

## **SYC'S Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles & Goals**

### **Vision Statement:**

School for Young Children (non-profit organization and outreach program of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus) provides an early childhood program of excellence which supports social and emotional development through play in the context of deep, respectful relationships between teachers, children and families.

### **Mission Statement:**

Through play, the natural way of learning at this age, and with the support of empathetic adults with a sound knowledge of child development, SYC will fulfill its vision by:

- Believing each individual (child, family member, and colleague) has inherent dignity and worth, and is unique.
- Viewing and respecting each child as a whole person, including social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language development.
- Nurturing the discovery of the world through large spans of uninterrupted, child-initiated engagement with the classrooms, outdoor spaces, and each other.
- Supporting children and families in setting healthy boundaries and in recognizing and expressing emotions in a healthy manner.
- Empowering parents and caregivers in the role of their children's first and most important teachers as well as their advocates.
- Honoring families and the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions they bring to the community.

### **Guiding Principles – At SYC, we believe that:**

- Childhood is a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle.
- The science of child development informs our work with children.
- Child-initiated play is the optimal environment for growth and development.
- Children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect.
- The bond between a child and family is important.
- Children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community, and society.
- Each individual (child, family member, and colleague) has inherent dignity and worth, and is unique.
- The diversity in children, families, and colleagues is valued.

### **Goal 1: Play will guide everything we do.**

- Large portions of the school day will be set aside for uninterrupted play.
- Staff will encourage and extend each child's independent learning and discovery through play.
- In-service trainings will be provided to guide teachers in using the emergent curriculum.
- Staff will play together through regular retreats and community-building activities.

### **Goal 2: Children, families and staff will feel safe at SYC.**

- Staff will respect confidentiality at all times
- Staff will work to encourage the expression of all emotions for all members of the SYC community
- Staff will support our community in learning acceptable behaviors to accompany these emotions.

### **Goal 3: Children, families and staff will be encouraged to learn, grow, and explore at their own rates.**

- Staff will observe and assess children individually.

- Children with disabilities will have the opportunity for intervention services.
- Families will have the opportunity to engage in transition activities, from infant/toddlerhood to preschool and from preschool into kindergarten.
- Parents' educational needs will be met through individual conversations, conferences, parent coffees, parent orientation, newsletter articles, and the parent library.
- Professional development will be offered to staff concerning current issues and research in child development.

**Goal 4: Each child and family will be respected for his/her individuality.**

- Children's individual interests will be reflected in the curriculum.
- All families will have the opportunity to participate in program activities and to develop a family-preschool partnership.
- Families' diversity will be honored and respected.

**Goal 5: Staff will build trusting relationships with children, families, other staff, and the church.**

- Staff will develop and maintain relationships with each child and family.
- Teacher in-service trainings will be provided to address barriers to strong relationships.
- Staff will communicate with families on a regular basis.
- The collaboration model will be supported by all the individuals involved.
- Policies will govern the sharing of space with the church community.
- The Director must attend church staff meetings.
- Director and staff will write columns for the church newsletter.

**Goal 6: We will ensure the philosophical and financial future of SYC.**

- New staff will share the SYC philosophy.
- New families will be informed of the SYC philosophy.
- Families and staff will complete year-end program evaluations and will receive results of these evaluations and reports of any changes made.
- The SYC committee will meet no less than quarterly to review on-going financial statements and the balance in the enrichment fund and review the budget to assure continued financial stability to sustain operation of the program.
- The SYC committee will review and improve yearly fund-raisers including the scholarship fund for the following year.
- The SYC committee will act to create community awareness of our program.

