



parentguide

August 2025-July 2026



TUCSON JCC | 3800 E RIVER RD + 3888 E RIVER RD | 520.615.5437 | TUCSONJCC.ORG

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Welcome to the Tucson J!

Everyone belongs at the Tucson J - we are excited to welcome you to our community! As you know, the Early Childhood Education Program is contained within the walls of the J, but have you ever stopped to think about what this means? Obviously, there are advantages to having our children grow and learn through a Jewish lens, but there are also benefits of having a state-of-the-art facility at our fingertips. Access to the gymnasium, swimming pool, and other common spaces make for a welcoming, secure, and enriching environment (and this is not just for your children - it's for you as well!)

The J is part of a network of Jewish Community Centers throughout the continent, each independently owned and operated. There are over 300 JCC's throughout North America and they all fall under the umbrella of the Jewish Community Center Association of North America. The headquarters in New York provide resource materials, consultations, expertise, and shared learnings for the field as a whole. As a member of the Tucson J, you also have reciprocal privileges at many other JCC's throughout North America.

Here in Tucson we provide services not only for young learners and their families, but also for the elderly, those interested in sports and wellness, aficionados of the arts, and youth and teenagers. The summer camp program serves nearly 400 children per day, while the Fitness + Wellness department accounts for more than 3,000 engagements each week. Sources of funding that help us provide services at reasonable rates include our membership fees, program service fees, individual donations, and support from the Jewish Philanthropy of Southern Arizona, in addition to a number of government and private grants.

Please think of your membership dues not as a prerequisite to enrolling in Early Childhood, but as a contribution to our community and as added value available to your entire family throughout the year, with access to:

- An expansive fitness center with beautiful views of Tucson
- In-person and virtual fitness classes
- A full-court gymnasium for Basketball and Volleyball
- Year-round heated swimming pool and Aquatics Programs
- Six tennis courts and the Sarver Tennis Center
- Pickleball courts
- Indoor racquetball courts
- Youth and Adult Sports leagues, clinics, and lessons
- JPlay Babysitting service
- Discounts on afterschool care, summer camp, and enrichment programs
- Tucson's only public-access sculpture garden
- Meditation space
- Community garden
- Kosher café
- Arts, Culture + Community programs
- and more!

Our community center has a long and vibrant history and we recently celebrated 75 years in Tucson. The building we now occupy at River and Dodge was built in 1989. However, the J founded in 1949 has been in a number of sites throughout Tucson. The organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit social service institution governed by a voluntary Board of Directors and managed through a multitude of committees. Its staff of over 300 includes professionals from the disciplines of education, social work, Jewish education, the arts, health and physical education, and the sciences. In addition to these skilled professionals, the committed volunteers and lay leaders bring expertise ranging from law and medicine to development. Together the staff and volunteers work hard to develop and deliver the quality services our membership demands and deserves.

We're invested in your well-being and encourage you to take full advantage of our services and amenities.

If you have an interest in becoming involved outside the area of early childhood, please contact us personally. Thank you and again, welcome to the Early Childhood Education program!

Dear Families

Welcome! Thank you for your interest in our Early Childhood Education program. We are pleased that our reputation within the Tucson community has brought you to our doors. We are committed to serving the entire family. Offering a gentle transition from the security of home to a caring and safe atmosphere, our program helps children learn to socialize, develop positive feelings about themselves, and enjoy new, creative and challenging experiences. We believe your child's years with us should be a special time... a time to love... a time to feel... a time to grow.

This Parent Guide has been designed to clearly describe our ECE program and policies, and the myriad of practical details that contribute to making each day as safe, pleasant, and successful as possible. Please review it and keep it for reference.

Our philosophy is based upon the belief that we have the ability and responsibility to nurture each child's development. This is accomplished through interactions and experiences that foster a zest for life and a love of learning. We believe "care" and "education" are inseparable and view each child as a feeling, thinking, and creative individual. We also believe a child's positive self-esteem is critical to social, physical, and intellectual development, and that there are developmentally appropriate practices which encourage young children to view themselves as capable human beings.

Many factors contribute to the success of a young child, and classroom composition is certainly one of them. Much discussion occurs as children are placed in classrooms with learning styles, friendships, verbal ability, chronological age, and enrollment all being taken into account. Although

working in partnership with you as parents means that we need and value your input, we cannot necessarily honor placement requests. Please trust us to place your child in the appropriate setting.

We select enthusiastic faculty skilled in a developmental approach to education. This approach is based on the understanding that every child has their own rate and pattern of growth. Our faculty act as facilitators who mobilize resources and structure the environment so opportunities for growth are maximized. They help develop interests, talents, and academic skills that will form a strong foundation for future learning. We urge you to stay in close contact with your child's teachers and the ECE administration. We want to meet your needs and expectations and know as a team, we can provide an enriching experience for your child.

Thank you for entrusting your child to our care.



Joline Riddle

Senior Director Of Early Childhood Education



*"It is through others that we
develop into ourselves."*

- Vygotsky

About our School

PHILOSOPHY

The ECE Program provides a safe, nurturing extension of family and community in a developmentally appropriate environment. Children are entrusted to our faculty who model respect, caring, compassion, and cooperation with each interaction. Effective communication between parents and the ECE staff is essential to the program's success.

