

Early Childhood Education Program FAQ's

What are the Early Childhood Education Program hours?

Beginning in June, our regular Full Day Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We will have Extended Day Hours from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for a limited number of families and at an extra cost (see Extended Day Tuition rates [here](#)). If we have more families interested than we have slots available for Extended Day Hours there will be a lottery to determine who can attend during this timeframe.

What program options are available?

6-HOUR

The 6-hour program begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m.

FULL-DAY

Our full-day option allows for arrivals and departures any time between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

EXTENDED DAY

Our Extended Day option allows for arrivals between 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and is available for a limited number of families at an extra cost.

MIXED AGE AND TODDLER CLASSROOMS

Our toddler rooms begin at age 16 months. Our preschool and pre-k rooms are mixed aged rooms (ages 3-5). If your child turns 3 on or before October 1st, they are eligible to be in our mixed aged rooms for the Summer and/or School Year.

SCHEDULED DAYS

We offer schedules anywhere from three to five days per week. We can offer 2 days schedules on a limited basis and only if we are able to match it with another child's schedule.

What are the benefits of mixed age classrooms?

Our preschool classrooms have a mix of 3, 4, and 5 year old's. Mixed age settings create an atmosphere where children learn to help and be helped by their peers. Younger children in these settings want to model the activities and behaviors of those who are older, while the older children take on leadership roles in the classrooms. Check out our website to read more about the benefits of mixed age classrooms [here](#).

What is looping?

We know that children's school success starts with relationships between the child and teacher, as well as the family and school. The child does better when these relationships are stronger. One of the ways we foster relationships is by keeping children with the same teachers. Toddlers will have one teaching team until they move to preschool. Then, that child will have the same teaching team until they go to Kindergarten. In the world of education, keeping the same teachers over multiple years is called looping. To learn more about looping, visit our website [here](#).

Will my child be provided with snack and lunch?

St. David's Center will provide your child with a nutritious mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack. Parents will need to provide a healthy lunch for their child. St. David's Center will provide milk with lunch and snack.

My child currently attends ECE-when should I apply?

Current families must complete their Current Child Applications, and any New Child Applications for siblings, by January 14, 2022, to have priority placement over incoming families.

I am a new family-when should I apply?

New families can access the application beginning February 1, 2022. Our Enrollment Team will begin reviewing applications during the months of February and March and may contact you to learn more about your child.

Do you require any hold fees to secure enrollment?

In order to guarantee your child's enrollment, we require a deposit of half your monthly tuition for each new child attending ECE.

- If you are starting in the summer, this deposit is due May 1st.
- If you are starting in the school year, this deposit is due August 1st.
- Please note: we cannot refund your enrollment deposit if you decide not to attend our program after those dates.
- Once attending ECE, your enrollment deposit will go towards your first month of tuition in ECE.

What are your enrollment decisions based on?

Our enrollment decisions are based on space in the classroom, age, our commitment to lower ratios, and the level of need and dynamics in each classroom.

We are committed to creating balanced classrooms that allows for every child to be successful within our ratios. We currently target 20-30% of each classrooms enrollment capacity to be for children who need some type of additional support.

We know children benefit from being surrounded by peers who can model physical/motor development, speech/language, prosocial behavior, and peer interactions. It is important to balance our classrooms in this way so we have a mix of children in each classroom while ensuring that the classroom dynamic is supportive and sustainable for all children.

What happens if I am placed on the waitlist?

We keep an active waitlist throughout the year and as enrollment shifts we will notify you if a spot opens up. Due to the many factors we consider with enrollment, we are unable to give an exact placement of where your child is at on our waitlist. While a child's position on our waitlist is one factor we consider when making enrollment decisions, we also strive to create a balanced classroom in terms of age, gender, and level of needs supported. These are all factors that are considered in our waitlist and enrollment.

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion is one of St. David's Center's core values. Inclusion means that children of all abilities learn alongside each other in our classrooms. As leaders in inclusion, we know that all children make greater developmental gains when they learn together in the same environment. Children with special needs make greater progress when included with their typically developing peers and typically developing children also make greater progress as they have increased opportunities for leadership, empathy, and compassion. An inclusive classroom helps children foster an appreciation for diversity, encouraging them to become more confident and comfortable with people who are different from them. At St. David's Center, we believe that children are set up for success when they are learning and playing alongside children of diverse abilities, races, ethnicities, and backgrounds.

Our classrooms focus heavily on social emotional development, which is the cornerstone for all of development and the greatest indicator for success later on. We believe that all children have something unique to offer and

we believe in celebrating differences. In learning about others, children gain better understanding of themselves including their own strengths and needs.

How does inclusion work at St. David's Center?

Our classrooms are comprised of about 80% typically developing children and 20% children with identified special needs. Each classroom has two head teachers and a third teacher who is available to help support at specific times throughout the day. Children who have diagnoses, receive pediatric therapies and/or who have an IFSP or IEP through the school district have a care plan that includes collaboration between the teaching staff and other relevant providers.

Our teaching staff use the HighScope curriculum to create weekly lesson plans based on all of the children's interests, strengths, and areas of needs. They use pictures and documentation to make sure that all children are making progress across all areas of development and working towards identified goals. Our low student to teacher ratio allows all children to receive more individualized attention.

What does Inclusion look like in your classrooms?

The inclusive nature of our classrooms means that our teachers affectively differentiate their instruction for all abilities and learning styles through our curriculum, the way the classroom environment is setup, the materials offered, and the daily routines. Our classrooms are filled with resources and tools that all children have access to and that support our children's individual needs throughout the day. In addition, our daily routines are consistent and created with developmentally appropriate practices in mind. For example, transitions and wait times are limited and children are allowed different options for how they want to participate during group times in order to increase learning and engagement.

Here are some common resources found in one of our classrooms:

- Alone zones (calming spaces)
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Stretchy Bands
- Chew Tubes
- Wiggle Seats
- Cube Chairs
- Rifton Chairs
- Weighted Lap Blankets
- Various small fidget items
- Bubbles (for hand eye coordination and calming)
- Social Stories
- Visual schedules
- Visual timers

What are your teacher to child ratios?

Our program is committed to maintaining lower child-to-staff ratios in order to foster each child's social and emotional development, cognitive development, communication and language skills, and higher social competence. These lower ratios help build strong, healthy, and quality interactions between teachers and children.

- Toddlers: Our toddler ratios are about 1:5 and our toddler classrooms will not exceed 14 kids with 3 teachers
- Mixed Age: Preschool/Pre-K ratios are about 1:8. Our mixed aged rooms have no more than 15 kids with 2 teachers and a third teacher at certain portions of the day.

What curriculum do you use?

We use the High Scope Curriculum in our classrooms and utilize a Reggio Emilia Inspired philosophy. We have also leveraged the expertise of many of our leadership team and staff members to use their knowledge around supporting children with varying needs and incorporating this into our curriculum. [Click Here](#) to learn more about our ECE Philosophy.