

# FAQs



## Early Childhood Education YMCA of Greater San Francisco

### PROGRAM ENROLLMENT & LOGISTICS

#### **What are the age requirements for your programs?**

The Tung Lok Early Childhood Learning Center, Gateway Child Development Center, and Villa de Kapuso Child Development Center have minimum and maximum ages of 3 months to 5 years old.

Lutheran Church of Our Savior Preschool, Alice Chalmers Preschool, and Mission YMCA Preschool have a minimum and maximum ages of 2 to 5 years old.

#### **What are your hours of operation?**

Our program hours of operation are 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

#### **Do you offer extended care?**

Yes, we offer optional extended hours. At the YGSF ECE Program, we believe that a ten-hour day is sufficient to support most families' needs. However, we understand that some families may occasionally require additional care beyond the standard ten-hour day. Optional extended care during regular operating hours may be available, subject to staffing and enrollment, during the requested time period. Families requesting extended care must submit a request to the Director at least 48 hours in advance. The fee for extended care is \$50 per hour. We will do our best to meet your family's needs whenever possible. For more information, please contact the center's Site Supervisor.

#### **Do you offer drop-in options?**

Yes, when ratios allow, we can accept children for drop-in care. Our daily drop-in fee ranges per number of days for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. For families interested in drop-in care, please contact the program location for rates.

The registration fee includes snacks and lunch for children over 18 months.

Please note that Community Care Licensing requires the mandatory paperwork to be submitted on or before the child's first day of care (e.g., immunization records, emergency contact information, etc.).

Payments for daily drop-ins must be submitted two weeks in advance, prior to the day of service.

## PROGRAM ENROLLMENT & LOGISTICS CONTINUED...

### **What is the step-by-step enrollment process? What can I expect?**

Step 1: Email Anne Senores at [ASenores@ymcasf.org](mailto:ASenores@ymcasf.org) or Katia Alvarez at [KAlvarez@ymcasf.org](mailto:KAlvarez@ymcasf.org) (Spanish Language Translation Support)

Step 2: Connect with the site supervisor to schedule a tour.

Step 3: If you are interested in enrolling your child you will need to sign up for the waitlist after the tour. An non-refundable (waived for tuition subsidized families) application fee applies. If registering the child within 30 days from the waitlist sign-up date, the fee may be applied towards the first month's tuition.

Step 4: Gather and submit all required licensing documents and forms to the site supervisor.

Step 5: Submit tuition payment method and documents 5 days before the child's start date: i.e., credit card on file, and/or ELFA scholarship, 100% or 50% credit required application, required proof of household income, residence, etc.

Step 6: We will work together to schedule a transition period at least 5 days before the child's first full day. Transitioning into the program depends on the child's readiness. The transition could take 2 to 5 days. Below is an estimated timeline:

Day 1: Child and parent visit the classroom and center for 2 – 3 hours

Day 2: Child is dropped off in the classroom and stays from 9 am to 12 pm.  
Parents stay nearby or return by noon

Day 3: Child is dropped off from 8:30 am – 12:30 pm; child eats morning snacks and lunch; participates in classroom routines.  
Parents pick up their child after lunch by 12:30 pm.

Day 4: Child is dropped off at 8 am and picked up after nap time, at 3 pm

Day 5: Child's first full day in the program

The child's Primary Teacher or Site Supervisor will conduct an intake with the parent to learn more about the child (e.g., sleep patterns at home, allergies, overall development). Together, parent and child complete the needs and service intake to create a plan for their child.

### **Do you offer financial assistance, subsidies, or sliding-scale tuition?**

Yes, we offer the following to families:

#### **Early Learning For All (ELFA) Grant – For San Francisco Centers Only**

The San Francisco Department of Early Childhood - Early Learning for All (ELFA) program helps income-eligible families access affordable early care and education for young children.

## PROGRAM ENROLLMENT & LOGISTICS CONTINUED...

As an ELFA partner organization, we receive grant funding through the San Francisco Department of Early Childhood to offer free or subsidized care to eligible families. The ELFA grant provides tuition assistance that can reduce or fully cover tuition at participating partner centers, including ours.

Depending on household income, families may qualify for one of the following ELFA tuition assistance options:

- **Free Tuition/Scholarships (ELFA/MRA)** – Full tuition coverage with no copay.
- **100% ELFA Full Credit** – A 100% ELFA credit is applied toward tuition costs; a copay may still apply.
- **50% ELFA Half Credit** – A 50% ELFA credit is applied to help reduce tuition costs.