- Each child is by nature a unique, creative, eager, and active learner who comes with a wealth of experiences and ideas cultivated by life in their family and community.
- Growth in children is highly individual, as they develop at their own pace. Every stage offers new opportunities for experiences to delight and challenge young learners.
- Children learn best when they are active participants in experiences fostering discovery, problem solving, decision making, and success. Such experiences provide a strong foundation for academic achievement.
- A child at play is actively engaged in the process of learning about self, others, and the environment. Play involves the whole child physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially.

THE SHEVA FRAMEWORK

Sheva, which means seven in Hebrew, is a powerful number in Jewish thought and practice. The Sheva framework employs seven core principles of early care and education and contemporary and ancient texts, using seven Jewish lenses to reveal universal values. The Tucson J ECE is proud to be part of the Sheva Learning Community network that provides us with opportunities to focus on engaging families, providing learning opportunities for our faculty, and supporting educators as professionals. We foster the seven core elements into our program, and weave the values of the lenses throughout our educational day.

THE CORE ELEMENTS OF SHEVA:

1. Children are Constructivist Learners
2. Early Childhood Directors are Visionaries
3. Early Childhood Educators are Professionals
4. Families are Engaged Partners
5. Environments are Inspiration for Inquiry
6. Discover CATCH are Sh'mirat HaGuf (taking care of our bodies)
7. Israel as the Story of the Jewish People

THE SHEVA LENSES:

Awakening (Hit'o'rerut) – Our lives are enriched by a sense of amazement

Covenant (Brit) – Commitment to self, family, friends, and the world is the foundation for a sense of responsibility and compassion toward others

Divine Image (Tzelem Elohim) – At each person's core is an undeniable spark of dignity that requires nourishment and encouragement

Holiness (Kedusha) – We strive to bring our full presence to everything we do, in order to recognize the unique, miraculous nature of every moment of our lives

Interpretation (D'rash) – A spirit of inquiry is the impetus for growth and reflection

Journey (Masa) – Telling and retelling stories from our past help us to renew our strength and refine our vision for the future

Repair of the World (Tikkun Olam) – We must live for the benefit of others, both in this generation and for the generations to come

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

A security system allows monitoring of the exterior doors. An intercom system allows immediate communication with all classrooms. Teachers carry walkie-talkies when not in the classrooms; and the playgrounds are gated. Fire drills, evacuation drills, and lockdown procedures are practiced regularly in all classrooms. Teacher/child ratios match the suggested ratios of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and typically provide better supervision than state requirements. Faculty conduct a brief wellness check as each child begins their day. Rooms, equipment, and materials are routinely inspected and kept in clean, working order. There is a designated area in every room to ensure proper snack/lunch storage and preparation. CPR and First Aid training is required for all faculty.

Additionally, the Tucson J has armed security personnel stationed at the main entrances during operational hours, and we employ crossing guards during peak traffic periods. We have established comprehensive emergency procedures and security protocols to ensure consistent readiness and preparedness. Our security directors maintain ongoing communication with local, state, and national authorities to stay informed about the latest information and assess potential concerns.

Goals

TYPICAL DAY

ECE is open from 7am to 6pm serving children 6 weeks through 5 years of age. Scheduled classroom activities begin at 9am. In addition to the regular activities, children and teachers meet with specialists to participate in activities such as music and movement. Whenever possible, please have your preschooler at school for the start of the day's activities. The routine will obviously vary with the age of the child and the particular class. Diaper changing and toileting are built into everyone's schedule. Younger children may take longer naps, while older children who do not nap enjoy additional activities in the "awake" rooms.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

7-9am (Before Care)	Arrival and greetings: independent choice activities (blocks, dramatic play, art, manipulatives or outdoor play)
9-9:30am (Start Of School Day)	Circle time: welcoming activities (songs, stories, finger plays, review previous day's activities, discuss plans for the day)
9:30-10:30am	Group activities (language, science, math, social studies, music, stories)
10:30-11am	Discovery centers (creative writing, science/nature, manipulatives, small group art activities, dramatic play, and book center)
11-11:30am	Outdoor play (large motor activities)
11:30-12pm	Story time
12-12:30pm	Lunch
12:30-1pm	Discovery centers
1-2:30pm	Nap
2:30-3pm	Wake-up, snack, stories, and music
3-4pm	Outdoor play / Discovery centers
4-6pm (After Care)	Group activity / Independent choice / Outdoor play

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

Children are helped to separate comfortably from their families as they join in activities that promote a sense of curiosity and independence. Activities set the stage for problem-solving, cooperative play, and shared responsibility. Children are encouraged to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings verbally, graphically, and through dramatic play. Emotional security grows as each child is guided in self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and pride in accomplishments.

COGNITIVE

Each child's competence is stimulated by activities involving communication, literacy, math, science, music, drama, and art designed at appropriate developmental levels. Children are encouraged to explore new materials, investigate new areas, and develop confidence in their ability to process and integrate new knowledge. Children are given the opportunities to make choices as they solve problems, join in activities, and plan their day.

