The School for Young Children
Family Handbook

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Introduction

Purpose
The purpose of the School for Young Children is twofold:

> ***To provide up to three years of a high-quality preschool program for young children prior to their age of kindergarten eligibility as defined by the State of Connecticut. The School serves children and families in the University of Saint Joseph Community, West Hartford, Hartford, and other neighboring communities.***
>
> ***To function as an exemplary demonstration teaching model for University of Saint Joseph undergraduate and graduate students and the early childhood community.***

Children must be three years old by December 31st of the first year enrolled in the program. When children are Kindergarten eligible, they may not enroll for programming at The School for Young Children.

Enrollment for a third year of preschool will only be given to children born after August 31st. Children returning for a third year will be enrolled in a class of five-year-old's. Children turning 6 years old in the fall are ineligible for Summer Camp enrollment.

As a demonstration-teaching model, it is understood that college students from all academic areas are welcome. These students may engage in the study of the growth and development of young children under the supervision of the faculty and the Laboratory School Coordinator.

Background
Established in 1936 on the campus of the University of Saint Joseph (then Saint Joseph College), the School for Young Children provides an educational preschool experience for young children. The school has been a pioneer in the field of early childhood education since its founding by Sister Mary DeLourdes.

Teachers plan curriculum with goals for children's learning. The State of Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) are used as a guide for planning. The Early Learning and Development Standards are designed to ensure that children develop the skills needed for a successful transition to kindergarten. Ongoing assessment of children's developmental skills happen throughout the year using the State of Connecticut's Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (DOTS). Assessment outcomes are used to plan activities for the class and for individual children.

A belief in the value of each child and sense of responsibility towards the needs of others is demonstrated and encouraged through teacher modeling and teacher-child interactions.

As the University of Saint Joseph is committed to welcoming a community with a diverse student population, so too is the School for Young Children. The school recognizes a responsibility to help

children learn about and live harmoniously with diversity. The School holds a strong belief that early intervention is essential to every child's success in all areas of development. Environments are designed, strategies are implemented, and community resources are utilized to promote the full potential of every child. Admission is open to children of varying ability levels, as well as all racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

Philosophy

The School for Young Children maintains a set of core values about how young children learn and how they deserve to be treated. We understand that children view the world very differently from adults. Our staff and teachers embrace and nurture the unique perspectives of young minds.

Children are treated with respect and the understanding that they are capable decision-makers. Their ideas are taken seriously, and teachers give children the opportunity to work through problems, projects, and conflicts independently. Teachers are available to support and facilitate children's activities and communication with peers.

Teachers help children learn responsibility, self-control and independence in the classroom. Program staff respect children and respond to their needs, while also setting expectations for them. Foremost among these expectations is that children respect the rights and feelings of others. They are taught to respect teachers, facilitators, and peers. Good manners are also emphasized in the classroom.

Teachers help children develop foundational skills to settle conflicts with their peers. Children learn ways to identify their feelings and work towards solving conflicts independently with words.

If a child is having persistent behavior problems, staff will work closely with the family to develop a behavior support plan for the child. When necessary, referrals are made for outside support.

The classroom routine is built around a predictable schedule that provides security and stability for the children. Routine is critical for preschoolers' feelings of security.

Goals

Our goal is to help each child:

- Develop a positive self-identity, self-control, and sense of belonging
- Develop confidence as a learner by taking risks and learning from successes and mistakes
- Develop skills to work effectively in a group with respect for social and cultural diversity
- Use language to communicate effectively and to facilitate thinking and learning
- Develop phonemic awareness and experience the written word in meaningful ways
- Represent ideas and feelings through the arts, play, and construction
- Think critically, reason, and problem solve
- Construct and acquire knowledge through exploration and discovery of materials
- Gain knowledge of one's body and be able to maintain an optimal level of health, hygiene, and fitness
- Develop the self-help skills necessary to function as an independent member of the classroom community

Curriculum at the School for Young Children

As a model laboratory school for the University of Saint Joseph and for the larger community, teachers accept their responsibility to engage in teaching practices as outlined in *The School for Young Children Curriculum Document*. SYC's curriculum document was created in accordance with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation guidelines as well as guidelines found in other widely accepted resources. Teachers understand that many pre-service and in-service teachers as well as other visitors are on-site throughout the year to observe classroom environments, curriculum materials, and teaching practices.

At the School for Young Children, we view the *process of learning* as the key to a quality education. Having time to try ideas, talk about experiences, and make choices is a fundamental part of learning. Teachers develop activities from careful observations. They observe the children's play and engage in conversations with them about their ideas and interests. Input from the children is reflected in the group's curriculum. Process-oriented experiences allow children to use materials creatively and in a self-directed fashion.

Teachers plan curriculum with goals for learning. We use the State of Connecticut Early Learning Development Standards as a guide for planning. These Standards are designed to assure that children develop the skills needed for a successful transition to kindergarten. We assess children two times a year using the Connecticut DOTS. These observations are utilized to plan activities for the class and for individual children.

Through a carefully planned classroom setup, children explore, experiment, and learn valuable decision-making skills. Teachers move through the classroom watching children play, asking questions, and offering instruction. We value the lessons children learn when they are able to take risks and make mistakes.

A good example of our hands-on approach to learning is how we teach literacy skills. Instead of flashcards or specific lessons to "teach" letters, we integrate words (written and spoken) into the daily classroom activities. Books can be found throughout the classroom and reading is emphasized every day. We play games and sing songs at circle time designed to build phonemic awareness. Children sign in and out each day with pictures, printed nametags, or by marking or writing - depending on their level. Each cubby is labeled with the child's name and picture. Children learn to identify their own nametags and those of their classmates. Children ask teachers things like, "What letter is this?" or "How do you spell that?"

As directed by NAEYC standards and criteria, teachers incorporate content, concepts, and activities that foster social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and integrate key areas of content including literacy, mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and the arts, health and safety, and social studies.

Teachers plan curriculum with goals for learning in mind. The State of Connecticut Early Learning Development Standards is used as a guide for planning. The standards outlined in the document are designed to ensure children develop the skills needed for a successful transition to kindergarten. Observations and assessments are utilized to plan activities for the class and for conversations with families about their child's development in different areas.

Connecticut Early Learning Standards (ELDS) and Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (DOTS)

Teachers identify standards in their weekly plans, and they post their goals for parents and visitors. In addition, they keep notes, pictures and other documentation to support their observations of children. We use the Standards in many ways here at the School.

Ways School for Young Children uses the CT Early Learning Standards:

- To guide weekly lesson plans
- In parent-teacher conferences
- Information related to how the curriculum connects with the CT ELDS is shared within classroom newsletters
- Posted on documentation panels about activities at The School for Young Children
- On our web site (www.schoolforyoungchildren.org)
- In our presentations to parents about curriculum

Staffing and Supervision of Children

Each classroom is staffed with a Teacher and Teacher Assistant. Classrooms receive additional support from a qualified work-study student or student teacher. A master teacher who holds a Bachelor's and/or Master's degree in early childhood education supervises the program and curriculum development of each room. Teacher Assistants have at least an Associate's degree in early childhood education or a closely related field. Our program staff engage in ongoing training to remain current with the best practices in early childhood education. All classrooms maintain a ratio as designated by the State of CT of 1 adult for every 10 children. These ratios apply for outdoor time and nap time as well as field trips. Children use bathrooms within the classroom, allowing teaching staff to supervise this area at all times. During outside time on the playground, a staff member remains at the playground bathroom door. The teacher is able to maintain ratio of the group while also being at the bathroom door to assist the child if necessary.