Eligibility for ELFA tuition credit is based on the following:

- Family income
- Child's age
- San Francisco residency
- Participation in qualifying programs

Families interested in learning more about ELFA eligibility and enrollment should speak with the center's Program Coordinator or Director.

### **Third-Party Vouchers**

We work with the following subsidy programs and accept third-party vouchers from 4Cs of San Mateo County, the Department of Human Services, Wu Yee, Children's Council of San Francisco, CalWORKs, and more. Vouchers from 3rd party, help to subsidize tuition costs for low-income families.

### **YMCA Facility Members' Discount**

San Francisco Sites – Families with a YMCA membership will receive up to a 20% tuition discount, regardless of household income. Must have an active membership.

South San Francisco Site (Gateway) – Tuition rates are competitive and set at low levels to ensure affordability; no additional tuition discounts are offered to facility members. However, all families receive free membership while enrolled at Gateway.

### **YMCA Financial Assistance**

The YMCA of San Francisco is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that reinvests back into the programs it offers to the community. Through the generosity of our many supporters and active fundraising efforts, YGSF offers affordable programs and services for people of all income levels.

The YMCA works with single parents, unhoused families, unemployed parents/guardians, and families experiencing challenging circumstances to provide assistance when needed. We strive to

## PROGRAM ENROLLMENT & LOGISTICS CONTINUED...

work with each family individually to create a plan that supports their need for quality early care and education.

YMCA financial assistance forms are available at the front desk or may be requested from the site coordinator/director. Families receiving financial assistance from the YMCA are required to renew their application every six (6) months or whenever there is a change in family circumstances. Please inquire with the site coordinator or program director regarding financial aid eligibility requirements and policies.

### **Sibling Discount**

Families with multiple children enrolled in our program are eligible for a 20% sibling discount. For example, for families with two enrolled children, the 20% discount is applied to the oldest child's tuition, while the younger child pays full tuition. For families with three enrolled children, the 20% discount is applied to the tuition of the two oldest children, and the youngest child pays full tuition.

Please note that the sibling discount is not available to families receiving ELFA funding.

### **How do you handle transitions (e.g., moving from a toddler room to a preschool room)?**

#### **Transitions (Infants/Toddlers to Jr. Preschool or Jr. Preschool to Preschool/Pre-K Suite)**

Transitions between age suites or classrooms are based on age, staff observations, developmental assessments, and parent input. When a transition is recommended, families will be provided with a planned schedule of visits to the new classroom.

Parents are encouraged to visit the new classroom, meet the teaching staff, and become familiar with daily routines. This helps support a smooth and positive transition for the child. The adjustment process is gradual and individualized, tailored to each child's needs, development, and temperament.

Initially, children may spend only a few hours in the new classroom and may leave prior to naptime. Over time, visits will become longer as the child becomes more comfortable. In some cases, parents may be asked to remain with their child for part of the visit until the child is comfortable in the new environment and with the staff. Full-day participation typically develops over several days.

#### **Transition Schedule for Newly Enrolled Children**

To help your child adjust comfortably to their new environment, similarly to currently enrolled children transitioning into a new classroom/suite, we also use a gradual transition schedule for newly enrolled children:

**Day 1:** A parent or guardian walks their child to the classroom, stays for a few minutes,

## PROGRAM ENROLLMENT & LOGISTICS CONTINUED...

and then says goodbye, reassuring their child that they will return. The child attends from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

This shorter visit helps the child begin to become familiar with teachers, classmates, routines, and the classroom environment. While the child is in the classroom, families attend a program orientation with the site supervisor to review program policies and procedures and schedule an intake meeting with the child's primary teacher.

**Day 2:** The child attends from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. They join the class for breakfast and participate in the morning routine before leaving after lunch, prior to nap time.

**Day 3:** The child attends from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. This allows the child to experience the full classroom routine, including rest time. Children who are adjusting well may begin transitioning to their regular schedule.

**Days 4–5:** If additional transition support is needed, the child may gradually extend to a full-day schedule. Suggested hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM on Day 4 and 7:30 AM to 5:30 on Day 5.

### **Ongoing Transition Support**

This gradual approach helps children feel safe, supported, and comfortable as they adjust to their new routine and classroom. During this transition period, it is normal for children to have emotional drop-offs, including crying at separation. This is a typical and developmentally appropriate response as they adjust to change.

We understand that this transition can be difficult for both children and parents. Our team will provide updates throughout the day via Swaddo, text messages, and photos of your child engaged in classroom activities, so you can feel connected and informed.

