

**South Lyon Community Education  
Preschool Program**

**Welcome Letter**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to South Lyon Community Education's Early Childhood Program. We are enthused about your interest in an excellent preschool program for your child. We believe you will find ours a quality program, and that our reputation for a sound curriculum combined with a caring staff will provide your child with an excellent preschool experience.

We started providing services for families of preschool children in 1974 and have been building on that strong foundation ever since. We are continually updating our curriculum and our structure to meet the changing needs of the South Lyon School community.

These are some of the most important years of your child's growth and development. Through use of effective early childhood practices appropriate for young children, we recognize this fact and offer you our support as well.

We look forward to having you join us as we work together in building a foundation for your child's future.

Sincerely

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM STAFF  
South Lyon Community Education

## **South Lyon Preschool PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

South Lyon Community Education Preschool supports an effective early childhood program that recognizes each child as a whole person, whose growth occurs in developmental stages that are uniquely individual and continuous.

Young children learn most effectively when they are engaged in an environment where teacher-child, child-child, and child-environment interactions are all at high levels. Learning is seen as an active process where knowledge is constructed as well as acquired.

The curriculum and instructional strategies are based on developmentally appropriate practice for young children. These strategies provide a balance of child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities, which enhances the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each child. The curriculum is based upon emerging abilities in young children and is responsive to the differences in their levels of development. The curriculum is aligned with the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten set by the Michigan State Board of Education.

The staff believes in a warm, nurturing environment that provides children physical and psychological safety. Teachers and parents working as a team provide the learning experiences and models, fostering positive attitudes and dispositions toward learning.

South Lyon Community Education Preschool recognizes the importance of a continuing evaluation system assessing and reviewing the progress, performance and development of children, personnel and overall program.

## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM GOALS**

- ✓ To enhance children's feelings of comfort and security.
- ✓ To provide opportunities to translate experience into understanding.
- ✓ To address all aspects of children's development.
- ✓ To teach children concepts and skills through active manipulation of objects.
- ✓ To design activities so that concepts and skills are appropriately presented by utilizing a variety of methods and techniques.
- ✓ To enable children to experience both challenge and success.
- ✓ To design activities that are carefully and developmentally sequenced.
- ✓ To provide individualized instruction and small group activities rather than requiring children to move as a group from one learning objective to the next.
- ✓ To enable children to learn those things which are important to them.
- ✓ To use language which enhances children's critical thinking.

## PRESCHOOL OVERVIEW

### I. CLASS STRUCTURE

A listing of precise days and times of classes is available, as a separate document, from the Preschool Office at the Early Childhood Center.

- A. 4-Year Old Classes meet for 30 weeks; 2 or 3 days weekly for 2 ½ or 3 hours per day.
- B. 3-Year Old Classes meet for 30 weeks; 2 days a week for 2 or 2 ½ hours a day.
- C. Parent-Tot Classes meet once weekly for 30 weeks for 1 ½ hours with a parent, guardian or other appropriate adult in attendance with the child.
- D. Pre-Kindergarten Class is offered for children who are age eligible for Kindergarten. If spaces are available, children with birthdays in December or January may be enrolled. The class meets four days a week for 30 weeks for 2 ½ hours.

### II. CHILD ELIGIBILITY

- A. 4-Year-Old Classes: children must be four years old by December 1 of the current school year and toilet trained.
- B. 3-Year-Old Classes: children must be three years old by December 1 of the current school year and toilet trained.
- C. Parent-Tot Classes: children must be 2 ½ (2 years, 6 months) to 3 ½ (3 years, 6 months) at the start date of class. Children need not be toilet-trained.
- D. Toilet-Trained: A child is toilet trained when he/she can verbalize their need to use the bathroom and can perform basic hygiene needs independently. Pull-ups and training pants are not permitted.

### III. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. A copy of child's **birth certificate** must be presented at the time of registration.
- B. A copy of the child's **immunization record** must be presented at registration. (Waivers are permitted and can be picked up at the Preschool Office at the Early Childhood Center [ECC].)
- C. One (1) **proof of residency** is required.
- D. A **child information card** (emergency card) must be presented on or before the first day of class, all lines of card must contain information.
- E. Signed written **permission to seek emergency care**, part of the child information card, must be presented on or before the first day of class.
- F. Within 30 days of initial attendance a **health appraisal form** must be presented signed by a licensed physical or designee stating that a physical evaluation has been made and the child is healthy enough to attend the program. The health appraisal form needs to be updated every two (2) years. (Children will be excluded from class if health forms are not turned in after 4 weeks of class.) Forms can be picked up at the Preschool Office at the ECC.
- G. Children in the 3 and 4 year old classes must be **TOILET TRAINED**. A child is toilet trained when he/she can make known their need to use the bathroom and can perform basic hygiene needs independently. Pull-ups and training pants are not permitted.