Hours of Operation

The School for Young Children offers both half-day and extended day options for families. The half-day program operates from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Full day programming is offered from 7:45am-4:30pm or 7:45am-5:30pm.

SYC is open for 48 weeks during the year (see school calendar). The half-day and full-day programs are closed for public school holidays and vacations. In the event of inclement weather School for Young Children posts closings and delays on two television stations - WFSB and WVIT. Families are also encouraged to sign up for the USJ alert system for the most convenient way to stay informed.

Funding

The School for Young Children is a non-profit organization operated laboratory school for the University of Saint Joseph. Funding is obtained through tuition, grants, and private donations.

Home/School Communications

Family Visits

Families are welcome to visit their child's classroom at the School for Young Children. We recognize the importance of family involvement, as well as the importance of your child's developing independence. Creating a balance between family involvement and a child's sense of independence is essential and achievable when we work together.

Open Door Policy

School for Young Children maintains an open-door policy for families. If you are interested in visiting on a specific day, please coordinate the visit with your child's teacher. During classroom visits, feel free to read a story or to become involved in one of the many activities taking place in the room. You are also welcome to share a talent or personal interest with the class. Our open-door policy aims to enable parents to have contact with the school and develop strong home-school relationships. All the while not impinging on or adversely affecting the school environment and the learning and teaching program in school.

If you have a concern regarding any aspect of the classroom or your child's day, please connect with your child's teacher. Teachers will arrange a convenient time to meet with you to discuss your questions or concerns. Collaborating to reach a mutually satisfying solution to particular issues is an important factor within the relationship developed between teaching staff and families. Teachers utilize their USJ email accounts to communicate with families on a regular basis. Each classroom also has a photo account online to provide families with photos of class activities and environmental changes throughout the year.

Ongoing Program Feedback

Families have opportunities to provide feedback to teaching staff and administration throughout the year through weekly communication and conference meetings. A formal feedback form is distributed to families once a year to share ideas related to communication, events and evening workshop opportunities.

Family Conferences

Sharing information about a child's adjustment, development, and activities at school is informative for families and helpful to teachers when planning individualized curriculum. Families are encouraged to share family information and/or changes that occur. Teaching staff share behavior management techniques and strategies used at SYC. This information is shared with families during conferences to provide consistency between the home and school setting. Informal and formal conferences are conducted three times annually in October, January and May.

In October, teachers will share information related to your child's transition into the program and begin observations related to their approach to materials. This conference provides an opportunity for families to share in-depth information about their child with the teaching staff. Families also discuss goals they have for their child within the program and specific activities they feel might further support developmental skills.

Families may request a conference with the teacher at any time during the school year. Likewise, teachers may request a conference time with a family at any time to share important information.

The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (CTELDS/DOTS) are utilized as the guideline for curriculum development and child assessment. The DOTS is a curriculum-embedded tool for assessing preschool children in their classrooms. It articulates comprehensive performance standards or learning outcomes. These documents enable teachers to plan and implement a curriculum that addresses specified learning standards and to observe and assess children's progress in achieving these standards. This system focuses curriculum planning on standards, or learning outcomes, rather than primarily on activities. Teachers use assessment checklists, observations and photographs to record children's development during the year. Teaching staff reflect upon observations regarding children's developmental skills. They use the information to plan activities within the classroom setting that reinforce and build upon current skills. Teaching staff strive to challenge children to the next level of development by providing activities that allow for success. The observations are shared with families during conferences. Each year, teachers use the DOTS to record children's development on the learning assessment profile tool. The teacher's observations documented on this tool are shared with families during the conference.

New Family Orientation

This orientation event occurs prior to the first day of school. The meeting provides new families with information related to SYC's curriculum, philosophy, and daily routine.

Curriculum Night

Curriculum Night is held during the first month of school. It is an important opportunity for families to visit their child's classroom and meet their teachers. This evening is for adult family members only.

Community Resources and Events

The School for Young Children staff can assist families with recommendations to a wide variety of services including special education, financial assistance, health and nutrition services, family counseling, literacy and library services and child and family activities. Please contact SYC staff for additional resources you may need.

Workshops for families are organized and held at the School for Young Children several times during the year. Early childhood practitioners are invited to an evening workshop to share pertinent information with families. This information allows teaching staff and families to work collaboratively to assist children's developing skills.

Bilingual Support

Support to non-English speaking families is available upon request. Arrangements can be made for translation of parent-teacher conferences and to communicate other important information between home and school.

Admissions and Enrollment

Age Eligibility Policy

Children are eligible for acceptance at the School for Young Children as early as 2 years and 9 months old, as long as they will be turning 3 by December 31st of that school year.

The School for Young Children provides up to three years of high-quality preschool education prior to a child's age of kindergarten eligibility as defined by the State of Connecticut. Currently, the State of Connecticut defines the age of kindergarten eligibility as turning 5 by September 1st of that school year. Teachers have many conversations with families related to school readiness before the kindergarten registration period. Research shows that children who enter kindergarten when they are age-eligible have the best outcomes over the course of their school career. The School for Young Children is committed to research-based practices and providing a high-quality preschool experience.

Enrollment for a third year of preschool will only be given to children born after August 31st. Children returning for a third year will be enrolled in a class of five-year-old's. Children turning 6 years old in the fall are ineligible for SYC's Summer Camp program.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of School for Young Children at the University of Saint Joseph not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, children and families we serve, and volunteers.

Forms

State Licensing regulations require the following forms to be complete and up-to-date at all times in each child's file:

1. Early Childhood Health Assessment Record (ED119) with current immunizations- in accordance with CT Office of Early Childhood Licensing Regulations – **all children within childcare programs must receive up to date immunizations.**
2. Medical Consent Form (Including emergency contact/alternate pick-up information)

All files must be complete and up-to-date in order to start and to remain in school. This rule also applies to all medications, medication authorizations, and care plans for children with severe asthma or food allergies.

A written consent form is needed prior to the pick-up of a child by an adult not listed on the Medical Consent Form. Teachers will not release a child to any adult other than those listed on the Medical Consent Form. If anyone else will be picking up your child, you must send a note. If you discover during the course of the school day that a different person will have to pick up your child, please call the main office. The main office will inform your child's teacher of the change. The person picking up the child will be asked to provide valid photo identification.

Scholarship
Scholarships are available for families with economic challenges. The State of Connecticut's School Readiness program sponsors these spaces, along with funds from the University of Saint Joseph. Families from West Hartford interested in School Readiness funding should contact the Director of School for Young Children. The Income Guidelines for School Readiness can be found on the CT Office of Early Childhood's website. Scholarships are generally awarded to families who fall below 50% of the State Median Income Level (about $40,000 a year for a family of 4).