Each child responds differently to transitions. Some children adjust within a few days, while others may need more time and may experience ups and downs throughout the process. While brief periods of adjustment challenges are common, most children settle into their new classroom with support, consistency, and reassurance.

We encourage families to be patient with both their child and themselves during this time. Our staff is here to support you and your child throughout the transition and beyond.

# HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT

## **What are your sign-in and sign-out security procedures?**

### **Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures**

For the safety of all children, the main entrance remains locked at all times. Please press the doorbell at the main entrance so a staff member can let you into the building. There may be times when staff are caring for children or handling administrative tasks and cannot respond immediately. If no one answers the doorbell, please call the center, or knock on the door or a window to get a staff member's attention.

### **SIGN-IN**

In the morning, a parent or guardian must escort the child to the classroom and remain with the child until a teacher has accepted responsibility for the child. Each day, parents or guardians are required to sign their child into the YMCA of Greater San Francisco Early Childhood Education program by providing a full, legible signature and date in the classroom attendance binder, on the iPad/tablet, or through the online PIN system.

Children may not sign themselves in using the PIN system. Signing a child in is the legal responsibility of the parent, guardian, or authorized adult, as required by Community Care Licensing.

### **SIGN OUT**

At pick-up time, please gather your child and all their belongings before leaving the center. Parents or guardians must sign the child out of our program each day using the attendance binder or electronic system used at your site. Children may only leave the center after being signed out by an authorized adult.

Children will only be released to the authorized adults listed on the Identification and Emergency Form. We will check photo identifications and/or make a copy of the identification card for people picking up your child for the first time, or if we are unfamiliar with the person. For safety reasons, we request authorization updates every 4 to 6 months.

We ask that parents please keep the center informed about any changes to the list of people authorized to pick up their child. We will not release children to anyone whose name is not listed on your child's "Identification and Emergency Information" form.

We will not release children to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or who is under 18 years old.

## **What is your policy regarding sick children and when they can return to care?**

At the YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE Program, we ensure that children's health and safety come first. Teachers and center staff conduct daily safety checks of both indoor and outdoor play areas for children. We conduct fire drills monthly and earthquake drills every other month.

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

Staff are certified in CPR and First Aid and are trained annually in handling Blood Borne Pathogens, Child Abuse Prevention, proper medication administration, and emergency procedures.

Toys, surfaces, and the child's environment are disinfected daily and as needed. Adults and children wash their hands throughout the day; infants' bedding is washed daily. Toddlers' and preschoolers' bedding is sent home weekly and, as needed, to be washed.

Our ECE staff also adheres to the following health and policy procedures as a precaution in preventing the spread of communicable diseases or illnesses:

### **Daily Health Inspections**

Staff will make a visual health inspection of each child upon arrival. The child will be accepted into the program only if he/she has no obvious signs of illness. (More information will be provided during the enrollment process.)

### **Immunization Requirements**

Our immunization records are reviewed annually by the Health Department to ensure the children in our program have proper health and immunization records as required.

### **General Health Policy**

Maintaining the good health of all children and staff involved in the center is very important to us. We do everything possible to work with families when a child is not feeling well, but if the health of other children or staff is compromised, we will ask that the child be brought home.

If the child's illness requires them to stay home for more than 3 days, please provide a doctor's note upon their return. This will help us ensure that the child is not in danger of a relapse or still contagious. If staff feel that the child is ill or cannot engage in normal classroom activities, the parents (or other emergency contacts) will be contacted to pick up the child. The child will be isolated from other children as they wait for their parents or an authorized person to pick him/her up. Parents must pick up their child within one hour of being notified.

### **Exposure Notifications of Communicable Diseases**

If a child or family member in the home has been exposed to a communicable disease, please let us know immediately so we can post an exposure notice. The child's name will not be revealed.

The exposure notice will be posted throughout the classroom, suite, and/or center as a precaution to inform parents that their child may have been exposed to a communicable disease.

The incidence and severity of illness can be greatly reduced if we cooperate to prevent the rapid spread of communicable infections among the children at our center.

Parents are required to notify the center if they or their child has contracted a communicable disease. Children must stay home if they have a communicable disease and may return to school

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

only with a doctor's note stating the child is cleared to return, or a clearance note from the Health Department, when applicable.

### **Shoe covers**

Due to sanitary issues, there is a "no shoes" and "no bare feet" policy in the infant rooms. If one is wearing socks, we ask that they remove their shoes before entering the infant suite or use the shoe covers provided by the center. In addition, please use the hand sanitizer by the door before entering the infant area.