For liability reasons, if a child has an accident, the teaching staff will supervise and give any verbal instructions required in order for the child to clean up himself/herself. The parent/guardian may be contacted to pick up the child. A good practice is to put an extra set of clothing in your child's backpack. Sometimes even children who normally do not have a problem may have wet pants on occasion.

#### IV. PAYMENTS

A. At the time of registration, the non-refundable registration fee and the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of nine (9) tuition payment installments is made. The other payments are due the first day of the month from September to April. Checks should be made out to S.L.C.E. (South Lyon Community Education).

- If payments are made seven (7) days after the due date, a late fee will be assessed to your account.
- If payment has not been received fourteen (14) days after the due date, your child may be dismissed from the program.
- Any remaining balance on your account will be turned over to a collection agency.

All tuition and fees must be paid before you can register any child in the family for any further Preschool classes.

B. No credits or refunds will be given for absences or vacations.

C. Individual bills will not be provided. However, notices will be put up in the classrooms prior to the payment date.

#### V. WITHDRAWAL REQUIREMENTS

If you choose to withdraw your child from the South Lyon Community Education Preschool Program you must call the Preschool office with two (2) weeks notice. Refunds are only given if withdrawal occurs before Preschool begins or within the first week of the Preschool program.

#### VI. STAFF

##### A. Teaching Staff

1. Master Teacher: Teacher with a Bachelor or Master Degree and current Michigan Teaching certificate. Responsible for planning, supervising and implementing the classroom program.
2. Teacher: Teacher with a CDA, Associate or Bachelor degree. Responsible for planning, supervising and implementing the classroom program.
3. Assistant Teacher: Assists Master Teacher and/or Teacher in the classroom, has experience working with children, may have a degree. Assists in planning and implementing classroom program under the direction of the Master Teacher/Teacher.

##### B. Administrative Staff

1. Early Childhood Director: Supervisor of Preschool program. Responsible for planning, supervising and implementing complete Preschool program. The director holds a Master's Degree in Early

Childhood Education and has experience as a teacher and administrator.

2. **Preschool Secretary:** Responsible for registering families, collecting tuition and answering general questions about the program.

C. **Criminal History/Unprofessional Conduct**

1. All staff complete a criminal history statement, this information is then sent to the Central Records Division of the Michigan Department of State Police.
2. Prior employers are contacted regarding any information relating to unprofessional conduct in the employee's file.
3. Information is sent to the Department of Human Services to check for any history of child abuse or neglect.
4. All staff are fingerprinted with results checked through an FBI national database.

D. **Health**

1. All staff working directly with children must have a physical and TB test prior to beginning work.

E. **Professional Development**

1. All staff working directly with children complete a CPR course annually.
2. All staff working directly with children complete a basic First Aid course every 3 years.
3. All staff working directly with children receive at least 12 hours of state-approved annual training.

VII. **PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION**

- A. Transport your child to and from school.
- B. Be prompt regarding arrival and dismissal times
- C. Escort your child to and from class, signing them in and out.
- D. Send written permission if someone other than you will be picking up your child.
- E. Attend field trips with your child or arrange for your child to ride with another parent in the class.
- F. Parents will be asked to sign up to help in class as needed by the classroom teacher. For the Parent-Tot class an adult needs to accompany the child for the entire class period for all sessions. Parents of children in Three-Year-Old class will be asked to sign up for one class session each at the beginning of the year and then as needed. In the Four-Year-Old class and Pre-Kindergarten, parents will sign up as needed by the teacher.
- G. Parents who are not able to come in to the classroom may be able to help in other ways. Please ask a classroom teacher.
- H. Complete Volunteer Criminal Clearance release signifying no criminal convictions (other than minor traffic violations), especially no substantiated charges of abuse/neglect of children or adults. If a parent/guardian is unable to sign the form due to prior convictions, please contact the office. We will provide you with a way to be part of your child's preschool experience.
- I. Parent Advisory Board  
Parent/Guardian volunteers meet monthly to discuss ways to improve the Preschool program. The Advisory Board looks at budget and curriculum as well

as other relevant areas. They provide a strong voice in fundraising to supplement the program. The goal of the Board is to have a representative from each Preschool class. To join the group, or to get more information, talk to your child's teacher or call the Preschool office.

