

Meadow Montessori School

Toddler Program

The Toddler House staff welcomes you and your child to Meadow Montessori School. The Toddler House is designed to meet the needs of children between the ages of 18 months and 3 years. Our staff is committed to providing loving and respectful care. We embrace each child's natural development, including language, motor skills, and concentration.

An important goal for the toddler and parent is to become separate people. Your child is becoming aware that he/she is able to do things on his/her own. With a little help from you and from us, he/she will grow in the next year. We hope that through child/parent orientations your child's transition into Toddler House will be a smooth one.

Drop off for Toddler House children (7:00 a.m.)

Walk with your child to the classroom. When your child is ready to enter the classroom, please ring the bell. Please allow the staff to assist your child upon entering the room. We will help your child put his/her lunchbox. Please remember to sign your child in using the attendance sheet that is hanging on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Good- byes

When leaving your child at school, please make your good-byes brief. If your child is apprehensive, assure him/her that you will be back later. Trust in the staff to give comfort to your child. If you need to, you may enter the observation room to view your child's transition; please don't let your child know that you will be in the observation room.

Clothing and Diapers

Your child needs several changes of clothing, including socks. A few extra shirts would be appreciated, as children will be allowed to use the low sink whenever they like. Please put your child's name on all items. Bring enough diapers for a week's period because there is not enough storage space to house large packages of diapers. The Toddler House staff will let you know on your daily information sheet when your child is in need of diapers and extra clothes. If your child needs any lotions or ointments, please label them and give them to a teacher.

Lunches

Please pack your child a healthy lunch. We have a microwave to warm food, and we provide whole milk. If you would like your child to have juice, please send it in a reusable container. Children pour their own juice into a glass. Please put your child's name on his/her lunchbox. Any fruit or other items that need to be peeled or cut up should be accomplished before it is sent to school.

Snacks

Children have a morning snack each day. We will assign each parent a week in which to provide snacks. You may choose what you would like to bring, or choose from our healthy snack list. The snack sign up calendar is posted on the wall outside of the classroom. Please bring enough snacks for the entire week. You may bring snacks at the beginning of the week or on a daily basis.

Nap Procedure

Children staying for nap rest for approximately two hours. We begin napping right after lunch, but it is hard to give an accurate time because lunch doesn't always end at the same time. How late or long your child will nap depends on when he/she falls asleep. It is not a common practice to wake the children, but we rarely allow them to sleep past 3:30 p.m. Each child needs a crib sheet, small blanket, and a crib-size pillow. Please label all your child's belongings. If there is a certain item that your child needs for security during nap, he/she may use it, but only during naptime. We send home nap gear every Friday to be laundered and returned to school on Monday.

Absent Days/Sick Days

If your child will not be at school for any reason, please notify the office (734.241.9496). For your convenience, the school's voice mail system is activated 24 hours per day. Children must be free from fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours prior to the school day. If your child exhibits any of these symptoms at school, we will notify you to pick up your child.

Birthdays

Special treats may be brought in on your child's birthday, but please send a healthy treat. You may also share a few pictures of your child when he/she was younger. It's fun to compare and talk about how he/she has grown over the years. If you would like to give a gift to the classroom to commemorate your child's special day, you may; however, it is not mandatory.

Picking Up Your Child

Children attending the morning session may be picked up in the play yard, weather permitting, or in the classroom. Please sign your child out on the attendance sheet. If there is a change in the person that will be picking your child up, please let your child know, as well as a toddler staff member. This person must be listed on your child's information card, or a note written and given to us. We will ask to see this person's I.D.

Parents Corner

We will have a Parent Bulletin Board in the observation room. This board contains special activities, our snack list, special recipes for children, tips, and other useful information. We will also have a "wish list" which will identify any items we might need for our classroom.

We look forward to a year full of learning and fun!

Ms. Charise

Toddler Food Facts

Toddlers 1 to 2 years old

Your toddler is getting more adventurous and curious about trying new foods. Allergy-producing foods are still a concern, but you also have to be careful about foods that can be a choking hazard.