### **Safe Sleep Practices**

Infants up to twelve months of age are placed for sleep in supine position (wholly on their back) for every nap or sleep time unless the infant's custodial parent and physician have completed a signed waiver indicating that the child requires an alternate sleep position.

Blankets or swaddling infants in a crib are neither necessary nor recommended; rather, one-piece sleepers should be used. Information on the health risks associated with blankets or swaddling is available upon request.

### **Plan for Meeting Individual Health Care Needs**

Parents are asked about allergies to medications, food, and environmental factors on the Needs and Services and Intake Forms. Health care forms are also reviewed for any additional special health concerns or needs. Individual Health Care Plans will be developed for children with significant health concerns or needs. Planning will involve parents and appropriate program staff.

With written permission from the child's health care practitioner, parents may train staff in implementing their child's Individual Health Care Plan.

These plans will be shared with program staff on a need-to-know basis to support the child's health and safety. Cross-training of staff will be provided, as appropriate, to ensure that a trained adult is on-site whenever the child is present.

### **How are staff screened, and what are their background check requirements?**

Staff are selected based on their professionalism, education, experience, skills, training, and demonstrated ability to work effectively with children. Prior to employment, all staff must successfully complete required criminal background clearances, including Department of Justice (DOJ), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) checks, as well as professional and personal reference checks, TB clearance, physical health screening, proof of required immunizations, and all other licensing and regulatory requirements.

We must also receive proof of education, training, and a professional permit from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC), as well as a training certificate of completion.

We recognize that a well-trained, stable, and nurturing staff is essential to providing a high-quality

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

early care and education program. The YMCA is committed to supporting staff growth and excellence through ongoing professional development opportunities, training, and continuing education at all levels.

### **How do you accommodate children with severe food allergies or medical needs?**

At the YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE Program, we ensure that children's health and safety come first. Teachers and center staff conduct daily safety checks of both indoor and outdoor play areas for children.

Toys, surfaces, and the child's environment are disinfected daily and as needed. Adults and children wash their hands throughout the day; infants' bedding is washed daily. Toddlers' and preschoolers' bedding is sent home weekly and, as needed, to be washed.

Our ECE staff also adheres to the following health and policy procedures as a precaution in preventing the spread of communicable diseases or illnesses:

- Daily Health Inspections
- Immunization requirements for children
- General health policy for ill children
- Criteria for keeping a sick child home, sending a sick child home, and readmittance

### **Medications**

If a child is on a medication they have never been prescribed before, please keep them home for 24 hours to watch for any possible side effects. If a parent has any concerns about their child's health, they can feel free to talk to the teaching staff or the site supervisor at any time. It is important that parents and staff work together to maintain a healthy classroom environment.

For the safety of the children, staff may dispense only prescription medication and may not dispense any over-the-counter medication without a doctor's consent. Prescription medication will be given when the following are met:

- Medicine must be labeled and provided to the center in its original container with the child's name, date, and dosage.
- Parents must complete a Medication Consent Form with date, child's name, type of medication, dosage, time to be given, and signature.
- A Medication Administration Record is completed upon administration and provided to you for your records.

### **Our center is a nut-free zone.**

No nut products are allowed in the center. This is to protect children with nut allergies. Parents must update staff on all changes in feeding, food allergies, or concerns.

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

### **What is the staff-to-child ratio for each age group?**

The YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE Program operates year-round, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM, with limited exceptions. During our core program hours from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM, we maintain lower teacher-to-child ratios than those required by California Community Care Licensing (CCL) to provide more individualized attention and support for children.

Our program ratios compared to CCL maximum ratios are:

- Infants: 1 teacher to 3 children (CCL maximum: 1:4)
- Jr. Preschool/Twos: 1 teacher to 8 children (CCL maximum: 1:12)
- Preschoolers: 1 teacher to 10 children (CCL maximum: 1:12)

## CURRICULUM & DEVELOPMENT

### **What is your educational philosophy (e.g., Play-based, Montessori, STEAM)?**

Our curriculum is grounded in research-based practices and current understanding of child development. It incorporates Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC), Reggio Emilia-inspired approaches, and the Creative Curriculum framework.

Through a balance of teacher-guided and child-initiated, play-based learning experiences, children are encouraged to explore, investigate, create, and problem-solve.

Curriculum planning is guided by developmental goals while also reflecting children's interests, questions, and experiences. Project-based learning and nature-based experiences foster curiosity, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and environmental awareness.

Teachers provide individualized support and responsive interactions to promote each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

### **How do you support social-emotional learning and conflict resolution between children?**

The YMCA of Greater San Francisco Early Childhood Education Program is guided by the core values of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility, which are integrated throughout the curriculum and daily interactions.