PHYSICAL

Development is promoted in both structured and choice activities. A large gym, a mat area, and fully equipped playgrounds are used daily to promote gross motor development.

DEVELOPMENTAL

Activities are designed at appropriate developmental levels to build self-esteem and encourage curiosity, exploration, problem solving, and divergent thinking. Space, materials, and equipment are used as resources for activities that are appropriate to developmental levels and individual learning styles. All children are encouraged to explore a variety of individual, small, and large group options giving them the opportunity to experience different roles and experiment with all materials, equipment, and toys.

JUDAIC

The Tucson J includes a unique component to our curriculum that highlights the festivals and values of Jewish living by providing rich and enjoyable experiences that promote understanding and foster Jewish identity. We also strive to maintain an environment where cultural and individual diversity are celebrated and gender, ethnicity, and individual differences are treated as strengths.

“Creativity seems to emerge from multiple experiences, coupled with a well-supported development of personal resources, including a sense of freedom to venture beyond the known.”

- Loris Malaguzzi, The Hundred Languages of Children

GUIDANCE

While attending ECE, children learn self-control, self-help skills, communication skills, and classroom routines. Parents and teachers work together to set reasonable limits, encourage children to engage in desired behaviors, and teach children how to make safe choices. Our positive approach to discipline increases children's self-esteem, allows children to feel valued, encourages children to feel cooperative, and motivates children to change strategy rather than to blame others. It helps them to take initiative, relate successfully to others and solve problems. We create an environment that allows all children to develop self-control and to assume responsibility for their own behavior, while ensuring the safety of all children.

Our teachers communicate their behavioral expectations in a language that children are able to understand in order to redirect inappropriate behavior. In an effort to support the emotional development of children, limits are set in a calm and reasonable manner. Not listening or not getting along with others are considered normal occurrences and are handled immediately within the classroom and often not mentioned to parents. Alternatives are suggested and children are encouraged to “use their words.” When a disruptive behavior such as hitting or biting becomes an issue, we work to change the environment (activities, classroom structure, routines, etc.) so the undesirable behavior is eliminated.

FACULTY

Teaching in a developmental, child-centered program is very demanding. Teachers understand the sequence of cognitive, physical, and social development that generally occur within their classrooms and introduce developmentally appropriate activities to promote growth in each area. Each classroom is staffed with a lead teacher and at least one assistant. Teachers and assistants are engaged in ongoing training through community sponsored workshops and conferences as well as in-house ECE in-service days and monthly staff meetings. Lead teachers have earned degrees, ECE certification and/or have prior experiences in an ECE program. Assistants are required to have a high school diploma.

Parents are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback to their child's teachers. Continued education and training is important. All faculty members participate in monthly professional development. We conduct seven full-day

in-service days throughout the year and pay our faculty for their learning time.

Our faculty in ECE are widely diverse and are given opportunities for growth and advancement. We support every person in their individual path for development. Every faculty member in ECE participates in a 30, 60, and 90-day onboarding and review process. Their training includes but is not limited to: Tucson J First Day Training, DES Health + Safety, J Culture, discover CATCH, CPR/ First Aid, child development, nutrition, accident and emergency procedures, and sun safety. See the ECE office for the full list of trainings required and offered for faculty at the ECE.



Teaching Approach

These programs provide learning opportunities that take into account the child's present abilities, interests, and cognitive, physical, and social/emotional development. A child-centered program is one where the child participates in planning activities and is encouraged to make choices. The teachers and assistant teachers have an active role in child-centered programs. They introduce new concepts by setting up the classroom environment with developmentally appropriate interest areas, activities, and materials so the children discover and build knowledge. The selection of materials, furniture placement, and activities offered all determine the nature of learning to take place that day. Curriculum is communicated with families through Brightwheel, daily notes, and conferences.

READING

The curriculum prepares children to become proficient readers. Reading and writing centers facilitate learning; reading to the children is part of the daily routine.

EXAMPLES:

- In the younger groups, children talk about pictures as they are exposed to a variety of literature. Repeated reading and familiar pictures enable them to re-tell and “read” the stories. Comprehension grows as children learn to sequence events and predict and draw conclusions from both pictures and printed material.
- When the teacher knows it is developmentally appropriate to introduce letter sounds, they will read a story such as Brown Bear, Brown Bear and ask whose first name begins with a “B” sound. Later they might ask the children whose name starts with the “B” sound to get their lunch. Objects in many rooms are labeled so children can begin to read environmental print and develop a sight vocabulary.
- Additional activities, such as dictating stories to the teacher and creating stories in the writing centers are an integral part of the program.

MATH

The curriculum includes strong math components. Meaningful experiences provide children with an opportunity to problem solve and develop an understanding of the meaning of numbers and fundamental mathematical concepts that are introduced throughout the day.

EXAMPLES:

- Recognizing and extending patterns with counting bears or graphing eye color are activities used to build a foundation in mathematics.
- Determining whether there are more children in school Wednesday than Monday, or deciding how many slices of pizza are needed for each child to have two, are further examples of meaningful math experiences.
- Addition and subtraction facts are introduced and practiced in “real life” situations.