The following foods are inappropriate for toddlers who are 1 to 2 years old:

- Carrots - Because they can easily choke a toddler, carrots should never be eaten raw. They must be shredded or well cooked and very soft.
- Grapes - Whole grapes are a choking hazard for small children and should always be cut into small pieces before you offer them.
- Hot dogs - Slicing hot dog lengthwise and then cutting it into pieces that are about a quarter-inch wide greatly reduces the risk of choking.
- Low-fat milk - The fat in whole milk is nutritionally important for young children up to 2 years of age, so low-fat milk should not be used for children in this age range.
- Peanuts and peanut butter - In addition to being highly allergenic, peanuts also present a choking risk for toddlers. Don't feed young children peanuts or peanut butter until the child is 3 years old.
- Snacks - Since hard candy, lollipops, nuts, popcorn or other snacks are just the right size to become lodged in a small child's throat, great care must be used when we offer them to toddlers. These snack foods are a choking risk.
- String cheese - For your toddler to safely eat string cheese, serve it shredded and never sliced or cut into chunks.

Toddlers 2 to 3 years old

Foods that are choking hazards are still a concern, so for toddlers that are 2 to 3 years old, avoid the following foods:

- Grapes - Whole grapes are a choking hazard for small children and should always be cut into small pieces before offer them.
- Hot dogs - Slicing a hot dog lengthwise and then cutting it into pieces that are about a quarter-inch wide greatly reduces the risk of choking.
- Peanuts and peanut butter - In addition to being highly allergenic, peanuts also present a choking risk for toddlers. Don't feed young children peanuts or peanut butter until the child is 3 years old.
- Snacks - Since hard candy, lollipops, nuts, popcorn or other snacks are just the right size to become lodged in a small child's throat, great care must be used when offering them to toddlers. These foods are a choking risk.

Food Hazards

Although it may be tempting to give toddlers certain foods that are fun to eat and staples in the diets of older children, make sure the foods are appropriate for the age group you are serving.

Here is a list of foods that should not be given to toddlers (or even children up to four years old), because they are choking hazards:

- Hot dogs
- Whole grapes
- Raw carrots
- Popcorn
- Hard candy
- Large chunks of meat or other food
- Marshmallows (even miniature)
- Spoonfuls of peanut butter
- Ice cubes
- Nuts, peanuts, or seeds

Eating Environment

Provide a calm and relaxing atmosphere. Eating with the children can model good eating practices. Mealtime can be a valuable learning experience. When you sit and eat with children, pleasant conversations can take place. Discussions about the colors, textures, and tastes of the food also can encourage language and cognitive development.

Let the toddlers feed themselves using child-sized utensils. Eating with toddlers can become very messy, but all messes can be cleaned up. If toddlers are using smaller sized utensils and are given small servings of food, the mess they make can be reduced.

Be encouraging and supportive during this learning process. Be aware of your verbal and non-verbal cues and reactions. For example, do not frown or sigh loudly when a child makes a mess. Toddlers are learning and need encouragement. Help children learn skills, including how to help clean up a mess!

Since toddlers are becoming more independent, they should also be allowed (as much as possible) to serve themselves. If children are allowed to make their own choices, chances are they will eat more than if they have no choice in the matter. Likewise, toddlers can start to make the choice to stop eating when full. Encourage children to take small servings and allow second helpings if the child is still hungry. Teach children to recognize body cues such as hunger and fullness. Forcing children to “clean their plate” may encourage overeating.

Families and caregivers have a major responsibility to make sure toddlers are healthy and safe. By understanding proper nutrition practices and the abilities of toddlers, adults are able to establish healthy eating habits for life.

Toddler House Snack Suggestions

- Fresh fruit – oranges, kiwi, bananas, fruit salad, etc.
- Breads – zucchini, banana, date, cranberry, corn, etc.
- Mini bagels and cream cheese
- Rice cakes
- Trail mix – made with cereal (Kix or Cheerios)
- Yogurt – large containers are more economical – we serve in bowls
- Natural applesauce – large containers are fine
- Soup
- Nutri-Grain bars
- Crackers and cheese (shredded or sliced)
- Please DO NOT send foods that may be hazardous to toddlers. This includes:
 - Raw Carrots
 - Hot Dogs
 - Pop Corn
 - Chunks of meat or cheese
 - Grapes
 - Seeds, nuts, peanuts, or peanut butter
 - Marshmallows