## PLEASE NOTE...

- ❖ Please do not LEAVE SIBLINGS IN THE CAR while you drop off or pick up your child. If you find yourself arriving early, please do not allow your car to idle in the parking lot except in the occasion of extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.
- ❖ SNOW/EMERGENCY CLOSING POLICY: Because our children do not wait for buses or walk to school, it doesn't always make sense for us to close for low temperatures. We see many families out and about on those cold days and know that for many a quick trip from house to car to school is preferable to staying cooped up all day or having to make it up later. **As a result, we will not necessarily close SYC when Columbus City Schools closes.** The SYC staff will make a decision on a day-to-day basis, taking into consideration road conditions and weather. We may also choose to close for the morning and open for the afternoon if it seems appropriate. We will aim to notify parents (email, Facebook, text, website) soon after Columbus makes their decision, but at least by 6:30 am for morning/all day cancellations and by about 9:30 am for afternoon cancellations. **If Columbus closes, we will post whether we are closing or whether we are staying open.** Keep in mind that last-minute cancellations are always a possibility due to other factors (water, heat, etc.) regardless of what happens in Columbus.
- ❖ CELL PHONE POLICY: For the benefit of all the children, please feel free to use cell phones in the hallways or outside, but NOT inside classrooms.
- ❖ If your child is sick or will not be attending school for any other reason, please notify us by phone or email before class time.
- ❖ If a medical professional diagnoses your child with a communicable disease during the school year, please notify the office as we are required by the Ohio Department of Health to notify the families of other children in your child's class.
- ❖ Morning class families should not arrive before 9:25 a.m. Afternoon class parents should not arrive before 12:55 p.m. That is when teachers will have classrooms open and ready for children.
- ❖ We ask that you do not talk about your children in front of them without including them in the conversation. If you need to talk alone with teachers, make arrangements to talk without your child present.
- ❖ Please go slowly and be extremely careful when backing out and driving in the parking lot. There are usually lots of children around at drop-off and pick-up time. Please always hold the hands of children when they are in the parking lot. *Do not let your children run ahead of or behind you.*
- ❖ Ohio Department of Human Services regulations necessitate that we do not recommend, certify or endorse in any way SYC employees or parents as child care providers. If you are seeking care for your child outside of his/her SYC class, please carefully screen any potential child care provider by your own standards and judgment. If you need assistance with child care arrangements, information on AFC certified providers and how to evaluate them (no charge for these services), contact Action For Children at 614-224-0222.
- ❖ Many caregivers enjoy gathering with other caregivers and their children after class time in various areas around the property (near the rain garden off of Weisheimer, behind the 4s playground). Once teachers are done on the playground for the day (usually after about 3:45) families are also welcome to use the 4s playground. Please return items to where they belong and do not use items that are in the shed.

## **IT'S ABOUT TIME...**

It is extremely important that children are picked up from school on time. It is upsetting to a child when their parent hasn't arrived when the other parents are picking up their children.

Teachers usually meet, plan, and set up classrooms for the next class during the time between morning and afternoon classes. This is also teacher break and lunch time. After afternoon classes, teachers often have planning meetings and some have their own children to pick up. Please consider this when making appointments, or when thinking about what time you must get into a check-out line, etc. These can often take longer than expected. If you anticipate a situation like this, we suggest you make advance contingency arrangements for another parent in your child's class to watch your child if you are late. (Be sure to have a pre-signed transportation authorization if you anticipate being in this situation.)

We understand that due to the occasional traffic snarl, or a last-minute sick sibling, parents are sometimes unavoidably a few minutes late. Allowing a few extra minutes for transportation time is a good idea, especially if you are coming from more than a few miles away.

It is always okay to be a little early. In fact, some parents like to arrive early enough (about 10 minutes) to spend storytime with their child. Other parents enjoy chatting with each other in the hallway or parking lot a few minutes before classes are dismissed.

We would prefer to avoid charging a punitive fee for late parents. Other centers do this routinely. Please help us by paying attention to time and valuing our schedules as much as your own.

# SCHOOL FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

SYC is a part-time preschool, our classes are 2½ hours each. Morning classes are 9:30 a.m.-12:00 noon and afternoon classes are 1:00-3:30 p.m.

### **GENERAL POLICIES & INFORMATION**

Children in our preschool have an opportunity to experiment with life, and begin to discover who they are. They learn as children learn best: by feeling and doing, by free play, and by day-to-day relationships.

The children themselves structure most of their day. Children can exercise their initiative because of the freedom to make choices from a great variety of activities. Maturity and self-control are gradually acquired by interacting socially with peers and experiencing the consequences of acts.

Limits are set so that children may not hurt themselves, others, or property, and while setting those kinds of limits, the teachers help the children express their feelings and deal with them. All this takes place in an atmosphere of trust fostered by developing a relationship with caring teachers.

The 32 week school year begins the Monday after Labor Day in September through mid May. Scheduled closings include: Wed-Fri of Thanksgiving in November, 3 week winter break in December, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, a one week spring break in March or April, and one other day for Professional Development. See the calendar on our website for this year's dates.

We are accredited by NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children), the largest professional organization for early childhood teachers. This accreditation means we meet criteria for a high quality program and have been reviewed by the Academy of NAEYC to verify compliance with their criteria.

The licensed capacity allowed in the school during class periods is 10 toddlers and 55 preschoolers.

SYC does not offer an infant care program, or evening and overnight care.  
Since our program is 2 ½ hours for each session, we do not have nap time.