#### VIII. SNACKS

Snack Time can provide these opportunities for the child:

- To enjoy food and the sociability associated with it
- To eat foods that contribute to meeting his/her nutritional needs
- To develop a willingness to try new foods
- To develop coordination using appropriate utensils
- To develop language through conversation with others
- To develop concepts such as shape, color, texture and weight

The Preschool program will provide the snack food and drink for all classes.

Snack time for Parent-Tot and Three-Year-Olds will be "family" style. Teachers and children will sit at the tables together to take part in sharing food and drink. Children will serve themselves, including pouring drinks.

Children in the Four-Year-Old classes will also have snack "family" style. They will sit with their teachers and friends for the first part of the year. Later in the school year their snack will be part of their daily choice time. Snack will be monitored by the teachers but will be a more independent activity as the children continue to prepare for Kindergarten.

Parents will be asked to sign up to help in class as needed by the classroom teacher. For the Parent-Tot class, an adult needs to accompany the child for the entire class period for all sessions. Parents of Three-Year-Olds will be asked to sign up for one class session each at the beginning of the year and then as needed. In the Four-Year-Old class, parents will sign up as needed by the teacher.

Parents who are not able to come in to the classroom may be able to help in other ways. Please ask the classroom teacher.

Parents of enrolled children are welcome at any time. If your child has separation anxiety, please consult with the teacher when you visit.

**IX. BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Birthdays are exciting for young children. They will have their feelings hurt when they are not included in birthday parties for their peers. We understand that not every child in the class can be included in every party. Please refrain from passing out invitations in front of other children or parents. It is better to mail them to homes or to very discreetly pass them out outside of class when the children are not present.

**X. BIRTHDAY TREATS FOR CLASSROOM**

Children may give a single, non-edible item to each child in the classroom to celebrate their birthday. Please remember the children's ages and provide a safe item. We request that parents not send in treat bags for the class due to the concern that items may be dangerous to younger siblings in the home. Consult with the teacher for ideas or suggestions or if you have questions. This is optional and not a requirement of the Preschool program.

**XI. CHILDREN'S DRESS CODE**

All children should be dressed comfortably for preschool. We provide many opportunities during the day for active play with projects that include paint, water, playdough, clay, and other "messy" activities.

**OUTDOOR DRESS**

All classes go outdoors if weather permits. This is a licensing requirement. Please send appropriate clothing with your child, including a light jacket in the spring and fall. During the winter months, please send boots, hats, mittens, along with a coat and snowpants. All children must join the group in outdoor activities. If your child is not well enough to go outside, you must keep him/her at home.

**XII. DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

In the South Lyon Schools Preschool, we strongly encourage the growth of appropriate pro-social behavior in young children. Pro-social behavioral expectations and classroom activities are a part of the environment to promote safety, respect of others, and protection of property.

In order for children to learn, they must feel safe and secure. Developmentally, all preschool aged children are in the process of learning self-regulation and pro-social behavior. As individuals, all children are at different stages of this social-emotional development.

It is the desire of all staff to help all children have successful experiences. The staff uses positive methods of discipline encouraging choice, self-control, self-direction, self esteem and cooperation.

When children experience social-emotional problems in the classroom:

Adults diffuse the conflict before moving into the problem by:

- ✓ Approaching children calmly and stopping any hurtful actions
- ✓ Acknowledging children's feelings

Adults involve children in identifying the problem by:

- ✓ Gathering information from all involved children (what happened, what upset the children)
- ✓ Restating the problem in a way that recognizes all the information gathered

Adults involve children in the process of finding and choosing a solution for the problem by:

- ✓ Asking children for solutions and encouraging them to choose one together that all can agree on
- ✓ Being prepared to give follow-up support when children act on their decisions

It is our goal to provide a safe and pleasant environment for ALL children. We recognize that children may sometimes act in ways that are inappropriate in a group setting. If this behavior is persistent or causes one-on-one supervision the following actions may occur:

