

# San Luis Coastal Adult School

## *Parent Participation Program*



### **Welcome!**

You are about to begin the unique experience of sharing a class with your child.

This program will encourage you to:

- Be with your child and other families in a positive school setting.
- Engage in teacher-facilitated discussions on relevant parenting topics.
- Take an active role in your child's early education.
- Use the resources in our Parenting and Child Library.
- Listen to and learn from expert community guest speakers.
- Learn to develop and implement activities that are age appropriate.
- Take field trips in the community to enhance learning.

***We must have a place where children can have a whole group of adults they can trust.***

***~ Margaret Mead***

# We are here to help parents...



**View** parenting as a valuable and worthwhile endeavor.

**See** themselves as the most effective teachers and models for their children.

**Grow** in parenting skills and knowledge.

**Appreciate** the value of childhood play.

**Understand** that growth is a process and that children develop according to recognizable patterns.

**Discover** the unique abilities and needs of their children.

**Learn** about suitable play materials that offer creative and constructive opportunities for learning.

**Be inspired** by new ideas and feel the support of others in their parenting community.

## **Sample Daily Schedule**

**Arrival, Indoor Play, Art, Centers** - Engage in age appropriate activities: Play with toys, do a craft, paint, use playdough, dress-up, build with blocks, work with manipulatives, read books, experience sensory exploration and play games.

**Good Morning Circle** – Sing, dance, share and read a story. Preschoolers will have opportunities for show and tell.

**Snack** – Parents provide nutritious snacks.

**Parent Discussion Time** - Teacher will facilitate discussions on a variety of age appropriate topics.

**Outdoor Play** – Sand and water play, climbing, jumping, swinging, various wheeled toys...and more.

**Goodbye Circle** – Sing, move and read a story.

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### **Notes on our schedule:**

The first part of the day is the best time to truly observe your child, as well as a time to get to know other adults and children. It is also the time when the bulk of the learning takes place. The relationships you form here can last a long time and/or provide immeasurable support or practical ideas. Your child will feel better knowing that they haven't missed out on any of the FUN when you arrive promptly at the start of class.

Flow is more important than a schedule in early childhood settings. Children need routine and continuity. If everyone is fully engaged in what they are working on, we will give them more time.

### **Suggestions for Circle Time**

Sit with your child/children and participate in the group. This is an important time for adults to model listening skills, singing, and classroom behavior for their children. If a child is having difficulty, do not hesitate to leave the circle and help them find an alternative quiet activity. With your help all the children will participate when ready.

*Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.*

*~ Fred Rogers*

## **Guidelines for Parents**

- Children transition easier when they do not feel rushed or hurried. Please do your best to arrive on time.
- Parents act as facilitators of learning. Help children only when necessary. A facilitator's job is to guide when asked so learning can happen.
- Be aware of the children around you.
- Be respectful: Avoid talking about children in front of them.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Introduce and encourage children to try various activities. If no interest is shown, let them make another choice.
- Follow your child's lead and participate with your child in their play.
- Model appropriate social interactions, manners and listening skills.

## **Guests**

Infants up to one year are welcome to attend with an older sibling. Child guests are welcome once a trimester. Adult guests, parents, and grandparents are welcome anytime.

## **Snacks**

Please check with your teacher about your class snack policy. We encourage snacks that are nutritious and would like to avoid excessively sweet or salty foods. Water and coffee are available. *Please alert us if your child has a food allergy so we can make our classroom safe for him or her.* We are a **peanut free** campus.

## **Illness**

Help keep everyone healthy. Please stay home if either you or your child is ill. Allow 24 hours after fever is gone before returning to class. Please contact the instructor if your child comes down with an infectious illness (conjunctivitis, whooping cough, chicken pox, etc.).

## **Library**

You may check out our parenting books and DVDs for two weeks. Check-out procedures are posted in the library. All materials must be returned by the second-to-last-week of each term.

## **Maintaining Safety**

Supervision is crucial. Many times young children do something to experience the cause and effect of an action. For example, they usually do not realize that someone is likely to get hit if they are swinging a toy in a crowded area--it is not their intention to hurt someone. Be alert and intervene when you see a potential hazard.

## **Use of Creative Materials**

Young children learn and acquire self-confidence when they are permitted to use materials in their own way. Children create art for the experience and the exploration. It is about the process, not the take-home product.

Art allows children to become divergent thinkers – to see that there is more than one way to do something. Please encourage discovery and creativity.

Some things you might say to do this are:

- Tell me about your painting/project. What part do you like best?
- The yellow looks so bright next to the purple!

*I used to draw like Raphael, but it has taken me a lifetime  
to learn to draw like a child.*

*~ Pablo Picasso*

## **Managing Behavior**

Our program follows a team-based model using a positive approach to discipline. Children need the adults in their lives to gently guide them toward age-appropriate expectations. In class, we will learn and practice tools and techniques for teaching our children how to manage their behavior. We believe that positive relationships are essential for effective discipline. We will spend time in class focusing on building these connections. When conflicts occur, stay calm and positive. Think of these situations as opportunities to teach the children about desirable behavior. Take a breath, then squat or sit down and help them work it out.

Parents in our program will be involved with all children in the class. We see parents as role models, skill builders, and facilitators of problem solving. If a child's parent is elsewhere, the adults present are encouraged to handle conflicts that arise. Challenges are normal. Many behavior issues are developmentally appropriate and can be managed by careful adult supervision.

Some typical behaviors might include:

- A child wants to be near you and will not participate in activities.
- A child won't join in a story or musical activity.
- A child does not follow the teacher's directions.
- A child takes toys away from another child.
- A child hits, bites, kicks or has tantrums.

Although you may be discouraged or embarrassed when these behaviors occur, we are here to support and encourage each other. Please remember that our children need us to gently teach them about positive behavior, and this process takes time, patience, and a solid understanding of developmental expectations for each age. We are here to help!

Our one school rule is: **Be Kind**

### **Closing Thoughts**

Young children learn by experiencing things that are relevant and meaningful. Our goal is to provide a class full of rich experiences where children feel safe to explore and grow, and parents feel supported.

We hope that your participation in our program is enjoyable for you and your child. We appreciate any suggestions or ideas that you may have.

We encourage you to share your talents, hobbies, resources and cultural celebrations with us. You are all valued teachers with many things to offer. We would be honored to have you enrich our class. Thank you for your support!



***It's not only children who grow. Parents do too.***

***As much as we watch to see what our children do with their lives, they are watching us to see what we do with ours. I can't tell my children to reach for the sun. All I can do is reach for it, myself.***

***~ Joyce Maynard***