### **What does a typical daily schedule look like for a student? How is "play" used to meet early learning standards and school readiness?**

#### **Infants (3 months–24 months)**

We have an infant suite. Each classroom has 12 children in a family-like group setting, with children of different ages. Each child will be assigned to a primary caregiver who will communicate daily with parents and be the primary person responsible for caregiving routines and recording. Whenever the primary caregiver is unavailable, the other teachers in the classroom will serve as

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

secondary caregivers and will be available to support your family. Personalized schedules and caring interactions throughout the day encourage infants to discover, develop, and advance in their own special way.

The suite is designed to provide a caring and stimulating environment for children. Sleeping, feeding, playing, and changing areas are built into the suite. The nap room has cribs for younger infants and small cots for the walking infants and is designed to promote relaxation for the infants. The design of the entire suite takes into account the infants' health and safety.

Infants will experience plenty of caring attention and age-appropriate activities throughout the day. Infants respond best to warm, caring interactions, so staff interacts with them by hugging, singing, rocking, and playing at the infant's level.

Developmentally appropriate materials help infants practice reaching, grasping, and tracking objects with their eyes. Bright, colorful toys and mirrors offer infants opportunities to touch and explore. Communication about an infant's activities during the day will be recorded on your child's day form/Tot Report. A copy will be given to parents upon request.

Parents are responsible for bringing in diapers and wipes to be kept at the center. Extra sets of clothing should also be brought to the center in case of accidents. Please provide lightweight and heavyweight blankets. Infant sheets will be washed and changed daily and as needed.

Infants' and young toddlers' gums are wiped down after their mid-day meal. For young toddlers, if you would like to practice brushing their teeth, please provide a small toddler-sized toothbrush and, if appropriate, dentist-approved toothpaste clearly labeled with his/her name, contained in a zip-locked or reusable/washable bag. (During times of communicable disease exposure, such as norovirus or flu, we will suspend the practice of tooth brushing until the outbreak has cleared.)

Parents will provide all meals and snacks. Please note that staff are not allowed to provide any food stored in an open can or jar. All of the child's belongings should be clearly marked with his or her name.

A "Needs and Services Plan" is required by licensing. Families must complete and submit this plan on or before the child's first day of school. The "Needs and Services Plan" must be updated every three months and as needed thereafter. This information will help the teaching staff gain a better understanding of your infant's individual needs.

### **Breastfeeding**

Nursing is welcomed and supported by our YGSF ECE Programs. For a quiet and comfortable space, nursing mothers may use the library or the infant's nap room to nurse their child throughout the day.

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

### **Infant's Daily Schedule**

Young infants' schedule for sleeping and eating are according to individual child's needs and schedule. Diapers will be changed every two hours or as necessary throughout the day. Infant teachers will work closely with families to individualize the schedule. However, infants over 1 year will have scheduled mealtime and nap time.

7:30- 9:30 AM	Welcome, hand wash (for both child and adults) health check, free play, breakfast for early children Parents fill out My Day Form/Swaddo (before or upon arrival) Transition to classrooms Young infants feed and nap according to their schedule. Continues to welcome children and conduct health check
9:30 – 11:00 AM	Circle Time Wash hands, free play Diaper change, offer art/small group activity Outdoor activities for older infants, free play
10:30 AM -12:00 PM	Indoor activity room/Outdoor activities Wash hands, young infants will eat according to their own schedule. Lunchtime for older infants. Optional brushing of teeth.
12:00-3:00 PM	Diaper change, naptime for older infants, outside time for younger infants. Indoor activities and quiet play.
3:00- 4:00 PM	Enrichment Classes, indoor/outdoor activities, snack time
4:00 – 5:00 PM	Circle time, music & movement, diaper change 2nd snack time, meal/dinner time, combine both classrooms
5:00 –6:00 PM	Combine classrooms, free play/quiet activity/prepare for Departure time, exchange of information

### **Two's/Toddlers, Jr. Preschool (24 months-3 years)**

Each child will be assigned to a primary caregiver who will communicate daily with parents and be the primary person responsible for caregiving routines and recording. Whenever the primary caregiver is unavailable, the other teachers in the classroom will serve as secondary caregivers and will be available to support your family.

Toddlers experience the world in new and exciting ways as they begin to talk, walk, and explore on their own. An enriching, stimulating environment helps toddlers learn and develop their own self-confidence, self-esteem, and understanding of the world around them.