- ❖ Teachers will contact parent/guardians by phone or in person
- ❖ A system of regular communication will be established
- ❖ Teachers will document behavior
- ❖ Parents/guardians may be asked to immediately pick up a child from class
- ❖ Parents/guardians may be required to stay in the classroom with the child on a regular or daily basis
- ❖ Parents may be asked to contact a referral agency or behavioral specialist
- ❖ The program may request assistance from the school district or from Oakland Schools
- ❖ Observers may visit the classroom to provide the staff with ideas and resources
- ❖ A child may be suspended from class for a period of 1 day to 2 weeks
- ❖ The staff may recommend another classroom or program placement as a more appropriate environment for the child

Teachers recognize that all children develop social and emotional strengths at different rates depending on the child's current life conditions, possible issues that may have occurred prior to preschool, and a child's overall developmental level. They work with children individually to help them change their behavior. Improvements often come very slowly with children sometimes regressing to old behavior patterns. Teachers are interested in changing behavior and not punishing children for poor behavior.

It is the desire of the Early Childhood Center staff to provide a safe learning environment. Dismissal from the program is a last resort.

Children may be suspended or dismissed for:

- Hitting, kicking, biting, pinching, or other behaviors that could be harmful to children or staff
- Disruptive behavior
- Antisocial behavior

- Parent/guardian not completing or following through on a referral or behavioral recommendation
  - Health information not completed
  - Emergency cards not completed
  - Parent/guardian verbally abuses or physically harms another child or a staff member
  - Non-payment of tuition or fees (where applicable)
- After an expulsion, if a child has learned to behave more pro-socially, a parent may re-apply for admission to the program. If no openings are available the child's name will be placed on a waiting list.

**Parents having questions regarding behavior in the classroom should consult the classroom teacher.**

**XIII. SIGN IN/SIGN OUT**

All children must be signed in and out at the classroom by a parent, guardian, or other designated adult.

**XIV. LATE PICK UP OF CHILDREN**

When a child is left at preschool after the end of class for any reason beyond 15 minutes there may be an additional charge of \$5.00 per minute. This charge may begin at class dismissal time. Please have another person available to pick up your child if you will be delayed.

**XV. ILLNESS**

**It is important that you keep your child at home when he/she is ill.** Sick children attending Preschool risk passing their illness on to other children. Being exposed to an illness may be of particular risk for children with chronic illnesses. Please be as considerate of other families as you would expect them to be of your family.

**If your child is ill, please call your child's teacher. Parents/guardians will be contacted when their child becomes ill at Preschool. You will be expected to pick them up immediately.**

Whenever a child is **hospitalized or has out-patient surgery**, a note from the child's doctor allowing him/her to safely return to class will be required in order for the child to return to Preschool.

**According to the Oakland County Health Department –**

**Your child is too ill to attend Preschool if they have**

- **red or running eyes,**
- **cough, particularly if persistent or productive,**
- **sore throat,**
- **diarrhea of more than three stools in twelve hours,**
- **vomiting within the last 24 hours,**

- **swelling and tenderness of glands, particularly about the face or neck,**
  - **pain and stiffness of neck and headache,**
  - **jaundice – yellowing of eyes and/or skin,**
  - **sores and crusts on the scalp, face, or body, particularly if red and swollen, or draining,**
  - **any skin eruption or rash,**
  - **or any contagious condition (head lice, impetigo, strep throat, etc.)**
- South Lyon Schools policy prohibits children from returning to class until they are completely nit free.**

Health care plan:

- All children and staff are required to wash their hands before handling food or eating and after using the restroom
- Staff receive blood borne pathogen training annually
- When handling children’s bodily fluids, staff are required to wear medical examination gloves and appropriately dispose of any contaminated materials
- Toys and equipment are cleaned and sanitized as needed, at least four times per year.
- Surfaces that are used for food service are cleaned and sanitized before and after eating
- Children who become ill at Preschool are kept away from the other children and parents are requested to pick them up immediately.
- Oakland County health department is used as the resource for our health care plan.

#### XVI. MEDICATION

Parents/guardians, in consultation with the student’s physician, are urged to develop a time schedule which allows the student’s medication to be taken at home before and after school hours, when possible and appropriate. As required by licensing standards and the South Lyon Community Schools Board of Education, any medication that must be given to a student must be accompanied by a completed school district form for Medication, signed and dated by both the student’s parent/guardian and the student’s physician, to the teacher. (See teacher for form and details.)

