

JCC Early Childhood



Early Childhood Center
PARENT MANUAL
2011-2012

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Welcome

Welcome to the St. Louis Jewish Community Center (JCC) Early Childhood Center. During the next year, we will partner with you to create a solid foundation for your child's future learning success—socially, emotionally, cognitively, physically, and spiritually. The JCC Early Childhood Center builds a foundation for academic successes, nurtures your child's unique learning style, supports interests and abilities, creates a safe place for fun and positive social experiences, engages parents as partners, and fosters an enriched Jewish identity in an inclusive environment.

At the JCC, we believe that children learn best in a safe and secure environment, from caring staff who consistently act with warmth and support in all parts of a child's day. By employing qualified teachers, applying an innovative curriculum, designing age-appropriate classroom environments, and consistently listening to the needs of our families, we hope to ensure that you always feel welcome, comfortable, and respected. Understanding that children develop and learn in the context of their families and communities, the JCC teachers establish relationships with families that increase their knowledge of children's lives outside the classroom. Together, parents and staff create an educational bridge for children, which nurtures and challenges them to grow and develop in their first formal learning experience.

This JCC Parent Manual has been designed to clearly describe the JCC Early Childhood Center's program, policies, and the myriad of practical details that contribute to making each day as safe, pleasant and successful as possible. Please review it and keep it for a reference. We understand that choosing your child's early childhood education experience is one of the most important decisions that you will make. Therefore, we thank you for choosing the JCC Early Childhood Center. We look forward to creating wonderful new memories with your family.

JCC Early Childhood Center Mission Statement

The JCC Early Childhood Center, in partnership with our families, is committed to providing quality care and education that embraces the development of children's mind, body, and soul.

- We stimulate the minds of young children through an innovative and individualized curriculum implemented by a well trained staff in a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment.
- Children develop their bodies and are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through a physical education program that utilizes the best of the JCC's resources in fitness, recreation, and aquatics.
- The soul is nurtured through living Jewish values and Jewish experiences in an environment that appreciates and respects the diversity of the children and their families participating in our program.

About the JCC Early Childhood Center

Philosophy and Curriculum

The JCC Early Childhood Center uses the Project Construct® Curriculum. Project Construct is a process-oriented curriculum and assessment framework for working with young children. Project Construct is based on constructivist theory, which states that children construct their own knowledge and values as a result of interactions with the physical and social world. The JCC Early Childhood Center also augments its curriculum using a combination of several other components that include: current brain research, developmentally appropriate practices, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) regulations, the Missouri Board of Voluntary Accreditation, the guidelines of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and An Ethical Start® curriculum - the integration of secular and Jewish learning.

The JCC Early Childhood Center prepares children for their next step in formal education and helps children achieve their full potential by focusing on the necessary development of social, cognitive, motor, language, pre-math, and pre-writing skills. A developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children is planned for the age span of the children within the group. It is implemented with attention to different needs, interests, and developmental levels of individual children so that every child will meet success in their individual activities. Children engage in science, nature, dramatics, art, music, physical education, movement, and a variety of other activities.

Program Goals

Physical Development

The JCC Early Childhood program has excellent play and work spaces both indoors and outdoors. Besides specific equipment to stimulate the use of large and small muscles, we have a physical education program once a week throughout the year. Swimming is an important part of the curriculum for the older classes.

Cognitive Development

Teachers encourage children to ask questions, promote curiosity, and facilitate exploration in order to ensure that the children become active participants in their own learning. Our teacher's use a daily routine based upon the needs of the children. This routine includes both active and quiet times and group and individual play. We teach the "whole" child in order to ensure that they enter school with both the social and academic skills necessary to be successful.

Social Development

Play is a natural learning tool. It is through play that a child learns the give and take of getting along with others. Through play, a child understands, discovers and interprets the real world. Children gain understanding, new attitudes, and appreciation, all through play.

At the JCC, the child participates in physical, fine motor, dramatic, group, and individual play. Teachers guide and offer support, so that children learn to help themselves.

Emotional Development

Children need to develop and assert their own personalities. Teachers help them understand and utilize socially acceptable behaviors. The chief aim of the JCC Early Childhood Center is to help children develop and use self-discipline, while providing adult support until they are able to regulate themselves.