Families meet with the Director to determine whether the household income qualifies for School Readiness funding. Family's adjusted tuition is calculated using household income and the Office of Early Childhood School Readiness sliding fee scale. Fee calculation is reviewed with the parent. Income is recalculated each year to determine eligibility and tuition fee changes.

Policies

Ethical Conduct and Confidentiality Policy
The School for Young Children adheres to the Code of Ethical Conduct for Early Childhood Professionals as outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Our Confidentiality Policy has been adopted to assure confidentiality and protection of individual rights to privacy for children, families and employees of the School for Young Children. The individual dignity of children, families, and employees shall be respected and protected at all times in accordance with the law.

Information about children, families, or employees must not be divulged to anyone other than persons who are authorized to receive such information. This policy extends to both internal and external disclosure.

Staff Policies Concerning Confidentiality of Children's and Families' Information

- All children's records must be kept in a secure file.
- Access to children's records is limited to appropriate employees and agencies.
- Children's records will remain in the school at all times.
- Children's records will never be left out on desks, tables, etc. where other people may have access to them.
- Children's or families' private information must never be discussed among employees except on a need-to-know basis. Employees must be particularly aware of their surroundings when discussing this information. Special caution must be taken to be sure other children, families, or employees do not overhear information that is private.
- Discussion of children's or families' information with volunteers, other families, friends, or community members is prohibited.
- Information and documents that are considered confidential are medical records, educational records, special needs records, family records, financial records, and any other private information about children or their families.
- All requests for release of information will be coordinated by the Director.

Child Guidance Policy

The School for Young Children at the University of Saint Joseph believes that a challenging curriculum and warm, responsive teaching helps to create an atmosphere that promotes positive interactions. Anticipation and preventative intervention are teaching strategies used to help children control impulses and develop communication skills.

Through positive guidance, teachers:

- Help children respect the rights and feelings of others
- Help children develop empathy for others through example
- Encourage efforts of cooperation and compromise
- Give specific feedback regarding their behaviors

The ultimate goal of the guidance policy of the School for Young Children is to help children develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others in a trusting, secure, and nurturing environment. If a child is exhibiting behavior that needs correction, teaching staff will redirect (positive guidance) the behavior to a more appropriate behavior, focusing on the positive. Teachers refrain from using any method of discipline that would embarrass, humiliate, or harm the self-esteem of a child. The use of corporal punishment is not permitted at any time. The School for Young Children staff work to assist children in developing skills by modeling and encouraging positive behavior.

Prevention is the key. Through classroom procedure and planning, teachers:

- Accept each child as a worthwhile individual at his/her own level of development and recognize that behavior reflects each child's life experiences
- Anticipate behavior and intervene before disruption occurs
- Provide children with clear expectations for classroom behavior
- Plan a wide range of activities using a variety of materials that complement children's interests, growth, and development
- Provide a balanced curriculum of quiet and active events in an orderly daily sequence in which children participate at their own pace

In addition to this Handbook, the discipline strategies used by SYC staff are discussed at the New Family Open House as well as the first fall conference in October. Each family will sign a letter to acknowledge they have received explanation of SYC's behavior management policies.

Behavior Management Policy

The goal of the School for Young Children's behavior management policy is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion, and other exclusionary measures.

- If a child is displaying persistent, unacceptable behavior, the staff will take steps to help the child gain self-control. A staff person will first attempt to help the child understand the gravity of the behavior. Staff will then redirect the child to activities that hold the child's attention (the choice is made with the child). If the behavior continues, the staff person will consult with fellow staff members and/or the director to develop alternatives for helping the child gain

acceptable control of his/her behavior. If the problem persists, the staff person will contact the child's parent for suggestions on measures to take to extinguish the behavior. The parent will be informed that if the measures do not work, the child may have to be removed from the program. The goal is to help the child strengthen his/her skills of self-control. Separating the child from the group is a final step that would be taken after other measures have been tried. If the child can not resort to behavior that ensures his own and the safety of others in the center, and/or the smooth operation of the program; the parent will then be called and asked to pick the child up from the program.

- This policy complies with federal and state civil right laws.

- It is our expectation that a child will be able to participate in our group program safely without the need for a dedicated 1:1. On some occasions, a child's unsafe behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting. Often it is possible to improve the behavior in our program in partnership with parents/guardians and outside/professional resources to support the child.

Policy on Suspending a Child's Enrollment

If, in our judgment, any child's behavior places the well-being of others at risk of injury, we will act quickly and decisively to resolve the situation (e.g., through closer supervision, redirection to more appropriate activities, removal from tense situations, firm and consistent limit-setting, and/or provision of alternative outlets for the expression of feelings). An Action Plan will be implemented to address how best to keep all children and teachers safe while working toward improvement. If we are unable to achieve positive change, our goal is to connect the child with the professional support needed for his/her success, while maintaining a safe environment. If the Action Plan is not successful and unsafe behavior has not resolved within a reasonable time despite our efforts, suspension of enrollment may be appropriate.

Suspension:

Some examples of situations when it may be necessary to remove a child or to suspend a child's enrollment are:

• A child is unable to participate safely in our program without a dedicated 1:1 aide.

• A child appears to be a danger to him/herself, other children attending the school, school employees, or anyone else at the school.

• Medical, psychological, or social service personnel working with the school determine that continued enrollment at the school could be harmful to or not in the best interests of the child.

• The family declines to explore or secure outside support or behavioral resources which may help to address the child's needs, improve the behavior and reduce the safety risks.

Immediate Suspension:

In extreme situations, the immediate removal of a child from school may be necessary. Reasons may include health and safety issues for the child or for the larger group of children, as well as the following:

- A parent/guardian is physically or verbally abusive or intimidating to center staff, children, or anyone else at the center.
- Potentially dangerous behavior by a parent or child.
- A parent/guardian fails to abide by center policies or requirements imposed by the appropriate licensing agency.
- Non-payment of tuition.
- A parent/guardian demands special services that are not provided to other children and cannot reasonably be delivered by the school. This includes requests that depart from the philosophy of School for Young Children.

Process

The director/assistant director, with teaching staff, will develop an action plan and meet regularly with the family involved to discuss the action plan, our efforts and next steps. Meetings with the family will take place to:

- Implement the action plan and discuss The School for Young Children's process and expectations for improvement in a reasonable time, and;
- Discuss available outside resources.

If we are unable to achieve positive change through redirection, positive guidance and parent/guardian collaboration, our goal is to connect the child with the professional support needed for his/her success, while maintaining a safe environment. In parent/guardian meetings, the director/assistant director will discuss available resources with the family which may later be required. If/when resources are in place, they should be included in the meetings, to the extent possible, to collaborate, add insight and strategies for our action plans, and support our efforts.

If the action plans are not successful and unsafe behavior has not been resolved within a reasonable time despite our efforts, suspension of enrollment may be appropriate.

During meetings, the director/assistant director will let the family know that we can't wait indefinitely for help/support to arrive while a safety issue exists and suspension may be necessary if the safety issues cannot be resolved. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to seek help to work towards the child's success in the program.

