



# **The First Time Child Care Parent Quick Guide**

**Early Childhood Learning Welcome Center (973) 762-0860**

**Assistant Directors:** Jennifer MacAfee and Marie Lachanski

**Administrative Assistant:** Danielle Myers

**Afternoon Supervisor:** Surayyah Wolfe

## **What class will my child be in?**

Classes are assigned according to age. Class names, lead teachers and their email addresses are as follows:

### **Infant Classes:**

**Cubs-** Miss Kesha [kbarron@metroymcas.org](mailto:kbarron@metroymcas.org)

**Koalas-** Miss Marta [mdiaz@metroymcas.org](mailto:mdiaz@metroymcas.org)

### **Waddler Classes:**

**Leopards-** Miss Sabrina [smcgaskill@metroymcas.org](mailto:smcgaskill@metroymcas.org)

**Pandas-** Miss Maryis [mvillada@metroymcas.org](mailto:mvillada@metroymcas.org)

### **Toddler Classes:**

**Kangaroos-** Miss Lil [agraham@metroymcas.org](mailto:agraham@metroymcas.org)

**Panthers-** Miss Alicia [alindo@metroymcas.org](mailto:alindo@metroymcas.org)

**Lions-** Miss Ericka [ethomas@metroymcas.org](mailto:ethomas@metroymcas.org)

### **Preschool Classes:**

**Butterflies-** Miss Maggie [mhunt@metroymcas.org](mailto:mhunt@metroymcas.org)

**Giraffes-** Miss Lisa [ldragon@metroymcas.org](mailto:ldragon@metroymcas.org)

**Jaguars-** Miss Kathleen [kjones@metroymcas.org](mailto:kjones@metroymcas.org)

**Brown Bears** - Miss Vanessa [vmays@metroymcas.org](mailto:vmays@metroymcas.org)

**Tigers-** Miss Sue Ann [ssuarez@metroymcas.org](mailto:ssuarez@metroymcas.org)

## **What do I need to bring on the first day of school?**

Every age group is a little bit different! Please find your child's age below to find out what you need.

### **Infant- Cubs and Koalas Classes**

- Diapers/wipes
- Food/formula/breast milk (we supply cheerios)
- Crib set up – sheet and whatever other crib items you'd like to keep your child comfortable

- A couple of changes of clothes in a plastic storage bin. This will be stored under your child's crib, along with your extra diapers and wipes. (these should be replenished as needed and as the seasons change)
- Sunscreen
- Written schedule of your child's eating and sleeping habits
- Sippy cups
- Spoons
- Diaper Cream

### **Waddler-** Leopard and Panda Classes

- Diapers/wipes
- Food/formula/breast milk
- Crib sheets and blanket
- A couple of changes of clothes that will be kept in your child's cubby (these should be replenished as needed and as the seasons change)
- Sun screen
- Lunch box with your child's snacks, drinks and lunch
- Diaper Cream

### **Toddler-** Kangaroo, Panther and Lion Classes

- Diapers/wipes
- Crib sheets/blanket
- Sun screen
- Lunch box with your child's snacks, drinks and lunch
- A couple of changes of clothes that will be kept in your child's cubby (these should be replenished as needed and as the seasons change)

### **Preschool-** Butterflies, Giraffes, Jaguars, Brown Bears and Tigers

- Diapers/wipes (if needed)
- Crib sheet/blanket
- Sunscreen
- Lunch box with your child's snacks, drinks and lunch
- A couple of changes of clothes and underwear that will be kept in your child's cubby (these should be replenished as needed and as the seasons change)

### **What are the hours of operation?**

The Center is open from 7am-6pm. Extended care is available from 6-7pm for an additional fee.

### **What time can I drop off/pick up my child?**

You are welcome to drop off and pick up your child at any time during the hours of operation. We suggest that you plan to have your child arrive by 9am, so they do not miss out on the morning classroom activities.

### **Where do we go when we arrive on the first day?**

You will walk in and proceed to your classroom. If you need help finding your classroom or need to know which classroom your child is in, just ask!

### **What do you do once you get to your classroom?**

When you enter your classroom, you will sign your child in, leaving a phone number where you can be reached for the day. Please remember to also sign out when you pick your child up at the end of the day.