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

The toddler suite was designed to provide fun and balance for the children. Each room will have an area where children can learn body control and coordination. Imaginative and dramatic play offers opportunities for creativity, independence, and adventure in a safe, caring space.

The toddler rooms are designed with daily learning plans that include a variety of age-appropriate activities that engage the child's interest. We understand that toddlers learn by doing, so we give them plenty of activities that include singing, dancing, jumping, and playing. Activities that stimulate all five of the child's senses are included in each learning plan. Puzzles and blocks help improve fine motor skills while exploring colors, shapes, sizes, and numbers. Singing and story time help with language development.

A toddler's mind and body don't always grow at the same pace, so self-control, potty training, and self-esteem are among the most challenging and important stages of development during this time. In the toddler suite, we have a changing table and toilets to support and encourage potty training. Regarding behavior and discipline issues, most situations can be handled by redirecting the child to another appropriate activity. This directly affects the child's confidence and self-esteem, which are formed during this highly impressionable time. We will support the child at his/her level of development and never compare one child to another.

Communication with parents will take place verbally and in writing (via a communication log) daily with the staff of the toddler suite. At the end of the day, the staff will communicate what each child's day was like. If there are changes to a child's feeding or napping schedule, please put it in writing so staff can include it in their learning plan.

During the potty-training stage, we will work with the family to create a plan that aligns with what is implemented at home and in schools (e.g., pull-ups, etc.). Three changes of clothing, in case of accidents, should be brought each day. In addition, please provide breakfast/lunch/dinner for the day, eating utensils, a blanket, and a small sheet for naptime. Blankets and sheets are sent home with parents every Friday for washing and returned the following Monday. Each child's clothing and other belongings brought to the center should be clearly marked with their name.

### **Toddler's/Two's – Junior Preschool Daily Schedule**

7:30– 9:00 AM	Welcome, hand wash (for both child and adults), combine with preschoolers, health check, parents sign in, free play
9:00 –9:45 AM	Separate into their Suite/classroom for choice table activities/learning center, clean-up, songs, Potty Training/Diaper change, wash hands, AM snack time, clean-up, wash hands
9:45 – 10:05 AM	Morning Circle/Large Group Time, prepare for outdoor play
10:05 – 11:05 AM	Outside choice time, walk, play structure, bike, and sand box

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11:05 – 11:45 AM	Wash hands, inside special small group activities, learning center
11:45 AM – 12:45 PM	Clean-up, Potty Training/Diaper change, wash hands before and after meal Family style lunch, teeth brushing after meal
12:45– 1:00 PM	Book Choice/Story Time, prepare for nap (check diaper/toileting)
1:00–3:00 PM	Nap, quiet time
3:00–3:30 PM	Wake – up, wash hands, PM snack time Potty Training/Diaper change, wash hands
3:30–4:00 PM	PM Circle/Large Group time, free play in learning centers
4:00 –5:00 PM	Enrichment Class/Outdoor choice time
5:00 –6:00 PM	Wash hands, diaper change/toileting, May combine with preschoolers, Free play in areas, quiet reading time

### **Preschool/Pre-kindergarten (3 years–6 years)**

Each child will be assigned to a primary caregiver who will communicate daily with parents and be the primary person responsible for caregiving routines and recording. Whenever the primary caregiver is unavailable, the other teachers in the classroom will serve as secondary caregivers and will be available to support your family.

Preschool programming encourages children to build reading skills, self-confidence, and have fun. The suite and the outside playground were designed for safe exploration, allowing children to have fun while learning. Individual and group activities provide preschool-age children with opportunities to expand their knowledge while exploring the world around them. Each room has clearly defined learning centers offering a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities. Preschoolers will have the opportunity to explore the art, science, reading, music, blocks, puzzles, dramatic play, and computer areas.

The outdoor play space is also divided into specific areas to create a productive learning environment. Sand and water trays are available outside for fun and experiments.

An age-appropriate play structure where children can climb, slide, and jump will be the focal point of most outdoor adventures. The children are developing their large-motor skills by interacting with playground equipment and peers. Bikes and tricycles, along with balls and jump ropes, are available for the children to choose from during outside play.

Both the interior and exterior environments were designed to take into account the developmental and physical level of the children using them. A safe and healthy environment is the key to a child's

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self-esteem development. Daily activities support weekly plans, which in turn support monthly themes. As the children grow through the preschool years, the focus will turn from exploration to building a foundation in math, science, language, as well as an appreciation for art and music.