Parents/guardians will be told that suspension may be necessary on a specified date until [he/she is connected with resources, an aide is in place, etc.] at which point the director/assistant director will meet with the family to determine our best next steps and if/how to return the child to the program with the right supports in place.

Abuse and Neglect Policy

The School for Young Children has a responsibility to prevent the abuse and neglect of the children enrolled in our school.

Child abuse is defined as a child who has had:

- any non-accidental physical or mental injury (i.e. shaking, beating, burning)
- any form of sexual abuse (i.e. sexual exploitation)
- emotional abuse (i.e. excessive belittling, berating, or teasing which impairs the child's psychological growth)
- at risk behavior (i.e. placing a child in a situation which might endanger him by abuse of neglect)
- injuries which are inconsistent with the explanation given.

Child neglect is defined as a child who has been:

- abandoned
- denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, for example a child who has not been provided appropriate food, clothing, shelter, education, mental care and supervision, or
- allowed to live under circumstances, conditions, or associations injurious to his/her well-being (CT GS 46b-120).

As defined in the Connecticut General Statutes, an abused child or youth could be: anyone eighteen years of age or younger, who has been inflicted with physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means, has injuries which are at a variance with the history given them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as but not limited to malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment, or cruel punishment. Teachers are informed of and are required to know the indicators of different forms of abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse indicators:

- The child has bruises, broken bones, lacerations, puncture marks, swollen areas, missing hair, bites, or burn marks.
- The child has frequent signs of major or minor injuries.
- The child has different injuries in various stages of healing.
- The parent or child gives odd or impossible explanations for the child's injuries.
- The child is frequently tardy or absent.
- The child receives overdue, unsuitable, or no treatment for injuries.

Emotional abuse indicators:

- The child cannot interact well socially, has very low self-esteem, or is listless, apathetic, or depressed and cannot respond to normal adult behavior.
- The child has a parent who treats the child in unusual or abnormal ways, such as refusing to care for or talk to the child, treating the child as an object, keeping the child from normal social experiences, punishing the child for his/her normal behavior, and/or thinking or feeling in a consistently negative way about the child.

Sexual abuse indicators:

Physical signs:

Pain or injury in the mouth or the genital areas, irritated, reddened, or itching genitals, urinary infections, difficulty with urination, and/or unusual odors.

Behavioral signs:

Fear of a person or of certain places, clinging, anxiety, a sudden interest in the genitals of others, unsuitable sexual activity for the child's age, and a return to infantile behavior.

Neglect indicators:

- The child is anxious about his or her survival.
- The child lacks energy or is overactive.
- The child is unable to concentrate or to play.
- The child often seeks attention.
- The child is hungry and/or dirty.
- The child's clothes are inappropriate for the weather.

Prevention of abuse and neglect outside of school

The School for Young Children has a responsibility to prevent the abuse and neglect of the children enrolled in our school. Teachers are informed of and are required to know signs of suspected abuse.

According to the American Red Cross, teachers may suspect abuse when:

- The child shows sudden behavior changes or erratic behavior.
- The child becomes withdrawn.
- The child is hostile or extremely aggressive.
- The child is suspicious or watchful of others' actions, as if fearing them.

Given our adherence to a Zero Tolerance Policy with abuse and neglect, it is our plan to ensure that the staff is aware of the signs of abuse or neglect. The staff must take immediate action to help the child whom they suspect is being abused or neglected. *As mandated reporters, the staff and teachers must report actual or suspected abuse or neglect or the imminent risk of serious harm of any child to the Department of Children and Families as required by Section 17a-101 to Section 17a-101e, inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes.*

In the event of suspected abuse and/or neglect, staff actions are as follows:

- ***Treat injuries***:
  The teachers treat any immediate injury that is within the scope of their first aid training.

- ***Provide clothing***:
  The teachers provide appropriate clothing for a child who needs it.
- ***Increase nutrition at school***:
  The teachers provide extra snacks or lunches for a child who is hungry.
- ***Emotional support of a child***:
  The teachers provide emotional support within their role as the child's teacher.
- ***Access to community resources***:
  We as staff must become familiar with the students' families and view our role as a support system. Our Social Services consultant and community resources could be called in to help give families guidance. The director/assistant director of the school utilizes contacts in the community to set up needed resources for the child and family. These include medical, social service, financial, and nutritional resources.
- ***Call 911***:
  If the teachers witness physical abuse, or suspect a child's life is in danger, then 911 is called immediately.
- ***Call Department of Children and Families***:
  Next, or at the same time, the teacher or the Director/Assistant Director will call the Child Protection Careline at the Department of Children and Families (DCF), open 24 hours a day, 1-800-842-2288. The reporter's name is required but may be kept confidential. The call is made within 12 hours of the suspected abuse. The person calling describes the reason for his/her suspicion of abuse and/or neglect and the indicators that have been observed.
- ***Reporting abuse***:
  After the call to DCF, a written report (DCF-136) is sent to the Department of Children and Families at 250 Hamilton St., Hartford, CT 06106 within 48 hours of the suspected abuse or neglect. The report is also given to the Director/Assistant Director. All reports to DCF shall be documented and kept in a file in the Director's office. A copy of all statements from staff and DCF shall also be kept within this file.

This report includes the following:

- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of the child and his parents and/or guardians;
- The age and gender of the child;
- Relevant information such as physical or behavioral indicator, nature and extent of injury, maltreatment or neglect;
- Exact description of what the reporter has observed;
- The approximate date and time of the injury, abuse, or neglect;
- Any information about previous injuries, maltreatment, or neglect to this child that staff knows about;
- A description of the circumstances under which the reporter learned of abuse/neglect;
- The names of the person or persons suspected of being responsible for the abuse/neglect;
- Any information the reporter believes would be helpful;
- Descriptions of the actions taken to treat, provide shelter, or otherwise assist the child;
- Medical attention is given to the child if necessary.

Prevention of abuse and neglect in school

It is also the responsibility of the School for Young Children to prevent any abuse or neglect that could happen at our school. In order to prevent abuse and neglect at our school the following are done:

- Review the approved and prohibited disciplinary techniques on a yearly basis;
- Brainstorm to help teachers figure out ways to deal with disruptive behaviors;

- Review the indicators of abuse and neglect on a yearly basis;
- Conduct a thorough check of the references of new staff;
- Orient new staff using the above policy;
- Supervise new teachers on a close and consistent basis;
- Do a background check on all teachers, including fingerprinting.

Prohibited discipline techniques:
In accordance with the State of Connecticut Department of Health Regulations, the following discipline techniques are prohibited from being used at the School for Young Children:

- *Inappropriate removal*:
  - The teachers may not keep a child out of play for more than three minutes in the room or 10 minutes out of the room.
- *Physical restraint*:
  - Teachers may not use physical restraint unless the child is in danger of hurting himself or others. The restraint consists of the teacher wrapping his/her arms around the child.
  - The director and staff may not tie nor bind children and shall not physically restrain children except for the protection and safety of the child or others, using the least restrictive methods.
- *Abusive or neglectful punishment*:
  - Teachers may not use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating, or frightening punishment under any circumstances.

