

Infant / Toddlers Curriculum Statement

The UWSA Day Care Infant Toddler Program offers high quality and respectful care for children under the age of two.

We have three infant rooms, one in our existing building, and two in our addition. Four children over the age of eighteen months will be placed in the Preschool Room also found in our addition.

Infants and Toddlers are at the center of a curriculum based on goals for social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Our staff strives to understand and respond to the interests and needs of each child and family.

We recognize that the child's family is the first teacher and that a child's earliest experiences lay the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, and health. Building healthy relationships and good communication is key to what we do. Those include relationships and communication with the child, with the child's family, between the children, and between the staff.

Our curriculum is based on the belief that caregiving routines and the exploration and play of children provide opportunities for positive interactions that support the child's learning and development.

We recognize, respect, and celebrate diversity of culture, ability, and gender of children and families. Through inclusive practices, a child with additional support needs will participate fully in our program. Our interactions are based on trust, comfort, and a sense of community.

Relationships

Our curriculum fosters responsive and positive relationships between staff and the child, between family and staff, between the children, and between the staff themselves.

Relationships between Staff and Child

Every staff in the program and every other child will interact with and be a part of your child's day. But, at the same time, because our program centers on the child, we provide a primary caregiver for each child. The children are divided into three primary caregiver groups. One person will care for your child for most of the day from the time they enroll until they are ready to transition to the preschool program. All staff will observe your child, but the primary caregiver will review and evaluate those observations and be responsible for documenting them.

On top of meeting your child's daily needs and observation, the primary caregiver will be responsible for setting goals, for creating activities, and for communicating with your family. The primary caregiver will record observations of your child in a log book. Documentation of your child's play experiences will be posted on the wall inside the room.

We speak respectfully and calmly at the child's level using a natural voice and wait patiently for a response. We explain what is happening and involve the child in routine decisions. We describe what we see them doing and use words to describe their activities and everything they see around them. Words like "Your hand is patting a furry teddy bear," helps build connections in the child's thinking.

We label and describe the child's feelings and share our own feelings to act as role models for emotional literacy. "You seem sad. Would you like a hug?" and "I'm feeling sorry that you're upset" are examples of what we say.

Communication between Staff and Parents

We strive to form a working partnership with parents. You'll always be informed about your child's day. We keep a daily log to record your child's day and it will be a gift to you when your child moves on to the preschool program.

We want you to feel free to approach any of us with your concerns. We're happy to speak to you about your child. Our staff would like to know about the time you spend with your child before day care begins. You may write a small report in the log to let us know. Also, you may bring in a family photo that will be displayed for your child to see.

Our Parent Resource Library holds a variety of books of interest to children and parents alike.

You will receive newsletters and notices letting you know about day care events.

Relationships Among Children

Children are introduced to each other. We encourage them to speak to each other and teach them the words they'll need to interact safely and respectfully with each other. Things we might say are, "You're playing in the kitchen together," and "Can you help her find her hat?"

Communication between Staff

Our communication is both verbal and written. To keep each other informed about each child, and any pertinent family information, we keep a daily communication book that includes messages from parents, messages between staff, and any relevant information about the children's care. We have regular staff meetings to discuss programming. And, as your child is ready to move into the preschool program, we write transition reports as a way to help the staff get to know your child and your child's needs.

Caregiving Routines

We make caregiving routines consistent to allow children a sense of control and to help them learn what to expect and to feel secure. Examples of skills we strive to develop through our care include awareness of other's feelings, helping others, taking turns, and taking pride in

accomplishment. We speak to the children to let them know what's happening. "When you're finished looking at that book, we're going to wash hands for lunch."

Diapering

We use the diaper routine as an opportunity for meaningful interactions and learning. We respectfully involve the children. We'll say, "May I check your diaper please? And, "Now it's your turn for a diaper change." The child is informed of each step along the way. "I'm going to gently wipe you now." And they are given choices such as whether they'd like to be lifted to the change table, or step up on their own.