Judaic Appreciation

The JCC Early Childhood Center participates in “An Ethical Start®”, developed by the JCC Association of North America. The Jewish Values Curriculum is based on Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) and with educational inspiration from Reggio Emilia. Throughout the year various components of this exciting program will be taught. The components of the program include an exploration of Jewish values through Jewish text and activities. These include responsibility, dignity, kindness, community, tradition, and respect.

The JCC ECC celebrates the Jewish holidays in a developmentally appropriate way. Children are taught about the significance and traditions of these holidays throughout the year. Jewish stories, songs, an introduction to Hebrew vocabulary, and an introduction to Israel are all incorporated in the classroom curriculum.

Staff Expertise

The teachers are an important factor in your child’s school experience. They are trained, experienced teachers with warm, outgoing personalities who are vitally interested in their students. To the teachers, the children are individuals with distinct personalities of their own. Each child’s needs are well known to the teacher, and the child’s happiness and well being are of extreme importance.

At least one teacher from each classroom is CPR and First Aid certified. Additionally, all teachers are required to complete at least 12 hours of ongoing early childhood training each year. All classrooms have at least one degreed/certified teacher or a teacher with related early childhood experience.

Staff members are screened annually by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Family Care Safety Registry.

Accreditation and Licensing

The JCC Early Childhood Center is licensed by the State of Missouri and is accredited by the Missouri Board for Voluntary Accreditation of Childhood Education Programs. Licensing books and regulations are available for viewing upon request.

Per the State of Missouri Licensing regulations, the JCC Early Childhood licensing records are open for review.

Parents as Partners

Parent Participation

Parents and teachers may look at young children's learning from different perspectives, but they share a common goal: making sure that children receive the best possible education. We believe one way to foster children's learning is through the joint efforts of families and the JCC Early Childhood Center, so that parents and teachers share responsibility together for creating a working relationship that will help children succeed. Your home and your early childhood program represent the primary environments in which your child grows and develops. Good early childhood education programs value parental involvement. We have found that the foundation for good parent-teacher relationships is frequent and open communication, mutual respect and a willingness to discover what is best for each individual child.

Communication

A strong connection between families and the JCC staff is essential for building a positive environment for young children. Children benefit most from healthy, reciprocal relationships between teachers and families. Like most relationships, these require time to nurture mutual respect, cooperation, and dialogue. For this reason, the JCC places strong emphasis on family involvement by encouraging frequent communication. To keep you informed about daily and weekly events and activities, we distribute newsletters, Director's messages, and notes about your child's early childhood education experience. You can look forward to receiving a newsletter from your child's classroom. The JCC ECC utilizes the Activit-e website to communicate with families. Families must register at www.activit-e.com to access this website. The registration key is available in the ECC office and will be given to families when they enroll in the center. The JCC also sends correspondence via email so please provide your preferred email address on your emergency information form to receive email updates. Please take time to read them and talk to your child about the week's activities, the learning of new skills, friends and other "happenings" in your child's day. If you have questions or concerns about your child or a classroom issue, please discuss it with the Early Childhood Director. Open, respectful communication often clarifies a situation before it becomes a problem.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

When meeting with family members, the JCC seeks a comfortable environment in which parents feel free to share information, ask questions, and make recommendations. The JCC teachers share information with you about your child's experience and development in a way that encourages respectful two-way communication. Regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences occur in the fall and in the spring. Telephone conferences may be scheduled on an as-needed basis.

Early Childhood Committee

The Early Childhood Committee is a group of concerned individuals (parents and professionals) with interest in the Early Childhood Center. The role of the committee is to assist the professional staff in establishing and reviewing Early Childhood policies, as well as focusing on the strategic direction of the program. The chairperson of the Early Childhood Committee is an appointed member of the JCC Board of Directors.

JCC Early Childhood Parent Association

All JCC parents are encouraged to join the JCC Early Childhood Parent Association.

Association members represent the JCC in the community, plan special projects and teacher appreciation events, make recommendations, plan and participate in fundraising events, set up volunteer pools, etc.