Breastfeeding caregivers are welcome at SYC. Should a private space be requested one will be provided for them.

We use an emergent curriculum that involves teachers closely observing children and responding to their interests, needs, and development.

**Supporting Separation:** Everyone experiences separation differently, and teachers have many resources to help both children and caregivers who are having a hard time separating. This may look different depending on the location (curbside, playground, classroom), though a lot of the same techniques will help.

We can reassure you that we will still support and care for your child by sitting with them, writing notes, calling or sending a picture of how they are feeling. As always, we will work with you and your child to find a plan that works for everyone.

#### CLASS CHOICES/STAFF RATIOS AT SYC:

	Required Age	Class	# of Children	# of Staff
2s		MW 2's	10	2
		TTh 2's	10	2
		F 2's	10	2
3s	3 by 9/30	MWF am 3's	18	3
		TTh am 3's	18	3
		TWTh pm 3/4's	18	3
4s	4 by 9/30	MWF am 4/5's	21	3
		TTh am 4/5's	21	3
4/5s	5 by 3/30	TWThF pm 4's	21	3

SYC does not exceed the following state-required ratios:

1:8 – Toddlers (30 months to 36 months)

1:12 – Preschoolers (3 years to 4 years)

1:14 – Preschoolers (4 until eligible for kindergarten)

#### SNACKS AT SYC

**Snack time** is an important social activity as well as a chance to fill hungry bellies. Each child eats the food he/she brought from home that day. All food is kept in the child's lunchbox/bag/backpack until the child is ready to eat. We do not heat or cool food, so be sure to send a thermos/ice pack as needed. In an instance in which a snack is forgotten or we run out, SYC will supplement, typically with a cereal grain and a canned fruit (no fresh fruit or vegetables are served). This stock is checked for expiration dates and replaced on a bi-weekly basis.

**SYC strives to be a Nut-Free school.** We know that we cannot guarantee this, especially because we share space with the church and outside groups that rent rooms. So our SYC spaces are used by many other people when school is not in session.

More and more SYC students have life-threatening nut allergies. In order to provide a safe environment for these children, please do not send peanut butter or other nut butters, or whole nuts of any kind for snack in your child's personal snack bag. The nut butters stick to fingers and surfaces even through washings and whole nuts can be stepped on and smashed without anyone noticing. Please read the labels on food you send to school for your child's personal snack so we can avoid nuts. If your child has a life-threatening allergy to another food, please make sure the classroom

teachers know so the parents of that class will know.

If you choose to send a **nut substitute (i.e.: sunflower butter)**, please first check the ingredients to be sure that it includes no nuts. Then, please **label the baggie/tub “NUT FREE”**. If the item is not labeled and it looks like a nut item, we will have to treat it as if it contains nuts.

Here are our guidelines for reading a food label when you are sending any food for snack, food to be used in activities in class (sensory table materials, cooking ingredients, etc.)

1. Please do not bring into the classrooms **any nuts, nut butters or any food with a label saying “may contain trace amounts of nuts”**. This applies to all snacks and all foods used in activities.
2. You may bring in foods that have been “produced in a facility that handles nuts” or “processed on shared equipment”.

Exception:

3. Individual classes may have a child whose doctor does not allow foods that have been “produced in a facility that handles nuts” or “processed on shared equipment”. In this case, do not bring food labeled with those warnings to open shared snack or to use as activity materials. The classroom teachers will make sure to inform all families in the class of this situation and give suggestions for foods that are allowed.

**Here are some Ohio Daycare Licensing regulations that guide our snack policies at SYC.**

1. We teach children to wash hands before and after lunch, as well as when they come inside from playing outside.
2. No food can be eaten on bare tables even when they have been washed and disinfected. Children are asked to take a paper placemat to the snack table to sit down to eat.
3. All foods must be prepared using proper sanitation methods.
4. Home-baked goods or favorite family recipes are still welcome for special occasions like birthdays or celebrations but not as an everyday snack.
5. Avoid sending foods that represent a choking hazard for children including: hot dogs, raw carrot rounds, whole grapes (you can cut them in half), hard pretzel nuggets and large sticks.
6. Foods from home that are only for your child must be labeled with your child’s name—on the outside of lunch boxes, bags, etc. Children do not share snacks brought from home.
7. We do not refrigerate or heat food for children, so be sure to use an ice pack or thermos as needed to keep your child’s lunch at safe temperatures.