SCIENCE

The science curriculum is based on a “wonder why” approach. Children are encouraged to explore and experiment in a hands-on environment that facilitates the discovery of cause and effect. They are encouraged to investigate how the world works and take responsibility for protecting and caring for the environment.

EXAMPLES:

- Children plant bean seeds, care for the plants, watch them grow to maturity, and then enjoy eating the beans. During this process, teachers will discuss how water and sunlight are necessary for plants to grow.
- Fulcrums and levers are part of block centers and encourage children to discover the Laws of Physics.
- The children's natural curiosity about their own development is discussed and explored through stories, class discussions, and drawing projects.

discoverCATCH



CATCH stands for Coordinated Approach to Childhood Health. Discover CATCH brings a Jewish

focus to the ECE curriculum and provides a way for JCCs to promote a love of physical activity and healthy nutritional habits through their health and wellness, early childhood education, family engagement and Jewish living and learning departments. Children learn about “whoa” and “go” foods, and how to make healthy choices. Through JCC Association training, JCCs engage families with young children in a lifelong commitment to wellness.

PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, + EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Teaching and learning extends beyond the academic subject areas to include the physical, social, and emotional development of the child.

EXAMPLES:

- Gross motor skills such as throwing, kicking, batting, running, and tumbling are developed through non-competitive games on the playgrounds, outdoor areas, and in the gym.
- Art activities emphasize the process of exploring materials and developing imagination. Risk taking and self-esteem increase as children become pleased and excited over their creation rather than attempting to copy a teacher-made model that can seldom be perfectly replicated.

INFANT CARE

HEALTH + SAFETY

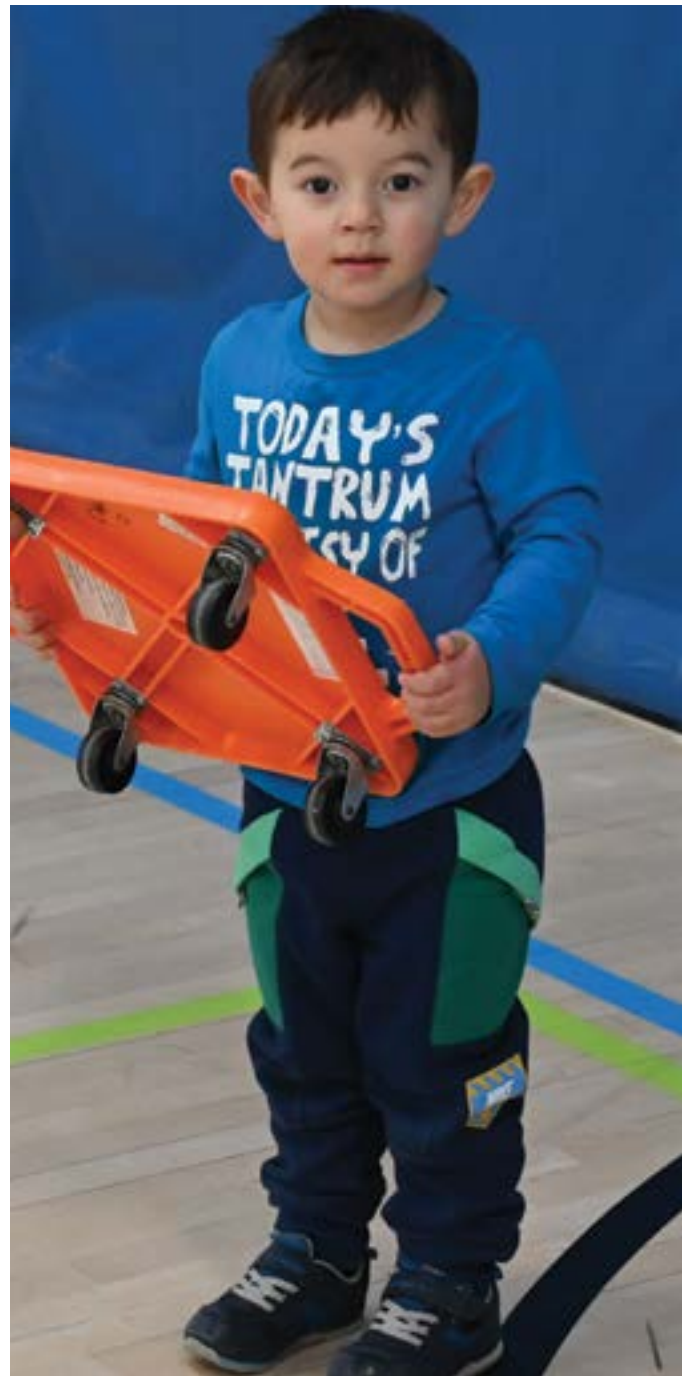
Families and staff are asked to wear shoe covers or remove their shoes before entering the infant rooms. We do this to reduce the amount of dirt and germs that enter the rooms because the babies spend most of their day on the floor. Upon arrival, families will be asked to wash their child's hands. This also helps us limit the spread of germs and helps us begin to instill a healthy habit that will follow your child throughout their time at the Tucson J and into adulthood! Finally, the Department of Health and Safety requires us to prevent siblings from entering the infant rooms, as not all of the infants have been fully immunized. We ask you to please drop off older siblings in their rooms before proceeding to the infant classrooms.