JCC Room Parents

For anyone who loves working with young children, being a Room Parent is a terrific way get to know your child's teachers and classmates and to get involved in your child's JCC experience. Room Parents work with teachers to arrange or provide for those extra touches that help make the year special and help communicate information to parents about class celebrations, field trips, and activities.

Visits

You are encouraged to observe your child's classroom in session, but we would appreciate your prearranging the visit with the JCC Early Childhood Site Director and the classroom teacher. This allows us to take account of special events and ensure that there are always a reasonable number of visitors at any given time. Parents are also invited to participate as volunteers and educational resources. Parents who would like to volunteer on a regular basis, are required to go through a volunteer application process that includes a background screening. We also welcome visits from grandparents, other family or special friends for special events.

JCC Policies

Admissions

The JCC Early Childhood Center welcomes all children and extends equal admission opportunity to all families. We require each child to participate in a staff supervised visitation prior to admission.

Class Placement

The JCC Early Childhood Center generally follows a regular school year schedule. Children move to their new classrooms in June of each year based upon the child's age, development and the kindergarten cut-off date. Occasionally, especially in the younger classrooms, children will be moved at different times during the year based upon age, development, and numbers of incoming infants. Parents will be notified before a child is scheduled to move to a new classroom and children will spend time visiting their new room before making the full transition. The JCC Early Childhood Center reserves the right to determine the appropriate class placement of children.

Inclusion Statement

The St. Louis Jewish Community Center recognizes the need for and supports early intervention, and attempts to address the concerns of families of children with special needs (physical, behavioral, cognitive, etc.). The JCC supports the right of each child to play and learn in inclusive Early Childhood programs, consistent with the best interests of all involved. We will work with families and specialists to provide proper care and education for each child with our current staffing. If the current staffing is not sufficient to meet the needs of a child, then the family will be financially responsible for providing additional support staff that meets the standards of the JCC. Any I.E.P. or other behavior plans need to be shared with the Site Director and, will in return, be shared with the appropriate staff members. A copy of these documents will be placed in your child's EC

file. The Early Childhood Site Director and appropriate staff will need to be involved in any ongoing I.E.P. meetings in order to best serve your child.

Additional Resources

The JCC provides early childhood on-site consultants from Jewish Family & Children Services (JF&CS) and the Belle Center. These consultants conduct regular classroom observations. The consultant's role is to assist the teachers and parents in creating a safe, encouraging and supportive environment for the children enrolled in the JCC ECC. The consultant may offer insights into techniques and approaches to help children develop into independent and successful individuals. Additional information regarding JF&CS and The Belle Center is available in the ECC office.

Referrals can be made to outside agencies including JF&CS, The Belle Center, First Steps and the Special School District (SSD). These agencies provide evaluations, counseling and other services to families and children. If, after working with a child and family, the child does not appear to be benefiting from the program or the child is seriously jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from the program, we shall inform families of such concerns. We will cooperate with the family and appropriate specialists to determine the child's current needs; identify the setting and services most suited to meeting those needs; and assist the family in placing the child in an appropriate setting. Close communication with parents is essential to providing quality care and education. If staff feels that a child should be evaluated, such recommendations will be made to parents. When a child has already been evaluated by outside professionals and/or a school district, then we expect parents to share with us the most recent evaluations so that we can work together to achieve agreed upon goals. The JCC strives to develop healthy relationships with families and specialists so that there is consistency for the child.

Records

Families have access to individual family records per request to the Administrative Assistant/Business Manager. If a family requests to have a child's academic record forwarded to another institution, they may do so in writing. All health and medical forms may not be forwarded, according to the HIPPA regulations.

Your Child's Day at the JCC

Program Hours

Center hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

The JCC has developed arrival and pick-up procedures that must be followed to ensure your child's safety. Licensing regulations require that all children be signed in and out. Children must be signed in and out in the Early Childhood Office. Licensing regulations also require that all children wash their hands upon entering the classroom as well as undergoing a morning health check. If there are any injuries or health concerns to report, parents should fill out and sign a health check report.

Children can be released only to authorized adults listed on your child's authorization pick up form. Please notify the Early Childhood Center's office in writing if there are

any changes to your child's authorization form. Under no circumstances are children released to anyone who is not listed on your child's authorization form without prior written permission. For your child's protection and in conformance with State regulations, JCC staff are instructed to request identification if they are unsure about the identity of the person picking up your child. If there is a change in custody or guardianship, we will require legal documentation of any changes in routine.