#### **CAREGIVER PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES:**

**The SYC Committee.** All SYC program and policy matters are determined by a committee of parents, teachers and church members. This dedicated group, along with their parent sub-committee members, keeps SYC running smoothly and provides the framework for SYC operations.

**Classroom Visitation.** Any custodial parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in this school shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided, or evaluating the premises. If you drop in at any time during your child’s class, please notify the office that you are here. Let’s reword that to... Please stop by the office to check in before visiting your classroom.

**One-on-One Visits.** Each child will receive a one-on-one visit from one of the teachers early in the year. This is a child's

own personal time with a teacher and provides a closer tie between home and school. Playmates and siblings should not be included if at all possible, unless the child specifically requests it.

**Caregiver-Teacher Conferences.** These conferences are scheduled by teachers after Winter Break each year, although parents are free to contact any of the teachers at any time for a conference. Discussing small issues when first detected can often prevent larger issues later. Teachers use daily observations, questions, and conversations with parents to complete informal assessments for each child in preparation for conferences. Conferences may be done virtually, outdoors or in a space that feels safe to both staff and families.

**Caregiver Coffees.** Two caregiver coffees are offered for each class during the school year. These are informal gatherings held by the head teacher during your child's class time. (We provide a substitute for the class for that day.) We notify families several weeks in advance of each coffee. This is an opportunity to get to know the parents of the children in your child's class and to talk about parenting and school issues that are important to you. Caregiver coffees may be done virtually, outdoors or indoors while masked as needed.

**Caregiver Education Nights.** Free for all current families. Scheduled throughout the school year, typically in the evenings from 6:30-8:00PM. Topics related to child development are presented by SYC staff in an informal discussion format; we occasionally have a guest speaker. Child care is offered for a small charge as possible. Caregiver Education nights may be held virtually, outdoors or indoors, and/or while masked.

**School Family Picnics.** Class Picnics scheduled in May are an SYC Tradition. It's a time for SYC families and friends to celebrate the school year together with food and music. There are no regular class sessions on class picnic days. Morning picnics are 11:00 to 12:00. Afternoon picnics are 1:30-2:30. (See school calendar for picnic dates). Parents and children (and other family members who will be joining us) gather at picnic time.

### **CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS (OTHER THAN PARENTS)**

Because we value the opportunity to demonstrate the SYC philosophy to students and others in the early childhood profession, SYC occasionally mentors volunteers in our classrooms. A copy of our policies on mentoring volunteers is available in the SYC office and on our website.

### **SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULES**

Some class schedules may vary slightly based on the needs of the class.

3 & 4's a.m.	9:30-9:45	Welcome! Free Play
	9:45-10:00	Announcements Small Group or Mini-Rug
	10:00-11:30	Free Play
	11:30-11:40	Gathering
	11:40-12:00	Story Time
p.m. classes	1:00-1:10	Welcome! Free play
	1:10-1:30	Announcements, small groups
	1:30-3:00	Free Play
	3:00-3:15	Rug Time
	3:15-3:30	Story



## **HANDBOOKS, FORMS AND PRIVACY**

This Parent Handbook containing all pertinent information about SYC is provided to every enrolled family and is on our website. We do not provide or sell any information, including email addresses, about our school families to any other entity.

SYC prepares a list of contact information for other parents and guardians with children attending SYC, accessible through Jovial. Only those individuals who indicate on the "ODJFS Child Enrollment and Health Information For Child Care" form that they want their email and phone number to be made available are included on the list.

We ask that you refrain from harvesting parent contact information from SYC mailings to use for non-school purposes (such as political and/or outside business mailings). We also ask that parents refrain from posting on any internet or social networking sites pictures taken at SYC that include children who are not their own.

Children's files are kept in a central location in the SYC office which is locked when SYC is not in session. Forms are kept current by updating as needed, or at least quarterly. SYC does not allow access to children's files except in the following situations:

- Office personnel place any screenings and assessment results in the child's file in the office.
- SYC teachers and administrators have access to all file information including health and safety information and individual child screening and assessment results for the purpose of designing individualized curriculum plans.
- Parents and legal guardians will have access to all file information including health and safety information and any of their child's screening and assessment results. No information will be shared with other individuals/schools/agencies without written permission from parents.
- Regulatory agencies.