#### XVII. COMMUNICATIONS

Teachers provide monthly newsletters of classroom activities and other information of interest to parents. The Preschool Office sends out newsletters through the classrooms as needed. Daily notice is provided of activities offered to children via a notice board in each classroom.

#### XVIII. PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are held once a year. Parents/guardians or the teacher may request a conference at a time other than that of the period provided. Parents are strongly encouraged to discuss any concerns with their child’s teacher.

**XIX. QUESTIONS, REQUESTS, CONCERNS**

Any question, request, or concern a parent/guardian may have should first be addressed to the child's teacher. Any matter that cannot be resolved by the teacher may then be addressed to the Preschool Director. The Preschool Parent Advisory Board, if needed, may take further action. Some questions may be addressed through the South Lyon Community Schools concern protocol.

**XX. PARENT SURVEYS**

A parent survey will be sent home in the spring. This survey is part of the on-going process to continue improvements in our program. Parents are encouraged to return the survey to help the Preschool program.

**XXI. TOYS AND OTHER ITEMS FROM HOME**

Children should only bring toys to preschool when they are scheduled for "Show and Tell." Anything brought to school will be kept in the child's cubby until the time allotted to share them with the class. The teaching staff will then direct children to put the items away.

Please be aware of anything your child brings to school. Note that inappropriate items will be confiscated by the teacher and returned to the parent. Be especially aware of anything that might be considered a weapon or a dangerous item. Bringing these types of things to school may result in suspension or expulsion, according to Michigan law.

**XXII. FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are part of the Preschool program. Teachers will make arrangements for appropriate trips. Any fee for the child and one parent/guardian are included in the tuition fees. Fees for a sibling or another adult must be paid by the participants. Evening activities are also arranged once or twice a year. Again, the teacher will make the arrangements and share that information with the parents/guardians. Field trips, picnics, and evening activities are considered class periods, providing important learning and social opportunities for the children. The end-of-year picnic is considered a class time. All are optional.

**XXIII. PETS**

Pets should not be brought to school, field trips, picnics, or evening activities. If you have questions or if an animal is used for assistance for a handicapped condition, please consult with the teacher or Preschool office.

**XXIV. CANCELLATION OF CLASSES DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS**

- A. Preschool classes are  canceled  when the South Lyon Community Schools are closed due to inclement weather.
- B. Inclement weather days will not be made up.

- C. School closings are announced on major Detroit TV channels and radio stations. Information regarding school closings can also be found on the school hot line, 248-573-8251.

#### XXV. DIVORCED/SEPARATED/GUARDIANS

According to the Michigan Department of Child Day Care Licensing: “Until custody has been established by a court action, one parent may not limit the other from picking the child up from your (preschool program) care. The child information card that the enrolling parent signs states “persons other than parent...” “It is not within your (preschool program) legal right to withhold a child from a parent, unless there has been court action which limits one parent’s right to the child.” South Lyon Preschool requests that a copy of the Judge’s order establishing custody be on file in order to prevent a non-custodial parent access to their child.

#### XXVI. REPORTING TO PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The South Lyon Community Schools Preschool program staff members are mandated by Michigan Law, Act No. 238, governing all schools and child care programs to report any suspected abuse or neglect of children in their care.

#### XXVII. OPEN DOOR

Parents of enrolled children are welcome at any time. If your child has separation anxiety, please consult with the teacher when you visit.

## **EARLY LEARNING EXPECTATIONS FOR THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR OLD CHILDREN**

“These expectations are meant to emphasize significant content appropriate for preschoolers at this very special time in their lives, to protect them from an underestimation of their potential and from the pressure of academic work meant for older children...These items are not meant to be exhaustive; children will demonstrate their progress in many ways.”

### **Language and Early Literacy Development**

1. Children begin to understand written language read to them from a variety of meaningful materials, use reading-like behaviors, and make progress towards becoming conventional readers.
2. Children begin to develop writing skills to communicate and express themselves effectively for a variety of purposes.
3. Children develop abilities to express themselves clearly and communicate ideas to others.
4. Children grow in their capacity to use effective listening skills and understand what is said to them.
5. Children begin to develop strategies that assist them in viewing a variety of multimedia materials effectively and critically.
6. Children develop positive attitudes about themselves as literate beings – as readers, writers, speakers, viewers, and listeners.
7. Children begin to understand that communication is diverse and that people communicate in a variety of ways.