If you are going to be detained beyond your regular departure time, arrangements should be made to have someone pick up your child. In addition, the JCC Early Childhood office must be notified. In the event that we have not heard from you, the teacher will try to reach parties listed on your emergency card. Please let whomever you have listed know that this may happen. If efforts to reach the parents and alternate persons listed fail, we would have no recourse, except to call the Division of Child Services. Teachers are not permitted to take children to their homes in such emergencies. **Your child will never be left unattended; however, due to a teacher staying with your child, there is a charge per hour rounded up to the next hour. If your child stays past the closing time of 6:00 pm, there is a \$1.00 per minute late fee.**

Breakfast

Children enrolled in early hour or full-day are served a light breakfast from 8:00 - 8:30 am. Arrival at 8:30 am or before will assure that your child will be served breakfast. If you are arriving after breakfast time, please be sure to feed your child breakfast at home. Children enrolled for a start time of 9:00 am do not receive breakfast and should not arrive early as to allow the classroom an uninterrupted breakfast.

Appropriate Clothing

Your child will paint, color, cook, play and eat, so please send him/her in comfortable, easy to wash clothing. Clothing should also be easy for your child to manage in the bathroom. Weather permitting (temperature above 20 degrees) we play outside every day, so please dress your child in appropriate outerwear (jacket, hat, mittens, scarf, boots, snow pants). Your child should have shoes appropriate for running and climbing. Please label everything!

Extra Set of Clothing

A complete extra set of labeled clothing is required, because spills can be common occurrences. On the first day, please send an extra set of labeled clothing that includes underwear, shirts, pants, and socks in a plastic Ziploc bag clearly marked with your child's name. Please check periodically to make sure your child's extra set of clothing is the correct size and appropriate for the current season.

Toilet Learning

Children do not need to be out of diapers when entering the JCC, but please let us know when you feel your child is ready to begin the toilet learning process. Together, we will work out a plan that will make this a pleasant experience for your child. Please reference the toilet mastery policy on page (insert page #).

Rest Period

Children who stay past 12:30 pm have a rest period as required per licensing. Please send a blanket or pillow for your child to use during this period.

Toys From Home

A goal of early childhood is to develop group-sharing skills. Toys from home create confusion for children over ownership of personal items. Therefore, we request that all toys and playthings be left at home. The JCC provides a wide variety of engaging materials and many opportunities for sharing. Some exceptions to this policy include show and tell at circle time or help with separation and adjustment. At the beginning of the year, some children may need to bring a meaningful toy from home as they make their separation adjustment to school. Please discuss any exceptions with your child's classroom teacher. We cannot accept responsibility for breakage or loss of items brought from home. **Guns, war toys, or other toys of destruction are not allowed in the school for any reason!**

Swimming Policy

Some children enrolled in the JCC Early Childhood Center are fortunate to have swimming included as part of the regular program (please check your child's classroom schedule to see if/when your child swims). If your child is well enough to attend school, then it is assumed that he/she is also well enough to fully participate in swimming activities. We do not have alternate activities planned for children who are unable to swim, therefore, we ask that if you do not wish for your child to participate in swimming, then please keep your child at home until the day's swimming activity is complete. We would love to have them join us after swimming to enjoy the activities planned for the remainder of the day.

If a medical condition prohibits your child from fully participating in swimming, a physician's note will be required, and alternate care may be arranged at the discretion of the JCC Early Childhood Site Director.

Health and Medical

Enrollment and Medical Forms

Please complete all enrollment and medical forms (signed by your child's physician in ink) and return to the JCC Early Childhood Center no later than five (5) working days **before your child begins at the JCC Early Childhood Center.**

Please notify the JCC immediately if there is any change in your home address, home phone number, e-mail address, employment address, employment phone number, cell phone number, emergency phone numbers, authorized persons for pick-up and/or your pediatrician's name and phone number.

In addition to state requirements, we may request other pertinent medical information that will enhance our understanding of your child. All such information is strictly confidential and will not be shared with outside parties unless you provide us with written consent.