## **FORMS REQUIRED FOR EACH CHILD**

The following forms are kept in children's files in the SYC office:

1. Child's Medical Statement, date of exam listed on form must not be more than 395 days ago. Form must be signed by the child's physician or nurse practitioner. A record of immunizations should be attached to the medical statement, or a statement from the physician, PA, APRN or CNP indicating that that immunization is medically contraindicated for the child, not medically appropriate for the child's age or that the parents have declined to have child immunized for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions.
2. Child's Enrollment and Health Information for Child Care Centers and Type A Homes signed by a parent and by a school representative.
3. SYC's Permission & Acknowledgement Form
4. Photography Permission Form

## **REGISTRATION, TUITION FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES**

### **2025-26 School Year Tuition Amounts:**

\$65.00	Registration Fee for all classes (non-refundable)
950.00	One day Friday (2s)
1,900.00	Two-day classes (for 2s)
1,850.00	Two-day classes (for 3s, 4s)
2,773.00	Three-day classes
3,450.00	Four-day class

Second child in the family (lowest cost class) receives a 5% discount. Limited tuition assistance awarded annually in

March for the coming school year. Tuition assistance is available only by application.

SYC does not discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin, or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.* of parents and/or children.

Enrollment information for the next school year is prepared and made available at the beginning of January, and registration begins in February. Children of members of the First Unitarian Universalist Church and children from families who are currently enrolled or have been enrolled in previous years at SYC receive priority status during the registration process.

Parents of each enrolled child must sign a tuition contract and pay a tuition deposit two days after acceptance. Deposit amount is \$110 for 1 day per week class, \$220 for 2-day-per-week classes, \$317 for 3-day-per-week classes, and \$386 for the 4-day per week class. The deposit is applied to the total tuition amount. If the deposit is not paid by the due date, we will consider the slot open and try to fill the space with another child. The deposit will not be refundable after the contract is signed. (See withdrawal policy below.)

Tuition payments are due by the 1st of each month, August - March. Tuition payments must be made by the 10th of each month or the student will not be able to attend class until payment is received. If your financial situation changes, please contact the front office to discuss payment options. Families are always welcome to make tuition payments in advance of any due date.

Fees may be paid by personal check, money order, cash or with an EFT through Jovial. Checks should be made payable to "First Unitarian Universalist Church" or "FUUC-SYC". There is a \$20 fee for returned checks. Receipts for tax purposes which include the federal tax ID# are available on Jovial. Other receipts are available upon request.

#### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

Once signed, a tuition contract remains in force until a replacement is found. Replacements will be filled in the order in which written withdrawal requests are received. All withdrawal requests and/or appeals for special consideration must be submitted *in writing* to the SYC Advisory Committee Chair, 93 W. Weisheimer Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43214.

In the Event of Non-Payment: If a family fails to stay current with tuition payments, the SYC office staff will notify parents of the date when, if tuition is not paid, their child(ren) will not be able to continue attending SYC. If this occurs, we will seek a new student to fill the child's space in the class. Any exceptions or extenuating circumstances to this policy must be presented to and approved by the SYC Committee.

## **CHILD MANAGEMENT, DISCIPLINE, MEDICATIONS TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY POLICIES**

### **Guidance and Child Management**

Discipline at SYC is designed to teach, not punish. Limits teachers set are to keep children safe and keep property from being destroyed. Rules are enforced with firm but gentle pressure and in a way that will not damage the child's self-esteem. We realize and expect that everyone makes mistakes and can learn from these mistakes.

When a child has out-of-bounds behavior, a teacher steps in to stop dangerous actions and then begins problem-solving with all involved, looking first to identify the need behind the behavior. The teacher will try to meet that need by changing the physical environment, the social environment, or the emotional environment why maintaining whatever

limits are necessary (“I won’t let you hurt kids but you can throw the balls over here.”)

For conflict between children, teachers will first make sure everyone is safe, and then help the children state their needs/desires to each other. As they’re able, the teacher will help children make a plan. Once the children make a plan that is agreeable to all parties, the teacher monitors interactions to see that the plan is being followed. If a child cannot work through the conflict and continues to threaten physically or verbally, he or she will be removed from the area with a teacher nearby until the teacher feels that the child can safely return to play.

As part of their regular communication with caregivers, teachers will check in to see what strategies work for the family at home and to work out a plan including positive supports for that individual child to help address the behavior. As needed, teachers may suggest an outside evaluation for specific challenges.

The SYC teaching staff never uses physical punishment, such as shaking, spanking or hitting and we do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion. The teaching staff never uses threats or derogatory remarks and neither withholds nor threatens to withhold food as a form of discipline.