### **What if my child loses something while at child care?**

Please help prevent lost items by labeling everything- all articles of clothing, lunch box items, sheets, blankets and anything else that your child may bring to school. Labeled items can find their way back to you much more easily- but just in case, there is also a lost and found box located by the front desk.

### **How will I know what my child did each day?**

Again, each age range is different:

As an infant and waddler, you will receive a daily sheet listing what your child ate and when they slept, as well as possibly some activities that they participated in and how their mood was throughout the day.

At the toddler age, children become more verbal and daily sheets are no longer written out. As these children begin to potty train, charts are kept for each child throughout the week to give you insight on how their potty training is progressing.

At both the Toddler and Preschool age, we encourage you to talk to your children, using the curriculum web to prompt their responses. Instead of asking, " What did you do today?", take a look at the web and ask, " What did you learn about the planets today?" You can always feel free to talk to the teachers when you pick up about what activities your child was engaged in during the day.

### **How and what type of communication will I be receiving?**

Infant parents will receive a curriculum web and letter once a month via email. At the Waddler/Toddler/Preschool ages, you will receive a curriculum web and letter from your lead teacher each week via email. Please make sure that your lead teacher has a correct email address for you. You will also receive weekly Early Childhood Learning Center updates from the Y. Please be sure to read all correspondence so you can feel connected to our Y family.

### **What about special events and trips?**

The World Festival, Tricky Tray, Scholastic Book Fairs in the Fall and the Spring, Family Olympics, and Family Nights are some of the events held during the school year. These events will be highlighted in weekly emails and on our website. The Lion class and all of the preschool classes go on field trips throughout the year. Toddlers go on their first field trip in the Spring. Local farms, plays, museums and other trips are planned to enhance our curriculum. Parents are always welcome to help chaperone!

### **How can I get involved?**

There are many ways that you can get involved at the Y. We ask for parent involvement as often as possible in the classrooms. Parents and family members have shared their family and holiday traditions, read stories to the class and made delicious treats. We also have class parents for each

classroom who help plan class parties and organize special events. All parents are also encouraged to get involved with our Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) which meets once a month to discuss school wide happenings/events. Some of our past Child Care parents also serve on the Y board. Please ask if you are interested in getting involved!

**Are you a peanut free facility?** Yes, to promote a safe environment for all students, we are a 'Peanut Safe' Center. All snacks provided by the YMCA will be free of peanuts/nuts. Children must not bring in ANY products that contain peanuts. This includes snacks as well as lunch items. If a lunchbox is found to have peanuts or peanut products, those items will be removed and parents notified. All items that are brought in for celebrations must be store bought with the ingredient label intact, or cleared with the classroom staff first.

**What should we pack for lunch?**

Infant, Waddler and Toddler parents can pack any foods that your child will eat (again- no peanut products) Refrigeration is available, as well as the ability to heat up food in the microwave.

In Preschool, lunches are no longer heated up or kept in the refrigerator. We ask that you place an ice pack in your preschooler's lunchbox to keep it cool. This can sometimes be challenging for children who are used to having their food heated. Some suggestions on items to send in include: meat and cheese roll ups, sandwiches, bagels and cream cheese, soy butter and jelly, cheese sticks and cheese and crackers. Another option for all ages is our hot lunch program which is available for an additional fee. Roman Gourmet, located in Maplewood Village, delivers food for our lunch program daily. Pizza, pasta, chicken, ravioli and sandwiches are offered throughout the week. If you are interested in this lunch option, please ask us about it.

**What if my child needs to take medication during the day?**

All medications must be in their original container and should be handed directly to a teacher in the classroom. You will need to fill out an **Authorization to Medicate form**. These are available in every classroom. Please make sure that you completely fill out the form and hand it to the teacher. When you give the medication to the teacher, they will show you where it is kept so you can retrieve it at the end of the day.

**What if I still have questions?**

Your child's teachers can best answer any day to day questions about your child. They are in the classroom with him/her all day long. They can be reached via email at the below email address above, or phone. Please understand that they are in the classroom with the children all day, the best time to reach them is during lunch/nap time- between 12-3pm. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact **Jennifer MacAfee** at [jmacafee@metroymcas.org](mailto:jmacafee@metroymcas.org), **Marie Lachanski** at [mlachanski@metroymcas.org](mailto:mlachanski@metroymcas.org) or **Danielle Myers** at [dmyers@metroymcas.org](mailto:dmyers@metroymcas.org).