TRANSITION

When the time comes to move your infant up to the toddler rooms, we know that the process can fill families with both excitement and trepidation. We want to assure you that we take all the necessary steps to ensure your infant is developmentally ready for this big change. They will need to be at least twelve months of age and walking before we can begin to consider transitioning them. There may be unforeseen circumstances that could affect when your child moves to an older classroom, and we understand that that can also be frustrating. Please know that we take the complete picture into consideration when we are looking to move a child and we strive to do what is best for them.

Once the time comes to transition, you will receive an information packet as well as a welcome packet from the new room. These documents will provide

you with important information that will help make the move go as smoothly as possible for you and your child. We encourage you to visit the new room and get acquainted with the new teachers before your child moves up. The infant teachers will slowly begin to transition your child to the toddler schedule and will visit them in their new rooms to make the transition easier. There will be some big and exciting changes in store for your little one in their new room! They will be exploring more inside and outside of their room, the activities will become more varied, your child will be seated at an age-appropriate table, they will practice eating by themselves, and they will be sleeping on a mat!



Policies + Procedures

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD

Membership at the Tucson J is required to enroll your child in the ECE program. Our Member Relations department will be happy to give you a tour of the facility and provide you with additional membership information.

CONTRACT OPTIONS

Children are enrolled for the 12-month Preschool or Infant-Toddler contract, or Pre-K 10-month contract. **We require 30-day advance notice if you are requesting a program change or are leaving the program.** Cancellation of your ECE contract does not impact your membership. Please contact membership@tucsonjcc.org to remove your membership should you want to cancel. Please refer to the school calendar each year for scheduled holiday and planning day closures. ECE is open from 7am to 6pm Monday through Friday. All children should be dropped off by 10am to decrease interruptions to daily schedules; appointments are the exception. Children may be enrolled in any of the following options per their age group (excluding Spanish Immersion):

2's, 3's, Infants + Toddlers		
5 Days	3 Days	2 Days
11 hours/day	11 hours/day	11 hours/day
9 hours/day	9 hours/day	9 hours/day
7 hours/day	7 hours/day	7 hours/day

Pre-K 10 + 12 Month
5 Days
11 hours/day
9 hours/day
7 hours/day

3's + Pre-K Spanish
5 Days
11 hours/day
9 hours/day
7 hours/day

If you wish to change your child's program during the contract period, all requests must be submitted in writing to the ECE office. **A \$50 service charge will be applied to every program change.**

ADDITIONAL DAYS

This option is for **occasional use** and is not intended for use on a regular basis. When needed, please **make arrangements in advance** with the office manager in the ECE office. We will accommodate your needs to the best of our ability.

LATE POLICY

We realize occasional delays are unavoidable and allow a 10-minute grace period when picking up your child. This grace period may be denied if used

frequently. If you are running late, it is important that you call and let us know. Your child's hours will be extended at the rate of \$15/hour. The ECE program closes at 6pm and the staff is no longer on duty. Therefore, after our 6pm closing and 4pm early closures, there is no grace period. All children will be brought to the ECE Office and a \$5 per minute charge for each child will be applied.

SCHOLARSHIPS TUCSON J / QUALITY FIRST

A limited number of scholarships, based on documented financial need, are available. Requests must be renewed annually by completing an application each March during registration. Awards are determined in late spring for the following school year.

DOCUMENTATION

A \$200 non-refundable registration fee is due upon enrollment and/or to be added to the waitlist.

The following completed documents must be filed in the ECE office prior to attendance:

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PAYMENT AUTHORIZATION

Automatic monthly payment can be by credit card (VISA, MasterCard, Discover) or electronic checking/savings account transfers.

EMERGENCY CARD

This form includes emergency and immunization information as well as the names of other adults who are authorized to pick up your child. We must have **WRITTEN** authorization before a child can be released to anyone other than the child's parent/guardian. Adults should be prepared to show a picture ID. Please remember to update your emergency information if numbers or addresses change. We must be able to reach you if your child becomes ill or injured. Please update your child's record as additional immunizations are received throughout the year. **The Health Department requires that we refuse admittance to children whose records are not current.** Emergency cards will be updated at the beginning of every school year.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

For the health, safety and welfare of both the staff and students, the Tucson J follows all the Department of Health Services vaccination requirements for students entering our program. Documentation of compliance, from an M.D. or D.O., with these requirements shall be provided to the J for all students upon entry to our programs. The J will monitor on-going vaccination compliance. This follows the standards and policies of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease

Control, and the American Council on Immunization and Prevention. There are personal exemptions to this policy. We will review medical and religious exemptions on a case-by-case basis. Medical exemptions must be from an M.D., D.O., or N.P. and specify a valid medical reason for exemption. Religious exemptions will be accepted when vaccination conflicts with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination of which the parent or child is a member.