We provide a small toilet for children who show an interest in toilet learning. And children who need help to reach the sink for hand washing will step up onto a stool.

Feeding

Each child sits in a group with a primary caregiver. The infants sit in highchairs. Those who show they are ready to feed themselves, usually the older children, sit at small tables designed for their size with their feet resting on the floor. Eating at these tables also prepares children for their transition to the preschool program.

Children are encouraged to feed themselves, though help is offered as needed.

Snacks are provided by the day care. The menu is posted ahead of time for your information. If your child is unable to eat the snacks we provide, we ask that you bring in a box of dry baby cereal or another suitable non-perishable food that we can serve. Lunches are provided by parents and are warmed up by staff for the child. All foods you bring in will be offered to your child and your child is free to choose what to eat.

Napping

Before the age of eighteen months, children sleep in cribs. After that, children sleep in cots. Children are offered a nap three hours after they wake in the morning or according to individual needs.

We help children sleep according to their preference and then gradually help them to sleep in a cot independently.

We supply the sheets and blankets and wash them every week.

In the infant room of our existing building, the nap room is a cozy, quiet room, separate from the eating and play areas. When there are four or more children in the nap room, there will be one staff present. When there are less than four, we place the cot or crib near the door for close supervision. Every five to ten minutes, a staff checks on the sleeping child and records the information on a chart.

While there is a separate nap room in the infant room of our existing building, there is no separate room in our addition. There we will make the rooms suitable for sleep with blinds closed and quiet music.

Exploration and Play

Your child will be included in every play activity, indoors and out. We imagine the learning environment from your child's point of view and allow them the time to experience the beauty and wonder of their world. We sit close to allow your child to take the lead and to provide support as needed. We give your child large blocks of time to learn and explore at their own pace. And we offer many ways to investigate their worlds with their body and senses. They will be encouraged to reach out, touch, explore, and interact. Examples of skills we hope to develop include following directions, sensory discrimination, sharing materials, emerging empathy, and imagination.

Indoors, toys and materials are accessible to your child. And enough toys are provided so that children either won't have to wait for a turn or can be provided with an equally enticing alternative. They'll have the opportunity to play with things like soft toys, board books, chunky puzzles, and building blocks. Art activities include painting with big-handled brushes, colouring with chunky crayons, and gluing collage materials onto paper. A science activity could be watching snow melt to slush and then to water.

Outdoors, your child will interact with nature in every season. Our Infant Toddler's nature playground features soft grass to land on, a garden, a slide built into a gently sloping hill, an above ground sandbox, and interesting ceramic stepping-stones dug into the ground. In spring and summer your child may want to sample strawberries or fresh mint. The sandbox filled with shovels and pails is a great place to learn about pouring and scooping. In autumn your child will play amongst the beauty of fallen leaves. In winter your child may want to shovel snow or slide down the hill on a sled.

We use our observations to provide a safe, cognitively challenging, and nurturing environment based on your child's curiosity, interest, and readiness. The children's needs are at the heart of the play experiences offered. We carefully observe and document your child's play so that we know what experiences are most meaningful and what direction to take next. Play experiences are based on interests. Toys and materials are added, changed, and adapted to suit each child.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion encircle our curriculum.

We believe children benefit from learning that everyone in our program and community is unique. We expose children to similarities and differences in a positive atmosphere. The cultural practices of families are respected and will be accommodated according to the child's best

interests. Diversity is reflected in our program through the faces of families, children, and staff. Pictures posted on our walls, our room decorations, children's books, music, dolls, and foods served are chosen with respect for and in celebration of cultural diversity.

Inclusion means that every child has equal access to participate in our program. Children have the right to belong and to feel safe and be accepted. When children of all abilities spend time together, positive attitudes are fostered.

We create and adapt activities, play experiences, and strategies for each child, and that includes those with additional support needs.

A Child and Family Focus

Our curriculum is everything we do for you and your child. We are committed to providing the best care and are always looking for ways to enrich our program. We welcome your child and your family and we value your input. We want the best for your child!