, (ie: Motrin, Tylenol, Advil, etc.)
- Diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours
- Vomiting has stopped for 24 hours
- Persistent cough has been checked by a pediatrician
- Questionable rash has been checked by a pediatrician
- 24 hours after medication for strep, conjunctivitis & any other infectious disease
- After treatment with a head lice medication and staff has determined that the child is lice and nit free
- Children with chicken pox may return after their pox have scabbed over and are no longer open sores
- Upon request, Physician's note submitted to Director

If a child contracts a communicable disease the parent must immediately report this information to the Director. A doctor's note is necessary for the child to return to the center, stating that the child is no longer contagious.

Note: Please let the staff know when your child will be absent due to illness or vacation. Each classroom has a phone, or you may leave a message with the Program Director.

Procedures For Caring For A Sick Child

When a child becomes ill or develops signs of a communicable condition while at the program, he/she will be moved to an isolation area. The child's parent will be contacted by the director or classroom teacher to come to the center to take the child home. A staff person will be with the child until he/she is picked up by the authorized person.

If the child's parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact names will be used to contact someone to come and pick up the child. These names have been provided to the center by the parents; and a signed release permission form is on file at the YMCA Child Development Program.

The emergency contact person will be asked for photo identification before the child is released to him/her.

It is the parent's responsibility to be sure phone numbers of emergency contacts, authorized pick-up persons and physicians are kept up to date. This is of the utmost importance in case of an emergency.

Inclement Weather Procedures

Every effort will be made for the program to remain open in the event of inclement weather. In the event of severe weather, families should call the Rainbow Station hotline 966-4528 ext 113 for closing or delay announcement.

Naptime and Sleeping Procedures

Each infant will have his/her own crib for sleeping which will be for their exclusive use. Toddlers and Preschoolers will each have their own cot for naptime. Infant parents will provide crib sheets and sleep sacks. Toddler parents will bring a crib sheet and blanket (pillow if desired) for their child's cot. These can be kept at the center on a weekly basis, and will be sent home on Fridays to be laundered. Cribs and cots will be labeled with each child's name. Cots will be stored and brought out each day at naptime.

Cribs and cots are disinfected weekly or as needed.

Children who have difficulty sleeping (after being allowed a short period of time to fall asleep on their own) can have their backs rubbed by a staff person to help them relax and fall asleep. Parents can inform the staff about particular sleeping routines, which may help the child relax in the child care environment. Parental input in this area is helpful and requested, to insure continuity for the child.

Lunch and Eating Procedures

All food (except morning and afternoon snack) will be provided for the child from home. All food will be refrigerated until it is served. Food will be prepared in the kitchen area using the microwave, etc.

Staff members sit with children, while they are eating and interact with them. Stories can be read at this time, and discussions between staff and children are held.

Daily Reports For Infants And Toddlers

A daily report will be completed each afternoon. Information on feeding, sleeping, toileting, as well as any developmental milestones observed, will be included. The child's favorite daily activities will also be mentioned.

The daily report is intended to act as a communication device between the child development staff, and the parents of the children enrolled.

Outdoor Time

The child development teachers will insure that the children enrolled have an opportunity to have two outdoor periods per day, weather permitting.

These outdoor times may include a walk around the grounds or surrounding neighborhood, or time spent on the playground. Infants are strapped in double strollers and taken on walks, or spend time outside on a blanket with their teacher.

In the playground, there will be at least one teacher for every four infants/toddlers and one teacher for every eight preschoolers. Teachers will spend the outdoor time interacting with the children as they play on the climbing equipment, in the sandbox, with riding toys, etc. Children on the climbing equipment will have a teacher in close physical proximity at all times.

Children will be taken outdoors if the temperature is over 35 degrees, and there is no precipitation.

Reading and Articles

Parents are a wonderful resource to the program, both to the staff and other families enrolled. Please feel free to share any book excerpts, articles, etc., with the staff who will pass them on to other families in the program



“Cherishing Our Young Children”

A Statement of Beliefs by New Canaan’s

Preschool Directors and Elementary Principals



Early Childhood

Directors Association

Position Paper Number Two

As educators of young children, we value childhood and want to keep it sacred. Too much exposure to television, computer games, and organized activities robs children of their childhood and produces the “hurried child syndrome.” Too much exposure to formal academics too early in a child’s development can cause a child to be resistant to the excitement of learning. Our goal is to allow children to explore, to wonder, to experiment with language and materials, to play and to develop a love for learning.