LICENSING

We are licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services, located at 400 West Congress St., Tucson, Arizona, 85701 (phone: **520-628-6540**). Yearly inspection reports are available online. The agency carries liability insurance as required by R9-5-308.

ACCIDENT + EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If your child has an accident, injury, or emergency that, based on an evaluation by a director, requires medical treatment by a health care provider, we shall ensure that a staff member:

- Sees to the comfort and safety of your child
- Notifies the parent immediately after the accident, injury, or emergency
- Prepares the appropriate documentation which will include: Description of accident, injury, or emergency, and the date, time, and location
- Document the method used to contact the parents and the time the parent was contacted

CAMPS

ECE offers 9 weeks of summer camp (May-July) to children ages 2-5 years of age enrolled in the program, as well as to children who are not enrolled. Children must be 3 by August 31st. The school calendar includes the camp dates. Pre-K 10-month contracts do not include camp. Children in this age group with 12-month contracts are automatically enrolled for all camp days at no additional charge. Camp families follow ECE policies and procedures.

FIELD TRIPS

We will be obtaining your written permission before we take your child to the sculpture garden, grassy area, swimming pool, or any other destination not licensed by the DHS. We will include the date and description of the trip, the time of departure and return to the facility, and the name of the destination. We will comply with the DHS written field trip forms and keep them for 12 months from the date of the trip.

PESTICIDES

We will notify all parents by posting a notice at least 48 hours before a pesticide application

in the facility. We will give any parent the information they request concerning the pesticide used, date, and time of application, the pesticide label, and the material safety data sheet which includes the name, telephone number, and business license of the applicator.

BABYSITTING (BY ECE STAFF)

ECE faculty are NOT permitted to babysit for children in their own classroom. We hire our faculty to work in ECE because of skills that may or may not be transferable to an unsupervised setting. We cannot endorse faculty employed in ECE to engage in private babysitting arrangements and cannot provide a reference for them to do so. Private babysitting arrangements should be made when staff is not working. Please do not interrupt the classroom to make babysitting arrangements or request sitting during working hours. Please do not hire our staff as your private nanny. Although you may be able to offer higher pay, recruiting ECE staff to work for you full time as a nanny or to accompany your family on vacation presents a conflict of interest as it disrupts consistency and is unfair to the remaining children and staff. If you hire a faculty member to stay with your children when you are out of town, please make sure you have someone else to watch them if they become ill, so that our faculty does not miss work.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Parents may send a special treat for birthdays. Please follow these guidelines and recommendations:

- Purchase cookies/cupcakes from a kosher bakery such as Café at the J or Nadine's. We cannot serve items baked at home even if your home is kosher.
- Purchase kosher foods from the grocery store. Entenmann's, Sunshine brand, Carvel Cake or others marked with a "U" or "K" are kosher.
- Most Baskin Robbins will make kosher ice cream cakes upon request.
- Fruits and kosher cheeses are preferred to sweets.
- Please do not plan on providing entertainment.
- Please check with the lead teacher before purchasing hats, favors, and/or decorations. Please do not provide balloons (latex or mylar). Uninflated latex balloons or fragments of popped balloons are the leading cause of choking deaths among children younger than 6. Please help us maintain the safety of the children in our care by adhering to this policy.

ADDITIONAL NOTE: Unless every child in the class is being invited to a party outside of class time, ECE mailboxes cannot be utilized for the distribution of invitations.

Policies + Procedures

DONATIONS

We love receiving outgrown toys, equipment, crib sheets, and baby blankets as well as craft materials to use in creative projects.

DRESS

Please do not send your child to school in “good” clothes. Dress your child appropriately for an active, messy day, as staff cannot be responsible for lost items, stains, or tears. Each child must have a complete change of clothes in their cubby including underwear and socks. All clothing should be labeled with your child’s first and last name. If your child is sent home in extra clothes from the center, please return them the following day.

SWIM WEAR

Weather permitting, we will schedule water park activities in the summer and may schedule water activities in the early fall and late spring. Send your child to school in their swimming suit and make sure there are dry clothes including underwear in your child’s cubby to change into afterwards. Children who are not completely toilet trained are required to wear plastic pants over diapers. Prior to summer water activities you will receive a summer Camp parent guide with more information.

SHOES

Appropriate closed-toe shoes are required for safety. If your child insists on wearing boots, sandals, jellies, heels, etc. to school, please include a pair of sneakers in their cubby and we will encourage them to change when necessary. Please remember water play often means wet shoes.

WEATHER

We encourage outdoor play every day when weather and air quality conditions permit. When outdoor temperatures are above 100 degrees or lower than 40 degrees, scheduled outdoor play activities and times may be altered. Please be sure your child is dressed warmly for cold weather.

SUN SAFETY

Children should wear a sun hat and sunscreen, and carry a water bottle when outside. Please leave your child’s sun hat in their cubby to provide added protection from the sun. All children will need a water bottle or sippy cup for water. Cups for water should not be more than two pieces, must be easily cleaned, and must not have small pieces that could become choking hazards. Families must provide sunscreen for their child that is labeled with

their first and last name. Children should come to school with an application of sunscreen, and we will reapply throughout the day prior to going outside.