Communicable Diseases Policy

Parents/guardians are expected to call the JCC when your child is ill with any suspected or diagnosed case of contagious/communicable disease. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services mandates reporting of certain illnesses. Examples of reportable illnesses include: chickenpox, fifth disease, head lice, scabies and vaccine-preventable diseases. Other diseases are communicable but are not listed as

“reportable”. Examples of these diseases include impetigo, conjunctivitis, ringworm, strep throat, pinworms, mononucleosis and influenza-like illnesses.

We will be alert and watch for similar symptoms in other children. If your child has been exposed to any contagious disease, we will send a note home to advise you, so you are alert to the symptoms as well.

Illness Policy

When a child becomes ill at the JCC, parents are notified immediately so you can make arrangements to have your child picked up within the hour.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services mandates that children with any of the following symptoms be kept at home. If your child develops such symptoms during the day, you will be called to pick up your child.

- Fever of 100° or higher during the last 24-hour period
- An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities
- An illness that calls for greater care than staff can provide, compromising the health and safety of other children
- Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, uncontrollable coughing, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness
- Heavy clear nasal discharge
- Green nasal discharge
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Head lice, until your child is nit free
- Whooping cough (pertussis), until five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed
- Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling
- Measles, until four days after disappearance of the rash
- Strep throat until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Chicken Pox until your physician has cleared your child to return to school
- Rash combined with fever
- Ear infections until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.

If your child has a cold, continuous runny nose, or just appears to be ill, you may receive a call to pick your child up at school. The JCC Early Childhood Center reserves the right to confer with your pediatrician when we have concerns or questions about your child's health and attendance at a JCC Early Childhood Center.

For the safety of all children, failure to comply with JCC's Illness Policy may jeopardize your child's enrollment.

Medication

If your child needs medication (prescription or over the counter) administered at the JCC, the following procedures are required:

- A signed Medication Authorization Form from a licensed health care provider, including instructions for administration and dosing, must be sent for any over-the-counter medications.
- Completion of a Medication Authorization Form for all medications (must be completed each year).

- Medication container must have the original label with the child's name, doctor's name and dosing information clearly displayed.
- Medication must be in a safety cap container.
- Medication must have a current expiration date (one month for antibiotics and one year for other medications).

In addition to the above noted information, the following medication guidelines apply:

- The Early Childhood staff will not administer the first dose of any medication
- Staff designated to administer medication may not have had previous medical training.
- For medication which is to be given regularly for greater than one month, each time medication is sent, it should be only a one month supply.
- All discontinued or unused medication must be picked up by the parent/guardian or will be disposed of by the JCC Early Childhood Center within five (5) days after the administration period has ended.
- Based upon an official policy of the AMA, medication orders from the child's parent who is a licensed health care provider will NOT be accepted

Accidents/Emergencies

In the event of a serious accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent or, if necessary, a designated caregiver. If we are unable to reach a parent or caregiver, we will attempt to contact the relative or friend alternate listed on the child's JCC emergency contact

If necessary, we will also call 911. Until the arrival of a parent, relative, other designated caregiver, or paramedic, the JCC Early Childhood Site Director will assume responsibility for the child and make all decisions regarding the child's care. For all injuries or other incidents, parents will be required to sign a report of the incident at the time of pick up.

Attendance

Please call the ECC office if your child will not be in attendance or if you will be arriving late. A child may be excluded from school if one or more of the following conditions are present:

- Illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the program activities.
- Illness that results in a need for greater care than the JCC staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

Following a fever, a child must have 24 hours of normal body temperature, without a fever reducer, before returning to the JCC. Following an illness, a child may return to JCC only if he or she is able to participate in outdoor activities. This is necessary because every day we spend time outdoors (weather permitting) due to the tremendous health benefits for children.

A **physician's note** shall be required for readmission in the following instances:

- After an absence due to an illness of five or more days duration.
- After any length of absence due to a reportable communicable disease as defined by The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.
- At the discretion of the JCC Early Childhood Site Director.

Guidance

At the JCC Early Childhood Center, young children learn self-control, self-help skills, ways to get along with others, and routines. Directors, parents, and teachers work together to set reasonable limits, encourage children to engage in desired behaviors, and teach children how to make healthy decisions. Criticizing, discouraging, creating obstacles and barriers, blaming, shaming, using sarcastic or cruel humor, or using physical punishment are negative disciplinary methods.