If a teacher, administrator or parent suspects a staff member of any of the above actions, the following steps, reflecting the Zero Tolerance Policy for abuse and neglect, would be taken:

- Report suspicion to the Director/Assistant Director of the School for Young Children and a senior administrative of Human Resources.
- Call the Child Protection Careline (1-800-842-2288) to report the suspicion of abuse or neglect. Within twelve (12) hours of the suspected abuse.
- One of the above administrators calls the parent to explain that a report has been made, what the report says, and what further action and investigation will be taken.
- Suspend the staff member with or without pay until investigation is completed.
- Submit the written report within 48 hours of the suspected abuse.
- Additionally, a call must be placed to the Department of Public Health at 1-800-282-6063 or 1-860-509-8045.
- Protect the child during the investigation. The child's teachers receive advice from our Social Service consultant about working with the child in the classroom.

Policy protection of staff as mandated reporters:
The School for Young Children will not discharge, discriminate, or retaliate against any employee who, in good faith, files an abuse or neglect report, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 17a-101e. The staff also knows they are immune from any liability, civil or criminal when making a good faith report.

Staff training:
Staff will be required to engage in annual training on child abuse and neglect. All new staff will be trained in these procedures prior to their start in the classroom.

Early Intervention Policy
The School for Young Children recognizes the essential role that early intervention services play in ensuring that every child reaches his/her full potential. The School collaborates with West Hartford Public School's Early Learning Center, University of Saint Joseph faculty, and the State funded Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) for guidance and support in observing children and implementing classroom strategies to ensure learning success for all children. Parents are informed and participate in all aspects of this process. The School for Young Children has collaborative arrangements with a number of organizations and agencies in the community with the purpose of providing families with support services as needed. The School will assist families in any way possible, including providing for a language interpreter, to ensure that families are successful in their request for support.

Behavioral Challenges
Family strategy sessions are held to develop behavior plans to meet the needs of more challenging behavior situations that may arise in the classroom. The school utilizes a Behavior Support Plan (BSP) that is composed by the teachers with assistance from the Director. The BSP outlines strategies for the classroom and home to assist the child's success in school. Parent participation in the implementation of the BSP ensures positive outcomes. Staff at the School for Young Children will assist families with the referral process in the event that an alternative program with special services is needed to support the child's development.
IEPs and IFSPs
Children who enter SYC with an IEP (Individualized Education Program) or IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) will have a meeting which will include the family, teachers, director and if available, a representative from the early childhood special education team. This meeting will take place prior to the beginning of the school year or within the first few days of school. During this meeting, the current IEP/IFSP will be reviewed and plans for effective and successful implementation at SYC will be defined.

Interagency Communication Policy
If your child is receiving educational or related services out of School for Young Children (for example your child is attending the WH Early Learning Center or is receiving services for speech, physical therapy or occupational therapy from a private provider) a parent or guardian must sign a waiver. The waiver will allow SYC staff to communicate with the special service provider. This communication allows SYC staff to provide consistent care and education for your child.

If your child enters such services during his/her time at SYC, you will be asked to sign a waiver at that time.

Transition to Kindergarten
When your child is ready to register for Kindergarten, the West Hartford Public Schools will organize an evening informational session to learn more about the registration process.

A Kindergarten Transition Form is completed for each child entering the West Hartford Public School System. Your child's future school will receive this form with your consent. The form provides information about your child's skills and abilities. The information SYC teachers collect is used by kindergarten teachers during the classroom placement process and transition period.

Each WH elementary school organizes an additional meeting for families during the spring. Information is shared related to the specific school schedule and routines. Time is also scheduled to bring your child to the elementary school for a Kindergarten visit. During this time public school teaching staff meet with small groups of children to make early assessments to guide classroom placement.

If your child is transitioning to kindergarten in another school district or a private school, this information can be shared with the school district at your request.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

School staff and parents must work together to maximize children's success at school. We are committed to engaging in a mutually supportive relationship with families.

As a parent/guardian, we count on you to:

- Submit and update school forms as requested to ensure your child's record is current at all times. Information that must remain current at all times includes your telephone number, home address, work telephone number, emergency contact information, and Early Childhood Health Assessment Record.
- Make sure that all individuals approved for pick-up are on your child's Medical Consent Form. Communicate all changes in pick-up to your child's teacher, including the full name of the person picking up your child. Remind anyone picking up your child to have photo identification on hand.
- Become involved in your child's education by participating in parent-teacher conferences. If possible, volunteer in your child's classroom and get to know other school families by participating in school-family activities.
- Pay tuition each month.
- Read all school communications in order to stay informed of important classroom and school events.
- Follow the security guidelines as posted at the main entrance. A buzzer and monitor system enable school staff to supervise the comings and goings of all visitors safely. After ringing the buzzer, please state your name and purpose.
- Inform your child's teachers if something has happened at home that could affect your child's success in school. Understanding the whole child supports developmental growth.
- Be aware that when parents are divorced or separated, both parents have full rights to participate in the child's school activities and to know what is happening at school, unless there is a court document limiting that access. If such a document exists, parents must provide the school with a certified copy. A non-residential parent has the right to access student records and information unless a court order prohibits such access.
- Give the school written permission if you want a stepparent who is not the legal guardian of the child to have information about the child or sign forms related to the child.

Toilet Training Policy
Toilet training can be a difficult developmental issue. We want to be as supportive of parents' efforts as possible.

It is the policy of the School for Young Children that children registered for school are strongly encouraged to become toilet trained before entering the program. For children who have not fully completed their training, a planned approach will be developed for both school and home, collaboratively implemented by the child's family and the teacher to ensure consistency.

Prior to the beginning of school, work with your child to develop independent skills while using the toilet. Allow them to pull down their pants and underpants. Clothes, which allow them to easily pull down and up their pants/underwear, are strongly suggested.

The first few weeks of school can be overwhelming for any child. Even children who have been trained a long time suffer occasional lapses when they are engrossed in an activity, are overtired, excited, or in new surroundings. We realize that an occasional accident may occur. Please be sure to provide an extra set of clothing for your child. If your child has recently secured the concept of toilet training, it is important to share that information with the child's teacher.

Tuition Policy
Tuition may be paid in monthly installments for your convenience. Should you wish to pay the semester or year in full, please feel free to do so. *Failure to pay tuition in a timely manner may result in disenrollment from the program.*

Payments may be made online at www.usj.edu/payonline. There is an additional fee to use your credit card for payment. There is no additional fee if you pay online with electronic payment from your savings or checking account.
If you wish to pay with cash or check, this may be done in person at the Cashier's Office located in McDonough Hall on the campus of the University of Saint Joseph or by mail to:

University of Saint Joseph
Cashier's Office
1678 Asylum Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117

Include your Family ID number on all correspondence and payments. Please do not send payments to the School for Young Children.

Withdrawal and Discharge Policy
Families are entitled to withdraw, forfeiting their $200 deposit**.** Children are considered enrolled, and families will be responsible for tuition as described in your Contract for Preschool Tuition, until cancellation of enrollment is submitted to the Director. Notice of cancellation must be submitted in writing 30 days in advance of the first day of each semester.