EXCUSING A CHILD/FAMILY

A family may be asked to leave the program for any of the following reasons:

- Inability or unwillingness to adhere to payment plan
- Lack of cooperation between parent and administration/staff
- Inability of parents/guardians to adhere to Tucson J/ECE policies and/or procedures

LABELING OF PERSONAL ITEMS

All personal items (including water bottles, sippy cups, sunscreen, diaper creams, wipes, towels, sheets, blankets, sweaters, and jackets) must be labeled with your child’s first and last name. We strongly urge you to label all clothing.

FOOD/KASHRUT POLICY

The Tucson J ECE observes Kashrut standards (Jewish dietary laws). A snack of fresh fruits or vegetables is provided each morning and afternoon. On Fridays, as part of our Shabbat celebration, challah bread is also provided. Lunch may be ordered or brought from home.

LUNCH SUGGESTIONS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| • Macaroni and Cheese | • Crackers and egg salad |
| • Pasta with/out sauce | • Granola and yogurt |
| • Peanut butter and crackers | • Bagel with cream cheese |
| • Deviled eggs | • Yogurt with fresh fruit |
| • Veggies with dip | • Cottage cheese with fruit or veggies |
| • Tuna salad and crackers | • Tortillas with cream cheese |
| • Fruit salad with cheese | • Cucumber-cheese sandwich |
| • Macaroni and tuna salad | |
| • Rice salad with fruit or veggies | |
| • English muffins with cheese | |

- Café at the J lunches may be ordered and pre-paid at the beginning of each week or on a daily basis. All orders must be done online, prior to 9:30am.
- Lunches brought from home should not contain meat, poultry, or shellfish. Please do not send sodas and try to limit sweets. Kosher for Passover lunches (no leavening products) are required during Passover. You may bring a prepared breakfast from home if your child

arrives before 8:30am. Breakfast served after 8:30am disrupts regular activities.

NAP TIME

Children up to age 4 are offered naps. Infants sleep in a crib and we provide crib sheets. Toddlers and older children nap on mats and parents should provide a crib-sized sheet to cover their mat. Sheets will be sent home each week for laundering. We cannot force a child to sleep if they do not want to.

As children begin to give up their nap, we try to follow parent requests. Usually transitions are most successful if made gradually. We cannot keep a child awake if they request a nap and appear tired. It is also difficult to wake a child who wants to continue sleeping. However, we recognize that children's sleep patterns change and we will work with you.

NEWSLETTER

We electronically distribute a monthly Buggy Bulletin on the second Sunday of every month. The letter contains important information pertaining to the entire program. A hard copy is available upon request from the ECE office. Please ensure your email is up to date in our system to receive these communications.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

We schedule a minimum of two conferences (November + March) with parents during the course of the school year to discuss your child's progress. As needed, you will be informed of any special problem, occurrence, or unusual behavior. Parents are requested to inform us of any unusual events in the home (new baby, trips, illnesses, etc.) so that teachers can better understand the behavior of each child.

CHILD ASSESSMENT + RESOURCES

Teachers regularly monitor children with developmental checklists. Milestones are dated in the areas of gross and fine motor, cognitive, language, social, emotional, and self-help. Areas of concern are also documented and families are provided resources as needed.

PARKING

For everyone's safety, please use caution upon entering and leaving the parking lot. Designated parking spaces are available for up to 15 minutes when dropping off and/or picking up children. If you need more time, please park in a regular

space. Please also observe the no parking signs in the accessible parking spaces, maintenance, and bus areas, as well as the fire lanes. In addition:

- Do not leave purses or other valuables visible in your parked car.
- No child should be in the lot without supervision. This includes leaving a sleeping child in a locked car.
- Do not leave your car running. Remove your keys and take them with you.

PHONE CALLS

You may call administration at 520.615.5437 with questions, comments, or concerns at any time during our hours of operation. If you would like to speak to your child's teacher, you will be transferred back to the classroom as long as it is not during naptime (which is typically 1-3pm). If it is not possible for the teacher to come to the phone, the teacher or an administrator will return your call as promptly as possible. A message left on voicemail will be answered as quickly as possible..

REFUNDS

Tuition will be adjusted if a child has a physician-documented illness for one month or longer. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer refunds for time missed due to short-term illness or for vacations. Although it rarely occurs, if a child is asked to leave the program, tuition for the remainder of the contract will be refunded.

SIGNING IN + OUT

A designated adult must note the arrival and departure of each child on the tablets located in each classroom. The adult's full name (first and last name, no initials), must be printed in the appropriate place. Whenever your child is removed from the classroom, the responsible adult must sign them out.