JCC Early Childhood Center does not use negative discipline methods or corporal punishment.

The JCC Early Childhood Center's positive approach to discipline increases children's self-esteem, allows children to feel valued, encourages children to feel cooperative, motivates children to change strategy rather than to blame others, helps children to take initiative, relate successfully to others, and solve problems. The JCC's goal is to create an environment that allows all children to develop self-control and to assume responsibility for their own behavior, while ensuring the safety of all children. The JCC teachers communicate their behavioral expectations in a language that children are able to understand in order to redirect inappropriate behavior. In an effort to support the emotional development of children, limits are set in a calm and reasonable manner.

About Biting

Biting may occur in infant or toddler classrooms. Young children tend to communicate with their bodies quickly and many times spontaneously. Reasons for biting range from exploration to frustration, teething, health problems and lack of language skills. Biting is not necessarily an indication of aggression toward another person. When biting occurs, teachers encourage children to use words, not their bodies, to communicate. The teacher shows concern for the bitten child and provides immediate comfort and care. Both children are treated with dignity and respect. After a biting incident, the child exhibiting the biting behavior is observed, supervised and re-directed. It is the JCC's policy to contact both sets of parents about a biting incident. To respect the confidentiality of all parties, the JCC does not inform parents about the identity of other children who are involved.

Behavior and Enrollment Policy

The Jewish Community Center wants to ensure a quality experience for all families of children enrolled, including those children who have special needs (physical, behavioral, or cognitive). The JCC works closely with families and specialists to provide quality care and education for each child as long as the child's participation does not in any way alter the day-to-day operations of the JCC program. As such, we require each child to participate in a staff supervised visitation before enrollment can be finalized.

If a child displays ongoing disruptive behavior (including biting), and/or a staff member has to alter the day-to-day programming of the class in order to address the behavioral or educational issues of a particular child, the following procedures will take place:

1. The director will contact the parents or guardians to schedule a meeting to develop a formal behavior modification plan. This meeting must occur within 72 hours of the request.
 - At this meeting an individual behavior plan will be developed to address the issues. This plan will include a timeline for implementation, including an established date to reassess the behavior.

2. The director will contact the parents to reassess the behaviors as outlined during the initial meeting.
 - If the behavior has not resolved a secondary meeting will be required.
 - It may be determined that outside assessment or a shadow is required. If the JCC determines that additional staff is required, the family will be financially responsible.
3. Should a behavior continue to be unresolved, children may be suspended and/or excluded from the program.
 - It will be up to the Site Director to make this determination.
 - In such circumstances, the parent/guardian may be called to pick the child up from the center.
 - The time during a suspension will not be credited. Suspension may vary from a few hours or longer up to and including dismissal from the program. It is our hope that such an event will not occur.

Toilet Mastery Policy

Child may not participate in the summer camp program without toilet mastery.

It is anticipated that children will achieve toilet mastery prior to transitioning to the 3-4 year old classroom. If mastery is not attained the following steps will be taken:

- A meeting will be held with the director 4-6 weeks after enrolling in the 3-4 year old classroom. A plan will be developed to support toilet mastery at school and home.
- The director will contact the parents or guardians to reassess toilet mastery according to the timeline established during the original meeting.
- If progress is not being made, outside help (therapist/physician) may be required.

A child may not continue onto the 4-5 year old classroom without the family addressing the issue to the director's satisfaction.

Nutrition and Kashrut

Nutrition

Life-long eating habits are formed between the ages of one and five years, which makes proper nutrition for young children a very important task for parents and caregivers. It is the goal of the JCC to promote good eating habits in the following ways:

- Demonstrating the enjoyment of eating nutritiously,
- Weaving nutrition education into the daily curriculum,
- Having children enjoy a selection of nutritious food, and
- Helping children develop the skills to serve themselves.