- Fall Semester – September 1 to December 31 (Last withdrawal date August 1)
- Winter Semester – January 1 to March 31 (Last withdrawal date December 1)
- Spring Semester – April 1 to June 30 (Last withdrawal date March 1)

The school reserves the right to cancel a child's enrollment for the following reasons:

1. Failure to pay tuition fees according to schedule.
2. Failure to submit all state required forms.
3. Child has been picked up after 5:30pm five times in any 60-day rolling period.
4. The teaching staff have been unable to meet the child's developmental needs, as determined by such staff and the director after consultation with the child's parents.
5. The child demonstrated behaviors that put other children, adults and/or themselves in danger as determined by the teaching staff and/or the director in their discretion.
6. A family member is verbally and/or physically abusive to a member of the SYC community, including teaching staff, other staff, volunteers, other parents, and any child.
7. The teaching staff has been unable to meet a parent's requests and/or demands after consultation with such parent.
8. At the discretion of the director.

Accident and Incident Policy

In the event of a minor accident at school, each classroom staff member has first aid supplies readily available. The School for Young Children contracts with a nurse consultant who visits SYC once each month. All teachers are trained and certified in First Aid, CPR, and administration of EpiPen.

An Accident or Incident Form is filled out when an injury or misconduct occurs at the School. This report will be kept in your child's file after you have read and signed it. An accident report will also be filed if a child comes to school with an unexplained noticeable injury. If your child has a noticeable injury because of an accident outside of the School, please inform the staff.

It is extremely important that all Medical Consent Forms be kept up to date. In case of a serious emergency, Emergency Services will be contacted through 911. You or your emergency contact number will be called immediately, and a staff member will remain with the child until you or your emergency contact person arrives. If transport is needed and parent has not arrived, a staff member will remain with the child.

Illness Policy

To prevent the spread of infectious disease within the school, the teaching staff, with the help of the housekeeping staff, maintains a diligent cleaning routine to provide a sanitary environment. Teachers help children to develop healthy habits by encouraging hand washing and the use of disposable tissues.

Children who are in the initial stages of an illness as evidenced by sneezing, coughing, nasal discharge, vomiting, diarrhea, fever or other symptoms are requested to remain at home until these symptoms have subsided.

Please notify the school by 9:00am if your child will be absent due to illness. Identifying the illness will help the staff alert other parents about the possibilities of contagion and identifying symptoms.

If a child becomes ill at school, the child will be temporarily isolated within sight and hearing of a caring adult while we contact a parent. If either parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person listed on your child's Medical Consent Form will be contacted. Once a parent or caregiver has been contacted, the child needs to be picked up within 1/2 hour. If the child is not picked up within

1/2 hour, the next person on the emergency contact list will be called to pick up the ill child. An illness form will be filled out by your child's teacher and sent home with your child.

A child may return to preschool only after the time indicated:

Fever: When your child's temperature returns to below 100° without the use of medication (e.g. Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) and your child is able to fully participate in preschool activities

Covid: Fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication, child is symptom free and has typical stamina to maintain daily schedule

Vomiting: 24 hours after vomiting has ceased

Diarrhea: 24 hours after the diarrhea has ceased

Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after the first dose of medication, when eyes return to normal, or a note from the physician is received

Strep Throat: 24 hours after the first dose of medication and the child has no fever

Lice: After shampoo treatment and hair/scalp is completely nit free

Rash: When rash is deemed non-contagious as evidenced by a physician's note

Lethargy: When the child is able to fully participate in preschool activities

Administration of Medication

Families, along with their child's pediatrician, should schedule medications to be given at home. If a child has a life-threatening condition that needs immediate attention, SYC will require specific documentation related to the condition. Documentation provided by SYC is completed by the child's pediatrician and reviewed by the Director and nurse consultant. All SYC staff have completed medication administration training and are able to administer EPI-Pen and other life-saving emergency medication.

Children with life-threatening conditions that require immediate care will receive medication authorization paperwork prior to the first day of school. If your child has prescribed medication that needs to be dispensed at school, staff members who have completed the required training to administer medication will do so. All staff members are trained to administer the Epi-Pen and to follow the emergency protocol in the case of anaphylactic reaction.

State law requires that all medications to be dispensed be accompanied by a Medicine Administration Order from your child's pediatrician. This includes over the counter medications. This form must also be signed by the child's parent or guardian. All medicines must be in their original container/box and be labeled with the child's name. Prescription medication must have the original prescription label affixed to the box. Medication will be stored in children's classrooms' First Aid backpack. After

administering medication to a child, teaching staff will record the type of medication given and the specific time it was administered to the child.

Medicine will not be stored at school or administered if the administration order or the medication itself has expired. Children who have expired medicines or expired Medicine Administration Orders will not be allowed to return to school until updated orders and medications are supplied or until the child's physician removes an order in writing.

Parking Policy

Parking spaces at the School for Young Children are limited. On MWF's SYC staff park at the apartment complex across the street to allow more access to families at 9:00am and 1:00pm arrival. Please do not park in the Handicapped parking spaces nearest the school entrances.

Your patience and cooperation are requested in dropping off and picking up your child. Please drive slowly as you enter and leave the parking lot and remind children to hold an adult's hand. Do not leave children or infants in your car unattended. Please be mindful of Connecticut's idling law and turn your vehicle off before entering the school or when staying in the parking lot for an extended period of time.

Classroom Pet Policy

Teachers are welcome to maintain a class pet of their choosing in their classroom. Per NAEYC standards, reptiles are not allowed as class pets due to risk of Salmonella infection. A care plan for the class pet must be posted near the pet's cage or tank at all times per state regulations.

Arrival and Dismissal ~ Children must arrive by 9:00 AM for full and half day programs

Arrival:

Extended Day: Arrival begins at 7:45am. Please ring the buzzer at the main entrance. A staff member will greet your child and escort him/her to their classroom.

Half Day: Arrive at your classroom's designated spot at 9:00am. Room 4 - right side entrance – by road, Room 3 - entrance by the gym, Room 7 - main entrance. After the entire class has arrived, the group will gather and walk to the classroom together.

***Dismissal*:**

Extended Day: If you pick up your child prior to the assigned time at the end of the day, please go to the main entrance. An office staff member will bring your child to the front door. 4:30pm dismissal: Room 1 - main entrance, Room 2 – main entrance, Room 6 - right side entrance by the gym, Room 5 - right side entrance. All dismissal spots will be labeled at the beginning of the school year.

Half Day: Arrive at your classroom's designated spot at 1:00pm. Dismissal will take place at the same location as arrival.

Late Pick Up Policy

If you expect to be late, please call the school. If a parent is late for *Dismissal* more than once, a $2 per minute fee will be assessed after 1:00pm or your child's scheduled extended day dismissal time. Two staff members will wait with the child until they are picked up. If a child is not picked up at the expected time, we will attempt to reach a parent/guardian or person from your *Emergency Contact*

list. If we are unable to contact anyone within an hour, we are obligated by law to notify the West Hartford Police Department.