### **Children with Special Needs or Persistent Serious Challenging Behavior**

SYC staff is educated in methods for working with typically developing children. Although our teachers frequently attend in-service trainings to learn how to work with children with special needs or persistent, seriously challenging behavior, they are not specifically trained to do so. However, we value inclusion of children with special needs and challenging behavior and have successfully integrated many into our classrooms, and our goal is to limit exclusionary measures. Our successes, we believe, are due to parents getting their children the outside additional professional help they need so our teachers can receive guidance in their management. In these situations parents and staff work together in the following ways:

1. Sometimes the parent may be able to stay at school for an extended period of time, as needed. We are sometimes able to hire an extra class teacher for a limited time should classroom management be an issue.
2. We have relationships with several professionals (pediatric nurse, psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist) that will occasionally volunteer their time to do observations in our classes and consult with staff, but we do not have the financial resources to hire specialists specifically for this purpose.
3. If teachers and parents decide together that outside professional help is needed, staff will offer families our listing of professional community referral contacts and help them connect with consultants for children who are eligible for their services. When indicated, teachers and parents will consult with outside professional help to work on common goals.
4. If it is determined by the family and other professionals that in-class one-on-one therapy would be helpful, the therapist will be invited into the child’s classroom. In this situation, when indicated, teachers and parents will consult with the therapist to work on common goals.

If, after efforts have been made to work with a child and family, the child does not appear to be benefiting from our program, or if the child is seriously jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from our program, we shall communicate with the family and appropriate specialists to determine the child's current needs, identify the setting and services most suited to meeting these needs, and assist the family in placing the child in a more appropriate setting. This policy complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

### **Medications**

SYC staff will administer prescription medications only to prevent life-threatening conditions such as allergy-induced anaphylactic shock and/or asthma. Parents must complete an ODJFS Request for Medication form with all proper sections completed. Medications will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children. All medications will be marked with the child's first and last name. Staff members are trained yearly on medication administration procedures for each child with a medical condition.

Prescription medications must be in their original container and administered in accordance with instructions on the label. If parents request any different dosages or uses, a physician must provide written instructions on the Request for Medication form. Medications and prescriptions must be replaced before their expiration date; expired medications and prescriptions will not be administered to children.

## **Communicable Disease Management**

### **Our General Policy:**

Our health and safety policy can be found [here](#). If your child has a fever or diarrhea or is vomiting within 24 hours of the start of school, please make arrangements for him/her to stay home. Students and staff must be free of these symptoms without the use of medication for 24 hours before returning to school. It can be really hard to keep kids home especially when it seems like they are feeling better, but please keep them home. Many times symptoms go away for a while only to return later. Waiting 24 hours helps protect the health of all the children and staff. Please talk to SYC staff if you have any questions or concerns. Please see our most recent Health and Safety Policy for any updates.

1. Each child shall be observed each day by the head teacher or another teacher designated by the head teacher in order to detect signs of illness.
2. No employee shall work when ill with a communicable disease or when otherwise physically unable to care for children. If a teacher becomes ill after arriving at school, they will be sent home and a substitute teacher will be called in.
3. These policies are subject to change with regards to high levels of covid transmission in the community. If your child exhibits any of these symptoms at home please keep your children home. Children are required to be discharged from the school if it is determined that they have any of the following symptoms:
  - a) diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24-hour period).
  - b) severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
  - c) difficult or rapid breathing
  - d) yellowish skin or eyes
  - e) bacterial conjunctivitis-exclude those with purulent (pus) eye discharge, or eye pain, or eyelid redness or fever until 24 hours after treatment with antibiotic.
  - f) temperature of 100°F taken under the arm, when in combination with any other sign of illness
  - g) untreated infected skin patch(es)
  - h) unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
  - i) stiff neck
  - j) vomiting
  - k) evidence of lice infestation or scabies
  - l) chicken pox, until all sores are scabbed and no new sores are appearing
4. The ill child will be isolated with an adult until the parent(s) or a designated person can be contacted to come for the child.
5. Should your child show symptoms of diseases as listed on our communicable disease chart or of a vaccine-preventable disease as listed by the Health Department, you may be required to provide written documentation

from a doctor to show evidence of either the diagnosis or the completed treatment. The Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart is posted in the Director's office.

6. The school will notify parent(s) in writing of known exposure to current communicable diseases that occur at school. Children who have been reported by family, doctor or Health Department to have a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible will be excluded from school and reported to the Ohio Department of Health according to the guidelines on the Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart. The school will follow the orders of the Ohio Department of Health if an outbreak should occur.

7. Should there be an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible at the school, families of children who are underimmunized will be alerted and children will be promptly excluded from school until approved to return under the advice of Columbus Public Health.