Early childhood is a time of wonder and discovery. Teachers strive to treasure and protect each child’s journey through childhood in order to ensure that children develop a firm foundation for their later years.

The New Canaan Preschool Directors, Elementary School Principals and Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers endorse and value the following skills as appropriate goals for young children.

Social/Emotional Skills

We believe children’s success in school is in part related to events and experiences that occur prior to a child’s entry into kindergarten. Children’s social skills affect the quality and success of the school experiences. Young children construct understanding by interacting with others and with their environment. Throughout early childhood we emphasize sensitivity to the feelings of others, kindness, patience and cooperation. In early childhood, social/emotional competencies are best achieved through play and play related activities. In order to be successful in a classroom, children need, for example, to be able to exert self-control when frustrated, be polite, listen, follow directions and classroom rules, take turns and read non-verbal language.

Communication Skills

Communication and language skills are critical to children’s social, emotional and cognitive well-being. Throughout early childhood, we encourage children to develop increasingly sophisticated language skills through social interaction, dramatic play and age appropriate activities. In order to communicate effectively, children must be able to use appropriate conversational tone and volume, advocate for him/herself, use appropriate vocabulary to put feelings into words, use language to discuss activities and events and use manners without prompting.

Self-Help Skills

Children gain confidence and self-esteem as they become more independent. Throughout early childhood, we provide opportunities for children to master important self-help skills that include the ability to:

- Recognize teachers and other children by name
- Respect property and materials that belong to others

Manage one's own clothing, including buttons, zippers and snaps
Wash hands and use the bathroom independently
Manage snack independently
Tie shoes when developmentally appropriate

Fine and Gross Motor Skills

As teachers, we recognize the impact of fine and gross motor skills on educational progress. The stage is often set with enough rest, proper diet and good physical health. We will encourage opportunities to:

Develop large muscles, including upper body strength
Experience skipping, jumping, hopping, climbing and balancing
Play for exploration and enjoyment
Develop awareness of personal space while walking, running and playing
Use proper grip when using crayons, markers and pencils
Use scissors correctly
Use a variety of art materials

Readiness Skills

A child's approach to learning is central to his/her success in school. Curiosity and the desire to learn come from positive, age appropriate experiences with story, language and problem solving as well as from exposure to new ideas. Throughout early childhood, students need to develop the ability to listen and comprehend a story being read out loud. Children also need to develop the language and thinking ability to retell and sequence a story. Recognizing and generating rhymes in games and songs and poetry are also appropriate skills for preschool and kindergarten children. Familiarity with lower case letters and an ability to problem solve are also skills young children are ready to learn.

We also believe that, in addition to the above skills, children should be exposed to experiences in the arts and sciences. Children should be taught an appreciation and curiosity for their world; they should develop a sense of beauty and a love for learning. There is so much for a young child to learn about him/herself and the world around him/her. We believe these skills/values must be in place before a child enters kindergarten if the child is to have maximum success. These may seem like pretty simple skills, however, each of these represents a great deal of effort or "work" on the children's part and will help to achieve social competence, comfort and joy during the kindergarten year.

EAST SCHOOL
SOUTH SCHOOL
WEST SCHOOL
BEGINNER'S NATURE PROGRAM
DAY CARE CENTER OF NEW CANAAN
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN NURSERY SCHOOL
NEW CANAAN COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL
NEW CANAAN COUNTRY SCHOOL
OPPORTUNITY CENTER
PLAYLAND NURSERY SCHOOL
ST. MARK'S NURSERY SCHOOL
TODDLER TIME NURSERY SCHOOL, INC.
UNITED METHODIST NURSERY SCHOOL
THE ANITA & G THOMAS HARGROVE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
RAINBOW STATION INFANT-PRESCHOOL CHILDCARE
Y'S LITTLE OWL NURSERY SCHOOL