Building Security
All entrance doors to SYC are locked at all times. Staff members have key cards for entry into the building. All visitors must use the call bell to connect with office staff and identify who they are and their purpose for visiting SYC. Office staff meet deliveries at the front door. Visitors are only admitted into the building if prior arrangements have been made with SYC staff.
SYC staff have walkie talkies while outside on the playground, trail, hill, and field to ensure prompt communication when necessary with the office.

Safety Drills
Fire Drills are required to be held on a monthly basis throughout the year. During a drill, as in the case of a real emergency, we do not stop to put on outerwear. Children are evacuated to Taylor's Field on the South side of the School. Primary and secondary evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. Following a routine Fire Drill, children will re-enter the building. From start to finish, drills usually last 5 minutes or less. If you are in the building when an alarm is sounded, please proceed to the nearest exit.

Lockdown Drills are practiced once annually. When Shelter in Place occurs, classrooms are evacuated and staff proceed to the basement, where a roll call is taken. Food, water, and a lavatory are available in case of a real emergency. During a Lockdown Drill, classroom doors are locked and teachers and students gather in a hidden area of the classroom until the drill is over. (See Appendix for the full outline of Evacuation Drill procedures.)

School Closings
The decision to close school is the responsibility of the Director. Communication between the Director and the Provost of the University of Saint Joseph occurs prior to making the decision to close. Inclement weather is the primary reason a decision is made to close school.

The USJ Alert System is the primary way we will communicate with you about the status of school delays or closings at SYC. To register for a text alert visit: www.usj.edu/emergency-alert-system. Select "School for Young Children Alerts" only. Once registered, you will receive emergency text messages via your cell phone, and/or any email address you list. Announcements are also posted on NBC Channel 30 (www.nbc30.com) and WFSB Channel 3 (www.wfsb.com**).** ***Please plan to sign up for a USJ/SYC text alert to receive notification of school opening/closing status.***

Inclement weather procedures are also listed on the backside of the school calendar form.

Lead Paint Management Plan
The School for Young Children operates under a lead paint management program overseen by the Bloomfield/West Hartford Department of Public Health (DPH), which includes biannual inspection by University of Saint Joseph Facilities Services and regular inspection by the DPH.

The DPH has determined that areas with lead paint should not be a cause for health concerns, as long as painted surfaces remain in good condition. We encourage anyone who witnesses damage to or deterioration of painted surfaces to inform the office immediately. (See Appendix.)

Program Routines

Clothing

Children will be participating in many types of indoor and outdoor activities. Children should be dressed so that they can play comfortably without fear of soiling their clothes. Therefore, please do not send children to school in clothing that is very special or difficult to launder. Children will need a spare set of clothing appropriate for the season. Please provide a labeled change of clothing at school in a labeled box/bag. Please include socks, underwear, shirt, and pants in the labeled Ziploc bag. Please update spare clothing as the seasons change.

Since outdoor play is part of the daily curriculum even in the winter, children should come to school adequately prepared for all types of weather. In the winter months, children will need boots, hats, mittens, and warm snow pants, in addition to a warm winter jacket. Please label all items. SYC encourages children's independence. All clothing should allow children to be independent when dressing and undressing.

Toys from Home

We recognize that children are often excited to show toys from home to their teachers and friends. However, this can cause challenges surrounding sharing and disappointment when toys from home are broken or lost. Please refrain from bringing toys from home to school.

Snack

Active children need frequent servings of nutritious food throughout the day. To accommodate this need, please pack a morning and afternoon (if your child is attending full day programming) snack in your child's backpack. All licensed programs must adhere to specific guidelines related to children's nutrition throughout the day. Please pack fruit, vegetables, and other nutritious snacks in a labeled container separate from the child's lunch each day. Please see the Food Safety section for food items not allowed at SYC.

Ideas for morning and afternoon snacks – **ALL SNACKS MUST BE PEANUT FREE**

Crackers and cheese	Fruit
Veggies and Hummus	Yogurt

Allergies/Special Diets

Please keep the staff up-to-date about special dietary needs your child may have due to allergies or other dietary restrictions. A list of children and their allergies is posted in each child's classroom and the kitchens.

Food Allergy Tips for Parents

Parents whose children do not have allergies can help. Make sure your child's hands are clean prior to entering the building. In rooms where there is a severe allergy, we may ask that you inform us if your child has a trigger food in his or her lunch, such as peanut butter. This is usually done by informing SYC staff on arrival in the morning.

Lunch
Children eat lunch in their classroom with their classroom teachers between 11:45am and 12:30pm. Lunches, including a beverage, are provided by the child's family and should be brought to school in a labeled lunch box. CT licensing regulations mandate that each lunch box contains an ice pack to keep items fresh. Teachers will not be able to heat lunches. Please pack lunch food that is healthy with a limited amount of sugar. We ask families to include only one dessert and no candy in your child's lunch.

Safe Food Policy
In accordance with NAEYC standards, please do not pack the following foods due to a high choking risk:

- Hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds)
- Whole grapes
- Popcorn
- Raw peas
- Hard pretzels
- Spoonful of peanut butter
- Chunks of raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole

This applies to food sent in from home for three-year-olds. Please help to observe our Safe Food Policy by not sending in the above foods for your three-year-old.

Handwashing Policy
All children and staff shall wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day
- before and after eating or handling food/ setting up children's lunches (i.e. lunches or snacks)
- before and after water or sensory play
- before and after giving medication
- after toileting or assisting a child using the toilet
- after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing
- after playground use/outdoor play
- after handling animals/animal cages
- after handling bodily fluids (i.e. saliva, blood, vomiting, etc.)
- after applying sunscreen and/or insect repellent
- whenever hands are visibly soiled

All children and staff will wash their hands as follows:

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water.
- Rub hands vigorously.
- Wash hands all over, making sure to include the backs of hands, palms, wrists, between fingers, and fingernails.
- Rinse hands thoroughly.
- Dry hands with paper towel and turn water off using paper towel.

Rest/Nap
Children attending the full-day program rest/nap in their classrooms. Please send a labeled crib size blanket for your child to use at naptime. Storage for naptime items is limited in the classrooms. Children, who still nap, sleep between 1:15pm and 2:45pm. Resting and napping items will be sent home each Friday to launder. Please return rest/nap items on Monday.

Holidays/Birthday Celebrations
At the School for Young Children, we strive to preserve normal routines during holiday times. We approach the holidays by focusing on the essence of the holiday season. Groups may spend time exploring the concept of generosity during the winter holiday season and friendship during the Valentine season. In keeping with SYC's focus on science and nature, we also study seasonal changes and explore various elements of nature throughout the year. Families are welcome to visit classrooms and teach the children about the family or cultural transitions they celebrate.

Classrooms will recognize children's birthdays in a special way. Birthday cakes and goody bags are not allowed. Invitations to birthday celebrations with friends must be distributed by families outside of SYC.

Social Media
To maintain a professional relationship with families, staff do not communicate with families on social media sites.

Child Care Outside SYC
SYC staff do not provide childcare for families outside of the school day.