8. A child who is prescribed antibiotics to treat an illness must be on those antibiotics for 24 hrs before returning to school.

9. Medication, vitamins and special diets are administered only when written permission and instruction is received from parent(s) and/or physician. In the case of prescription drugs, a physician's statement must be provided to the school office. Appropriate forms are in the school office.

10. Mildly ill children who are experiencing minor common cold symptoms but who are not exhibiting any symptoms listed in number 3 above, are welcome to attend school if they feel well enough. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in activities, please keep them at home.

### **Supervision and Clothing Policies**

1. Staff must be able to see and hear toddlers and preschoolers at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.

2. Children are given the opportunity to play outdoors each day unless weather conditions or safety issues preclude allowing it. Generally we go outside if the temperature is above 20 degrees with the wind chill, and will go out in the rain if there are enough children with rain gear who want to go out. If outdoor play is unavailable, the classrooms will be set up to provide large muscle play indoors.

3. Our program encourages children to discover their own limits (for instance, how hungry they are, how cold they are, etc.) so they begin to gain internal control vs. external demands. As part of encouraging independence and learning this internal control of their bodies, we do not insist that children wear coats, hats, gloves, scarves and mittens unless the temperature is below freezing, or unless a parent lets us know that a child has been ill. We encourage children to wear clothing that will keep them warm in the winter and cool in the summer, and teachers model this behavior. We also recommend that parents apply sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to their children before coming to school, as we do not apply it at school. When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, we recommend that parents apply insect repellents to their children before coming to school.

4. During warm weather, children often play outside in sand and water. Many preschoolers naturally enjoy taking off their clothes when they get hot or wet from water play. Our policy is to allow them to play in their underpants only (rather than no clothes)--if they choose. Some children may want to bring their own swimming suits or wear them to school in very warm weather. We also have a few swimming suits here at school.

When lots of children are wet and sandy, teachers will help them change their underwear and clothes so they are reasonably clean and dry for pick up time. Our policy is to rinse off the sand and give them dry underwear as quickly as possible. Some children want to do it themselves using clothes from their backpack.

When several children are changing into dry clothes at once, they may see other classmates' body parts. Three to

five-year-olds are naturally curious about their own bodies as well as others'. Teachers will respond to children's questions as honestly and matter-of-factly as possible. If a child looks uncomfortable or asks for privacy, a teacher will accompany him/her to a more private space.

Our goal at SYC is to make sure children feel comfortable about their bodies and also allow for their growing needs for privacy. If this policy is not acceptable with your family, please speak to your head teacher and we will work together to create a plan that will honor your family values.

### **Transportation Policies**

1. SYC does not provide child transportation under any circumstances.
2. Ohio law requires that children under 4 years old and under 40 pounds must ride in a car or booster seat that is appropriate for the child's age and weight. The car seat must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions. Ohio also requires that children ages 4 through 7 who are less than 4'9" tall must ride in a federally approved booster seat. Children through age 15 years must wear a seatbelt or be secured in an appropriate child restraint system.
3. Our parking lot is a busy place with drivers who may be going to restaurants and not watching carefully for children. Always hold your child's hand while walking through the lot. When backing up to leave, please check carefully behind you and proceed in a counterclockwise direction following the arrows on the pavement.
4. Each child must be brought into the building / to a teacher by an adult. At the end of class time each child is kept in the building until an authorized person appears to pick him or her up. Parents are not to leave children in their car in the parking lot. If parents need help because of a sleeping baby, a child with disabilities or a large group of children, they are to call the office and a staff member will come out to stay while the parent takes the child to the classroom.
5. A teacher will greet each child and place a checkmark on the attendance sheet.
6. Please call or email the school to let us know if their child is not coming to class.
7. If there are custody issues involving your child, you must provide the SYC office with court papers indicating who has permission to pick up the child. SYC may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.
8. Release of a child from the school to anyone other than the custodial parent or guardian will be permitted only if the parent or legal guardian has completed a Transportation Release Form listing the names of those so authorized or, in an emergency, by calling the school before pick-up time. This includes grandparents, babysitters, carpools, etc.
9. If no one arrives to pick up a child, we will attempt to reach the parent by phone. If the parent or another authorized transporting adult cannot be reached, the office will call the emergency numbers provided on the Child Enrollment and Health Information form. If no emergency person can be reached after one hour, we will call Columbus Police and Franklin County Children's Services to determine what to do next.