The oldest (or pre-kindergarten) children in the preschool will have pre-kindergarten enrichment activities daily. These small-group activities will have a stronger educational focus in their weekly plans and monthly themes, conducted in small groups away from younger preschoolers. Letter recognition, story time, poems, and songs will all help prepare the children for the years to come. For example, counting, sorting, and ordering are basic math components that the children will focus on through games and activities. Working in both small and large groups will help with social development and the concept of sharing, both of which are very important when children enter Kindergarten.

Preschool-age children need time to rest and recover after hours of excitement and activity. Each classroom will have a designated quiet time, where children will rest for approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. We provide the cot for children to sleep on, but parents must send in a blanket and sheet for their child. This should be taken home every Friday for washing and returned the following Monday. For children who do not nap, provisions will be made for quiet activities that do not disturb the rest of the sleeping children.

As practice in self-help and healthy habits, preschool-aged children are given the option to brush their teeth after they finish lunch. To participate, please provide your child with a toothbrush and a small tube of toothpaste clearly labeled with his/her name, contained in a zip-locked (or reusable/washable bag. (During times of communicable disease exposure, such as norovirus or flu, we will suspend the practice of tooth brushing until the outbreak has cleared.)

Communication with parents will take place verbally each day when the child is picked up. Formal parent-teacher conferences take place twice a year. Monthly calendars with the month's theme, along with weekly curriculum plans, will be posted in the classrooms.

### **Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten – Daily Schedule**

7:30– 9:00 AM	Welcome, Wash hands for both child and adults, combine in Toddler suite, Health check, parents sign-in. Free play, learning areas, breakfast for early children.
9:00 – 9:45 AM	Preschool suite opens, wash hands for adults and children arriving. Wash hands, AM snack time, Clean-up. Children help prepare for the day. Circle Time (15 – 20 minutes)
9:45 –10:45 AM	Free Choice, learning centers, interests' area play Small Group Activities / Pre-K Enrichment Time

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT CONTINUED...

10:45 -11:45 AM	Outdoor choice time
11:45 AM -12:30 PM	Wash hands, family style lunch, clean-up
12:30-1:00 PM	Wash hands, help cots down Teeth Brushing/Prepare for nap Begin rest time with book reading
1:00-2:45 PM	Rest time
2:45-3:15 PM	Wash hands, put cots/bedding away, PM snack time, clean-up
3:15-4:15 PM	Enrichment Class/Outside choice time
4:15-5:30 PM	Indoor choice time, PM circle time, learning activities
5:30-6:00 PM	Clean-Up. May combine with Toddlers, area play Wash hands, quiet literacy time

### **Do you provide meals and snacks, and are they nutritionally balanced?**

#### **Food Services**

Children over 12 months of age will follow the center's established meal and snack schedule. The center provides morning and afternoon snacks that meet CACFP meal pattern requirements, including components from at least two food groups for children in the appropriate age groups. Lunch is also provided at sites participating in the CACFP food program.

At our non-CACFP site, Gateway Center, families may choose to purchase a catered hot lunch through Chefables for children 18 months and older at an additional cost or provide a packed lunch for their child. Chefables application forms and monthly menus are available at the front desk.

For children under 18 months old, parents/guardians are responsible for providing all required breast milk, infant formula, and complementary foods, meals, and snacks for older infants (12 – 23 months old). Formula must be provided in ready-to-feed bottles, each labeled and prepared for a single feeding. Center staff will follow the infant's Individual Infant Feeding Plan provided by the parent/guardian to ensure consistency with home feeding routines, when appropriate.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing all necessary feeding supplies, including bottles (for infants), drinking cups, and eating utensils. For safety and sanitation, all items must be non-breakable and microwave-safe, and labeled with the child's name.

We do not microwave bottles or food for infants; instead, we place the bottle or container in warm water or a bottle warmer to warm it.

## COMMUNICATION & PARTNERSHIP

### **How will I receive updates about my child's daily activities and milestones?**

#### **Communication**

We understand that communication about a child's development is important, especially during the early years. The lines of communication are kept open in a number of ways: formally and informally via our daily infant sheets/Swaddo, daily/weekly written notes, newsletters, parent groups, incident reports, email, texts, bulletin boards, conferences, surveys/questionnaires, and events.

Frequent communication between families and the YGSF ECE program staff is essential in supporting a child. To provide the best possible care for a child, it is important for parents to inform us of any changes at home that may affect the child's behavior at school. This will help us to understand the child's behavior at school and further support their needs at the center. We welcome parents to visit their child during the day to observe their progress.

#### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Each age suite has a schedule for periodic conferences for the children in that age group. There will be semi-annual conferences for infants, toddlers, and preschool families. This gives the staff the opportunity to share important observations and information with parents about their child. It also gives parents the opportunity to see their child's progress and work with teachers to support any specific needs. The tool used is the "Desired Results Developmental Profile" (DRDP) developed by the California Department of Education. This tool is based on observations of the child during program activities. Daily communication between parents and teachers will also include this information. Parents and staff should feel free to meet as frequently as needed and not wait for a scheduled meeting if there are any concerns about a child, curriculum, or program.

### **Are there opportunities for parents to volunteer or participate in program events?**

#### **Parent Involvement**

The YMCA of Greater San Francisco's ECE program is family-centered. We believe in collaboration between parents and the program team. We encourage and welcome parent participation in the program by visiting the center and becoming involved through family programs, volunteering, and participating in our semi-annual program evaluations, annual campaign, and special events.

Parents may volunteer for the following:

- Fieldtrips/Special Events - Assist during fieldtrips, special events, picture day, and Back-to-School Night, Open House, etc.
- Special classroom/center guest:  
(the following activities must be discussed, approved, and/or scheduled with staff ahead of time)
  - Read to the children
  - Lead a special project or activity (i.e., cooking, music, art, science, etc.)
  - Share cultural events, stories, etc. o Perform, teach dance, play musical instruments, etc.

## COMMUNICATION & PARTNERSHIP

- **Parent Classroom Representative/Parent Advisory Committee** – You may volunteer to be a parent classroom representative and/or as a member of the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), also known as the Steering Committee. The PAC is one of the best ways to involve parents in the program because parents not only help strengthen program quality but also learn and benefit from the experience. The steering committee comprises parent volunteers, classroom parent representatives, and program staff.

The committee meets monthly to quarterly, as needed. This volunteer group provides support to the YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE by giving feedback and recommendations for improvement(s), finding resources, and providing support in fundraising.

- **Special Events Committee** – Parents may volunteer to assist staff in planning and organizing special events such as the Costume Parade/Fall Festival, Winter Holiday Party, Annual Giving Campaign, Open House, and other center-wide celebrations. One of the main goals of this committee is to encourage other parents to participate and ultimately to help strengthen the YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE community.

If you are interested in participating in or discussing any of these parent involvement activities, please let us know.

## OPEN DOOR POLICY

### **How do you handle behavioral challenges or “big emotions” in the classroom?**

#### **Discipline and Behavior Management**

The YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE Program is committed to creating a safe, supportive, and developmentally appropriate environment where children can explore and learn with minimal stress and frustration. Teachers and staff model respectful and appropriate behavior to help children develop positive social skills. Our discipline approach considers each child’s age, developmental level, emotional needs, and individuality.

We believe that a supportive and trusting environment reduces the need for frequent discipline while still providing clear structure, rules, and expectations. When conflicts arise between children, staff encourage children, when appropriate, to use words and problem-solving skills to resolve the situation independently.

Staff will support and guide children through this process and will intervene when necessary. If a conflict cannot be resolved, children may be temporarily separated while staff addresses the situation with each child individually. Staff use these moments as learning opportunities to discuss appropriate behavior and the natural consequences of actions.

## OPEN DOOR POLICY

Children are then supported in returning to the group and rejoining activities successfully.

If behavioral concerns continue, and the child does not respond to redirection, the following steps may be taken:

- Staff will speak with the child about the situation or behavior.
- The child may be redirected to another activity if necessary.
- Parents/guardians will be informed of the situation.
- A conference with the parent/guardian and teacher may be scheduled to discuss concerns and develop support strategies.
- If needed, a formal behavior support agreement may be developed.
- If appropriate, a referral to a counseling or support agency may be recommended to assist the family.
- If the situation cannot be resolved and the behavior continues to pose a concern, the family may be asked to arrange alternative care.

The YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE Program reserves the right to discontinue services if a child's behavior poses a risk of harm to themselves or others.

Please note that these steps are guidelines only. Each situation will be evaluated individually, and responses will be determined based on the specific circumstances. The YMCA of Greater San Francisco ECE Child Development Center **does not use** corporal punishment, physical punishment, prone restraint, or any other disciplinary methods that may hurt, frighten, humiliate, or violate children's personal rights.

### **Who should I contact if I have a specific concern about my child's progress?**

Parents may contact their child's primary teacher, co-teachers, and site supervisors regarding concerns about their child's progress. The program staff may, when necessary, refer the child for further assessment to either the Golden Gate Regional Center or the local school district to monitor the child's progress. The child's parents will be responsible for initiating the additional screening, and YMCA program staff may assist with the process.