Appendices

The School for Young Children-Emergency Plans

Emergency Evacuation
1. The Director will contact campus safety (x5222) to "***activate the Evacuation Plan for the School for Young Children***." The Director will indicate to Campus Safety the time frame for which the children and staff will be exiting the building.
2. The Director and support staff will take the following steps:
    - Inform classroom teachers to prepare for evacuation via the phone intercom system.
    - Collect visitor and USJ student attendance
    - Direct office staff to post a sign on the door.
    - Monitor the group's exit of the building
    - Exit the building with the Office Red Backpack containing the following items:
        - The Director's Red Notebook
        - Master list of children's emergency contact information
        - Two-way radio
        - Two traffic stop signs
3. In classrooms, teachers will prompt children to line up for exit. A head count and roll call will be taken to ensure all children are in line. One teacher will carry their classroom backpack containing the following items to the evacuation site:
    - Emergency cards

- Day's attendance sheet
- First aid kit
- Medications with Administration Order for children in the classroom

4. All SYC staff and children will exit to the field at the South side of the building. (Similar to a fire drill.) At the field, teachers will take a roll call. Administrative staff will attain attendance from each group. When all are accounted for, the School will walk as a group to the apartment complex across the street at 243 Steele Road. Campus Safety will assist the SYC group across Steele Road. In the event Campus Safety is not present for the street crossing, the Director and support staff will utilize handheld stop signs to control traffic for the crossing.
5. Upon arrival at 243 Steele, teachers and children will assemble as classroom groups in the lounge area. Teachers will take a roll call. Water and bathrooms are available to children and teachers.
6. The Director will meet with Campus Safety and/or administration to develop a *Risk Communication Message* related to the emergency. A message to families will be posted on the USJ Alert System.
7. A Campus Safety officer will be in the parking lot to announce each parent's arrival. A member of the school staff will walk each child to their vehicle. If a parent arrives on foot, they will also be expected to follow these Dismissal Procedures. No children will be dismissed from inside the building.
8. All teachers and staff will remain present at the evacuation site as needed. Teachers will update attendance sheets as children are dismissed to families.

Fire Emergency

1. The person in charge at the time of the emergency will make sure that all classes have been alerted by the fire bell.
2. Teachers will organize children in a calm orderly fashion at the door of each classroom. (NO TIME IS TAKEN TO DRESS FOR THE OUTDOORS.) Teachers will take with them their attendance record and their classroom backpack, which contains a first aid kit, Medical Consent Cards, and medications.
3. One teacher will lead the class of children out of the building using the primary evacuation route posted beside each classroom door. If the primary route is unsafe, the teacher will lead the children to the secondary route as posted beside each classroom door. The second teacher will make sure all children have left the classroom, leave the lights on, close the classroom door and follow behind the class.
4. All classes will cross the parking lot and wait on Taylor's Field.
5. The person in charge at the time of the emergency will make sure that the building has been totally evacuated. The person in charge will make sure that all classroom doors are closed, only if there is no immediate danger.
6. The person in charge will take with them the office backpack, two-way radio, stop signs, and visitor's log.
7. Once the classes have reached the designated area: teachers will take a roll count to make sure all children have been safely evacuated. The person in charge will check with each classroom to make sure all children, staff, and visitors are accounted for.
8. If a class is on the playground when the fire alarm sounds, they will gather and wait in the upper left-hand corner of the playground. An administrator or other person in charge will check via two-way radio to ensure that all children on the playground are accounted for.
9. In the event that it becomes unsafe for the classes to return to the school building, each class will be so notified by the person in charge, and the classes will then follow the Evacuation Plan.

Shelter in Place (Severe Weather)

In the event that it is dangerous to remain on the first floor of the building due to severe weather conditions, children and staff will proceed to the basement of the building. An announcement to move to the basement will be made over the intercom. Teachers will gather the group together and take attendance to ensure everyone is present. Teachers will proceed to the basement with the children, attendance form, and first aid backpack. Once in the basement each classroom will gather in a section of the toy storage room. Water and crackers are stored in the basement in the event that the group needs to be there for an extended time. A bathroom is also on this level of the building. Administrative staff will contact families to let them know where children are located within the building.

Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency, teacher/staff members will attend to first aid as needed. Another staff member will call 9-911. She/he will identify themselves and explain the reason for the call. After calling 9-911, staff will refer to the child's emergency contact so that the ambulance can be directed to the family's "Preference of Hospital". A staff member will then notify the family to meet the child at the emergency room. An SYC staff member will accompany the child on the ambulance. The other teacher in the group will move children not involved in the event to another area of the classroom.

In the event a child becomes ill, parents will be notified and the child will be moved to an area where the child will be made comfortable. A staff member will remain with the child at all times.

Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

Mission: The Parent Advisory Committee's role is to help build a sense of community among families and staff through activities and ongoing school-wide communication. With the help of parent volunteers, PAC provides support for all school programs and is an avenue for parent feedback, which is used to shape the direction of the School.

Please see the calendar for the dates and times of these events.

New Parent Orientation: An evening event before school starts for new parents to meet veteran parents and SYC staff in order to learn about a typical day in the life of a preschooler at SYC.

Fall Picnic: A chance for new and returning families to come together on Taylor's Field (field adjacent to the school parking lot) for a "Bring Your Own Picnic and dessert to share" gathering.

PAC Fundraisers: Each year fundraising events are held to help financially support the events PAC sponsors.

PAC Meetings: Meetings will be held six times throughout the school year to help prepare for PAC events, receive an update from the Director, and gather for guest speakers on different topics.

Fall Festival: An annual tradition for the children to celebrate fall at school with their friends and teachers. The festival includes a "pumpkin patch," pumpkin decorating, games, and fun.

Community Service Events: Brings the children and families together to provide support to our SYC families and teachers, as well as urgent needs within the broader community. Past examples include collecting food for the West Hartford Food Bank and collecting coats for the "Coats for Winter" drive.

Spring Picnic Fundraiser: The annual fundraiser to support SYC's yoga and music programs as well as additional preschool enhancement opportunities during the year.

Staff Appreciation Week: An opportunity for families to show their appreciation to the SYC staff with special activities throughout the week.

Beth Bye Scholarship Fund: SYC staff select a USJ student worker to be awarded money from the Beth Bye Scholarship Fund.

Lead Paint Advisory Yearly Notification

The School for Young Children

To: Parents, Teachers, Employees, and other personnel or their guardians

From: University of Saint Joseph
1678 Asylum Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117

The School for Young Children contains some lead painted surfaces. These surfaces are in good condition and should not present a hazard to children, unless the condition of the painted surfaces changes significantly or unless the children are allowed to mouth (bite or chew) the painted surfaces. The University of Saint Joseph will be conducting biannual inspections to ensure that paint remains in good condition. We ask you to assist us in trying to provide a safe school by doing the following:

1. Notify us if the condition of suspected or known lead pain changes (chipping, peeling, cracking or flaking).

2. All areas with suspect lead paint should be kept clean (washing the surfaces is the most effective.)

3. Children should be supervised carefully to ensure they are not chewing any suspect surfaces.