### **General Safety Policies**

1. Telephones are accessible in the school office and church office for emergencies.
2. Fire drills are held monthly at varying times and a record of these is maintained in the school office. Tornado drills are held monthly, March through May. Lockdown drills are held quarterly.
3. Plans for fire emergency, general emergency, lockdown procedures and weather alerts are posted in each wing, including a map of exits from the class. Dental emergency procedures are posted in each classroom and in the office.
4. First aid kits are located in the middle room above the sink in the 3's and 4's classes, and above the sink in the 2's classroom
5. Names of staff trained in CPR and first aid and dates of training are available in the school office and each classroom.
6. SYC does not provide transportation during medical emergencies. In the case of a severe emergency, first aid will be administered, a rescue squad will be summoned, and parent(s) will be contacted. The following phone numbers are

posted in the school office: Police, Fire, Squad – 911; Poison Control - 228-1323.

7. SYC has the right to refuse enrollment to any child whose parents decline to grant consent for transportation to the source of emergency treatment.
8. A child who is not an enrolled child (ex: sibling, relative, friend, etc.) cannot be permitted to attend any SYC class at any time unless the child is accompanied by the parent or an adult responsible for the care of that child.
9. Use of spray aerosols is prohibited when children are in attendance.
10. Water play or activities. Sometimes students engage in water play at SYC with the sensory tables, garden hose and/or wading pool. We follow ODJFS recommendations and do not use wading pools that are taller than 18in in wall height.

### **Procedures for General Emergency or Accident/Injury**

1. In case of a general emergency that requires evacuation of the building, all personnel will walk children to Olive & Lime where parents can meet them. (4519 North High Street, Columbus, Phone 262-5200.) Our secondary evacuation location is Our Lady of Peace Church, 20 E. Dominion Blvd.
2. In case of an accident or injury:
  - a. One staff member provides first aid if necessary, one staff member stays with the other children, one staff member tells the office to call 911 and the office manager then summons an emergency squad, then she and/or the director will contact the parent(s).
  - b. The director shall report the incident to the Ohio licensing office in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 5180:2-12-16. The school will document the incident/injury on the JFS01299 "Incident/Injury Report" form. The completed report shall be given on the day the incident/ injury to the parent/guardian, or the authorized person picking up the child from the center.
  - c. In situations requiring emergency transportation, the report shall be available at the center for the parent within 24 hours following the incident/injury. Copies of the report forms shall be kept on file at the school for at least one year.

### **CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS & PROCEDURES**

As required under Ohio Revised Code, Section 2151.421, our staff members are trained to be familiar with the symptoms of child abuse, including physical, sexual, verbal abuse and neglect by families, staff, volunteers, or others and we follow Ohio law and procedures that protect children against abuse and neglect. If we have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, we are required to report it to Franklin County Children's Services and follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken. When appropriate, parents or guardians will be informed that a referral has been made.

Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

If a parent has a problem or is upset with something that is occurring or has occurred in his/her child's classroom, the first step in resolving this kind of issue is for the parent to speak as soon as possible to the head teacher of the class.

If the problem cannot be satisfactorily addressed and resolved in this manner, the parent next should contact the Co-Directors (Susan Roscigno and Amy Rudawsky) to discuss the issue. If they feel it is necessary, the Co-Directors will arrange for a meeting with all parties to try to find ways the issue can be resolved.

If neither of these steps adequately address the problem to the satisfaction of all involved, the parent should contact the chair of the SYC Committee, in writing, outlining the problem. If the chair of the SYC Committee cannot work out an effective solution among the parents and staff, the SYC Committee will then meet to discuss the situation and decide any appropriate actions to be taken.

Policies and procedures outlined in this handbook apply to all employees in this center.



**Ohio Department of Job and Family Services  
CENTER PARENT INFORMATION  
REQUIRED BY OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

The facility is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a conspicuous place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the facility's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing law and rules governing child care are available for review at the facility upon request.

The administrator and each employee of the facility is required, under Section 5180:2-12-19 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in the facility shall be permitted unlimited access to the facility during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the facility or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

Contact information for parents/guardians of the children attending the facility is available upon request. This information will not include the name, telephone number or email of any parent/guardian who requests that his/her name, telephone number or email not be included.

Recent licensing inspection reports and any substantiated complaint investigation reports for the past two years are posted in a conspicuous place in the facility for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The center's licensing inspection reports for the past two years are also available for review on the Child Care in Ohio website. The website is: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/childcare.stm>.

It is unlawful for the facility to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

*This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians and employees as required in 5101:2-12-30 of the Ohio Administrative Code.*