### **Creative Development**

1. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through experiences in the visual arts.
2. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through listening, participating in, and creating instrumental and vocal music experiences.
3. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through movement experiences.
4. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through dramatic play.
5. Children develop rich and rewarding aesthetic lives.

### **Physical Development and Health**

#### ***Physical Development***

1. Children increase their ability to understand and control their bodies and learn that regular physical activity can enhance their overall physical, social, and mental health.
2. Children experience growth in gross motor development and use large muscles to improve a variety of gross motor skills in both structured and unstructured settings.

3. Children experience growth in fine motor development and use small muscles to improve a variety of fine motor skills both in structured and unstructured settings.
4. Children participate in activities that encourage self-motivation, emphasize cooperation, and minimize competition.

### ***Health, Safety, and Nutrition***

5. Children begin to have knowledge about and make age-appropriate healthy choices in daily life.
6. Children recognize that they have a role in preventing accidents or potential emergencies.
7. Children become aware of and begin to develop nutritional habits that contribute to good health.

### **Early Learning in Mathematics**

1. Children begin to develop processes and strategies for solving mathematical problems.
2. Children begin to develop skills of comparing and classifying objects, relationships and events in their environment.
3. Children begin to develop the ability to seek out and to recognize patterns in everyday life.
4. Children begin to develop skills of sorting and organizing information and using information to make predictions and solve new problems.
5. Children explore and discover simple ways to measure.
6. Children can translate a problem or activity into a new form (e.g., a picture, diagram, model, symbol, or words) by applying emerging skills in representing, discussion, reading, writing, and listening.
7. Children begin to develop an understanding of numbers and explore simple mathematical processes (operations) using concrete materials.
8. Children build their visual thinking skills through explorations with shape and the spaces in their classrooms and neighborhoods.

### **Early Learning in Science**

1. Children develop positive attitudes and gain knowledge about science through observation and active play.
2. Children show a beginning awareness of scientific knowledge related to living and non-living things.
3. Children show a beginning awareness of scientific knowledge related to the earth.

### **Early Learning in Social Studies**

1. Children begin to understand and interpret their relationship and place within their own environment.
2. Children begin to recognize that many different influences shape people's thinking and behavior.

3. Children show growth in their understanding of the concept of time and begin to realize that they are part of history, which includes people, places, events, and stories about the present and the past.
4. Children begin to learn about the reasons for rules and laws, the importance of a democratic process, and the responsibilities of being a member of a classroom, a family, and a community.
5. Children increase their understanding about how basic economic concepts relate to their lives.
6. Children increase their understanding of the relationship between people and their environment and begin to recognize the importance of taking care of the resources in their environment.

### **Early Skills in Using Technology**

1. Children explore and use various types of technology tools.
2. Children can name various components of computer systems and use various input devices.
3. Children work cooperatively with others while using technology tools.
4. Children demonstrate responsible handling of technology equipment.

**To see the complete Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten go to:**

**[www.michigan.gov/documents/Early\\_Childhood\\_Standards\\_of\\_Quality\\_-\\_DRAFT\\_107748\\_7.PDF](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Early_Childhood_Standards_of_Quality_-_DRAFT_107748_7.PDF)**

## Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum

South Lyon Preschool has implemented use of the Second Step Curriculum as a means to start teaching children how to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior and increase their social competence. This happens by teaching skills in empathy, impulse control and anger management.

### SECOND STEP FOR THREE-YEAR-OLDS

Empathy can be defined as "understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings or thoughts of another person." Individuals who are high in empathy skills frequently and appropriately respond to the needs and feelings of others.

Children learn to:

- ✓ Identify feelings from a variety of physical (face, body) and situational clues.
- ✓ Recognize that people may have different feelings about the same thing.
- ✓ Recognize that dealings change and why this is so.
- ✓ Predict feelings for simple actions.
- ✓ Understand that people may have different likes and dislikes.
- ✓ Differentiate intentional from unintentional acts.
- ✓ Apply fairness rules in simple situations.
- ✓ Communicate feelings using "I" messages and actively listen to another person.
- ✓ Express care and concern for others.

### SECOND STEP FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Impulse control refers to stopping and thinking through a problem rather than doing the first thing that comes to mind. Problem solving applies a strategy to use in any interpersonal conflict. Behavioral skills training provides individual sets of skills formulated for specific target behaviors, such as "joining in" or interrupting politely."