The JCC provides nutritional snacks that follow Jewish dietary laws as we follow the USDA's Food Pyramid guidelines including dairy products, fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products. On Shabbat, children enjoy traditional Shabbat foods. We will work with you to meet the special dietary needs of your child. Please be sure to notify us if your child has any food allergies. We will ask you to put together, with your doctor, an allergy action plan including treatment if your child is exposed to an allergen. We will post a sign in the classroom, add your child's name to our school allergy list, and monitor all snacks and treats.

A detailed menu outlining all of the meals and snacks served will be distributed to families on a regular basis. Menus will also be available on the JCC website.

If you would like to modify the menu for religious and/or medical reasons, please contact the director. Not all requests can be accommodated.

Food Allergies

The JCC Early Childhood Center maintains a strict policy of prohibiting the serving of products that contain nuts. Products which contain nuts are not permitted in any early childhood classroom. However, the JCC cannot guarantee that products we serve were not processed in a facility which also handles nuts. Should your child have special dietary needs, please consult with the Early Childhood Site Director.

Kashrut

All food brought into the JCC must be in original, unopened containers and marked with a kosher symbol. Please become familiar with appropriate kosher symbols found on a wide variety of food items. A list of acceptable kosher symbols can be obtained from the Early Childhood office. Please send food with your child only on special occasions that have been coordinated with your child's teacher.

Holidays

Each Jewish holiday receives special attention at the JCC. We encourage parents to join us for classroom and holiday events throughout the year, including our weekly classroom Shabbat celebrations. We celebrate national holidays like Thanksgiving, but we do not celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, or Easter.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special occasions for your child, and we invite you to share this event with your child's class. Special birthday treats are welcome; however, goody bags and balloons are not allowed. As with all food brought into the JCC, all birthday treats must be kosher and pre-packaged. Acceptable snacks include fresh fruit, vegetables, baked goods from a bakery that is certified kosher, or packaged goods marked with an acceptable kosher certification. Please talk to your child's teacher if you would like to hold a classroom celebration.

Safety and Security

The safety and security of children is our top priority. As such, we have implemented permanent security systems at each of our JCCs that include:

- Surveillance cameras, recording systems and monitors at strategic places throughout the building and outdoor areas.
- Signage that will alert all visitors that the premises are under surveillance.
- Emergency alarms that are connected directly to police authorities.
- Limited access and locked entries equipped with electronic controls.

The JCC's security system provides a high level of protection that creates a visible deterrent for would-be troublemakers and prompts quick action in the event of danger. In addition to these obvious measures, there are less apparent aspects of security in place as well.

All JCC staff are carefully screened and undergo background checks. They also receive training in security, safety measures, and scenarios including possible medical issues, severe weather conditions, and the oversight needed of children while in our care and supervision. Furthermore, the JCC also maintains excellent working relationships with local governments including police and emergency personnel. Not only do these municipal personnel keep a watchful eye on our sites and grounds, they alert us to any security information, issues, and threats that could affect us.

We know that our JCC families recognize the importance of these measures and we ask for your cooperation in adherence to them.

Evacuation Procedures

If evacuating the building becomes necessary due to the threat of fire, bomb scare, or other building emergency, the following procedures are followed:

- All children will be evacuated through the nearest exit and will be escorted to a safe distance from the building.
- Children will remain outside of the building until the fire/police department informs us that it is safe to reenter.

When instructed by the proper authorities, children will be escorted back into the building. Parents will be notified about all evacuations in writing at pick-up time.

Fire drills are practiced monthly and tornado drills are practiced quarterly.

Weather Closings

In the event of a closing related to weather or other circumstances, we will follow the following procedures:

- In the event of a school closing (or delayed opening time), a message will be left at 314-442-3224 for the Staenberg Family Complex and 314-442-3450 for the Marilyn Fox Building no later than 6:00 am.
- School closings or late openings will also be run on the major news stations.
- In the event of an early closure, we will call all families alerting them of the closing time. Please make sure all of your contact information is up to date in the Early Childhood offices.
- There will be no pro-rated refunds given if the program is closed due to weather or other circumstances.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The State of Missouri requires that all staff working with young children be aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect. The JCC Early Childhood Center is obligated by law to report any suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the Department of Family Services Hotline.

Enrollment Process

Reserving a Spot

If a spot is currently available, families are asked to place a \$400 reservation fee.