The problem-solving approach has five steps:

- ✓ **What is the problem?** Identifying the problem using facial, body and situational cues.
- ✓ **What can I do?** Brainstorming ideas.
- ✓ **What might happen if...?** Evaluating ideas on the basis of safety, effect on those involved, fairness and workability.
- ✓ **Choose an idea and use it.** Performing the solution using skill steps.
- ✓ **Is it working? If not, what can I do now?** Evaluating whether the idea is working and changing to an alternative idea if necessary.

Anger management is a compilation of stress reduction techniques for channeling one's angry feelings into socially acceptable directions. It is not an attempt to sweep the emotion under the carpet, but rather to address the source of the anger in a constructive way.

Anger management substitutes positive coping statements and psychological techniques to reduce the physical arousal pattern. This strategy is:

- ✓ **How do I feel?** Children recognize sensations that tell them they are angry.
- ✓ **Take three deep breaths.**
- ✓ **Count slowly to five.** Older children may count backwards.
- ✓ **Say "calm down" to yourself.** Children use self-instructional statements that reduce arousal.
- ✓ **Talk to a grownup about it.** Children talk about their feelings and reflect on how they performed in the situation.

If parents/guardians are interested in more information about the Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum, please speak with your child's teacher. We have written information and a video that can be borrowed. We also encourage you to talk with your child about these strategies and to practice them at home.

# DAILY ROUTINE

The classroom Daily Routine will provide these activities (not necessarily in this order).

## GREETING TIME & CIRCLE TIME

Greeting Time and Circle Time are when all the children are in a large group. The following activities often occur: singing, dancing, reading a story, learning finger plays and talking about special events in the classroom.

## SMALL GROUP

Small Group is when the class is divided into small groups of 9 (or fewer) children. During this time children are actively involved with counting, classifying, drawing, cutting, learning about same/different, more/less and other important concepts based on their interests and the teachers' directions.

## PLANNING TIME

At Planning Time children and adults meet together to talk about what each child wants to do during work time. It allows children to decide for themselves what they want to do. This process helps children learn that they can make things happen and that they can make decisions. It also helps children develop communication skills.

## WORK TIME

Work Time is the longest time in the daily routine. This is a very active time as children carry out the plans that they have made.

## **CLEAN UP TIME**

Clean-up Time is when the adults and the children work together to clean-up the room.

## **RECALL TIME**

At Recall Time, children remember and share what they did at Work Time.

## **SNACK TIME**

Snack is a self-serve activity involving the children and the teaching staff. Depending on the age of the children and the time of year it may be part of their work time.

## **OUTSIDE TIME**

When outside, children are developing their large muscles by climbing, throwing balls, swinging and running. Children also develop social skills as they play with other children.

## **How Parents Can Help Prepare Their Children for School \*\***

### **Help your child discover books by:**

- ◇ Reading to him/her.
- ◇ Asking questions about the stories.
- ◇ Talking about the pictures.

### **Take walks with your child in the community or neighborhood:**

- ◇ Talk about what you see.
- ◇ Take him/her to see the public library, the neighborhood grocery store, the zoo.

### **Talk to your child:**

- ◇ Let your child tell you what he/she is doing at school.
- ◇ Encourage him/her to talk about friends, interests and things he/she is doing.

### **Help your child develop independence:**

- ◇ Give him/her small household jobs to do.
- ◇ Permit him/her to make small purchases at the grocery store.
- ◇ Allow your child to dress himself/herself, starting with their coat and shoes.

### **Help your child understand the meaning of good behavior:**

- ◇ Teach him/her how to talk to adults.
- ◇ Show him/her how to act in public places.
- ◇ Let him/her know how you expect him/her to behave in school.

### **Give your child recognition for what he/she does:**

- ◇ Recognize a job well done.
- ◇ Never make fun of his/her efforts.
- ◇ Build on his/her strengths.

### **Help your child by doing “with” him/her, not “for” him/her:**

- ◇ Let him/her complete a task at his/her own rate.
- ◇ Encourage him/her to try new things.
- ◇ Teach him/her to complete tasks that he/she starts.

### **Accept him/her for what he/she is:**

- ◇ Don't criticize his/her shortcomings and failures.
- ◇ Don't re-do what your child does.
- ◇ **BE PROUD OF YOUR CHILD!**

*\*\*Adapted from: E. Thurman & N. Neisen, Cincinnati Public Schools*