- The reservation fee will roll over towards the required \$400 refundable deposit once your child starts at the JCC Early Childhood Center.
- The JCC Early Childhood Center will reserve a spot for an unlimited amount of time.
- A reservation does not guarantee a spot. Spots are only guaranteed if the start date is within three months of the current date.
- Should the JCC receive a request for a reserved spot more than three months from the start date, families will be required to pay 50% of the monthly tuition in order to keep that spot.
- If the family would like to cancel their reservation in lieu of paying 50% of the monthly tuition, the \$400 will be refunded and the family will be placed at the top of the current wait list (see wait list procedures below).

Wait List

Early Childhood spots are in high demand! By placing your child on the wait list, your child has the best opportunity of receiving a spot in the JCC Early Childhood Center. If you would like to be placed on the Early Childhood Center wait list:

- A non-refundable \$25 wait list fee must be placed. This fee will roll over towards the required application fee, once a spot becomes available.
- When a spot becomes available you will be contacted by the Early Childhood Center office.
- Families have 48 hours to commit to the available spot by placing the \$400 deposit.
- Families are required to start paying 50% of the tuition upon agreeing to take the spot and then payment in full once the child begins in the program.
- If you decide not to enroll in the available spot, you can elect to remain on the wait list or asked to be removed from the wait list.

Deposit and Application Fees

Families are required to pay an annual non-refundable \$25 application fee every school year.

A \$400 refundable deposit is required before a child can enroll. The deposit will be credited towards the child's last month of tuition at the JCC Early Childhood Center, with the following restrictions:

- Your child must be enrolled in the program for at least six months.
- Your account must be in good standing.
- Thirty days notice must be given prior to leaving the program.

Billing

Payment

Families will receive a copy of the fee agreement, which must be signed by the parents and the Early Childhood Center Site Director. Fees are based on your child's current schedule and classroom assignment. If your child's schedule or classroom changes, the fees will be adjusted accordingly. All fees are adjusted annually.

All families are required to pay by electronic funds transfer (EFT). This is either an automatic debit from a checking account or an automatic charge to MasterCard, Visa, Discover, or American Express. **There will be a \$25 charge for returned EFTs.** If you need a receipt other than the statement that you will receive each month, please request one from the Early Childhood Administrative Assistant as needed. Payment must be current or the JCC could deny future service.

The Early Childhood Center bills its families on a monthly basis. The monthly fee is derived from an annual charge based on the number of days that the Early Childhood Center is open in a year. The amount of days you attend each month may vary based on the month, secular holidays, Jewish holidays or staff training. Families are required to pay their full monthly fee each month regardless of the amount of days actually attended. Thirty day written notice is required for withdrawal to avoid being billed.

Prorating

Fees cannot be prorated for participant absence from scheduled class sessions. Refunds or credits are not given for illness, vacation or temporary childcare arrangements. Extra days in addition to your regular schedule may be allowed at an additional charge if there is space available. Please check with the Early Childhood Administrative Assistant if you need an extra day.

Refunds

Written notice of cancellation must be submitted to the Early Childhood office at least 30 days in advance to avoid being billed. Violation of this policy will result in a forfeiture of the deposit. From time to time, it is necessary to make changes to our program. Refunds or pro-rations are not granted for staffing, curriculum or other changes in the program.

Schedule Changes

The Early Childhood Center recognizes that schedules for families may change. One change each year from the original schedule is allowed. There will be a \$25.00 fee for additional schedule changes. See the office for schedule changes; they will be subject to availability in the classroom. All requests for schedule changes must be made one month in advance of the requested change date.

Discontinuation of Services

If we determine that continued participation in the JCC's programs or services is not appropriate, the JCC reserves the right to discontinue services. In such a circumstance, any unused portion of program fees paid to date will be refunded. The JCC reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for reasons not limited to the following: failure to observe the rules of the JCC as outlined in the Parent Guide, special needs of a child that cannot be adequately met with current staffing, physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by adult or child, or non-payment of fees.

JCC Membership

JCC membership is not required to enroll in the Early Childhood Center. Discounted rates are available for members of the JCC. Membership must be in effect for the duration of your child's enrollment in the JCC program to continue receiving the discount.

***Thank you for entrusting your children with the
JCC Early Childhood Center!***