BRIGHTWHEEL

ECE uses a parent engagement app called BrightWheel to communicate important information with our families. Upon enrolling your child, you will receive either an email or text message invitation to the app. If you do not receive an invitation or you need help signing up for the app, please email Meghan at mbriceland@tucsonjcc.org. Once signed up, we ask that you check BrightWheel throughout the day and enable notifications as staff will upload pictures of your child's day, provide such reports, document diaper changes, request more supplies (diapers, sunscreen, etc.),

Policies + Procedures

send reminders about upcoming events, and so much more! It is also a way for you and your child's teachers to message directly as we ask our staff not to give out their personal phone numbers.

TOILET TRAINING

Children do not need to be out of diapers to move to older rooms. We can start the toilet training process when your child is developmentally able, showing interest, and understanding their own body and how it works. This is generally around 24-27 months. Together we will work out a plan that will help make this a pleasant experience for your child.

TOYS FROM HOME

A goal of early childhood is to develop group-sharing skills. Toys from home may create confusion for children over ownership of personal items. Therefore, we request that you do not send toys or other valuables to school. Some exceptions to this policy include show-and-tell at circle time or a comfort item to help with separation and transitions. Please discuss any exceptions with your child's classroom teacher. All toys must be at least 6 inches long so they cannot become lodged in throats, noses, etc. Never send war toys or other toys that promote violence.

VISITING

Parent visits are always welcome. In addition, you will be notified of special activities throughout the year. If you find that your visit is disruptive for your child, please do not stay. We ask that you do not use your visit as a parent/teacher conference. These will be scheduled during the school year, or you can request a formal conference. Please sign-in on the visitor log by the ECE office.

MANAGING SAFETY AT THE J

The J will provide a safe and welcoming environment for members, staff, program participants, and guests to the best of its ability. When a staff member receives information that an individual using Tucson J facilities might pose a risk to the safety of others (staff, members, program participants, or guests) due to the current or past conduct of that individual, the staff member will immediately inform their supervisor. The CEO or COO shall also be notified immediately. The COO, or their designee, will investigate to evaluate the risk, if any, the individual poses to the safety of others. Any decisions regarding the individual will be shared with related staff/departments as

necessary to implement the decision or resolve questions about the individual's use of the J.

Our security procedures and policies are in place to keep our families, children, and employees safe.

When entering and exiting our facility it is important to slide your own swipe card and make sure the door shuts behind you. If another family or individual is behind you, please ask them to swipe in with their own card or press the intercom button to speak with us.

The ECE has many doors for family and program use. The doors that are to be used by our families are the main ECE doors on the north side, the south door located near the staircase, and the upstairs south door. Please remember to bring your swipe card and use the intercom if you do not have it.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION

Your peace of mind regarding your child's safety is a top priority for ECE and we are always looking for ways to improve our already high standards. While we certainly hope that an emergency will never occur, we need to be prepared. Part of that preparedness is the ability to notify parents/guardians in case of an emergency and to get you information about picking up your child. Emergency notifications will be relayed by admin via Brightwheel messages and phone calls.

DETERMINING WHETHER A CHILD IS SICK

We recognize colds, coughs, and runny noses are common occurrences. We also know infections can be contagious before a child has symptoms and request you consider other children when deciding whether or not your child should come to school. The staff recognizes individual health needs and will call you if necessary. If your child is too sick to participate in all activities, please don't send them.

A CHILD IS CONSIDERED ILL AND SHOULD NOT COME TO SCHOOL IF THEY:

- Demonstrate behavior or display symptoms indicating they are not well (overly tired, lethargic, very cranky, etc.)
- Have a temperature of 100.4 or above within the last 24 hours. Please do not bring your child to school after administering a fever-reducing medication, like Tylenol.
- Have an uncontrolled cough or a runny/stuffy nose that inhibits breathing.

- Have diarrhea that is evident by watery stools more than 2 times a day or have vomited within the last 24 hours.

SPECIFIC DISEASE EXCLUSION GUIDELINES

- Chicken Pox - Until all the blisters have dried into scabs: about 7 days after onset of rash.
- Conjunctivitis Pink Eye/bacterial infection - Until 24 hours after treatment begins.
- Cocksackie - Until fever has subsided and blisters are scabbed over.
- Impetigo - Until all sores are healed or can be covered with bandages or child has been treated with antibiotics for at least a full 24 hours.
- Lice (head) - Until first treatment is completed and no live lice or nits are seen.
- Measles - Until 5 days after the rash appears.
- A child may return if a physician states they are not contagious and/or after being fever or symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

We are allowed to dispense prescription medication only. (Doctors will usually write prescriptions for over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol to relieve the discomfort of teething.) The medication must be in the original bottle and be accompanied by the prescription. Parents must sign the medication book before it can be given. All medication is kept in locked boxes and refrigerated, if necessary, in the ECE office. Only directors give medication. The only exception are Epi-Pens, which are kept in the specified child's room and taken whenever they leave the classroom. PRN prescriptions will be dispensed as needed but must be rewritten every six months. To comply with state regulations, all medication must be picked up after treatment is completed.

EXPRESSING CONCERNS

If you wish to communicate needs, make suggestions, or express concerns regarding the program, please follow this procedure:

1. Contact your child's teacher
2. Contact the ECE Director (Joline Riddle) or ECE Assistant Director (Tiffany Mills-Horton)

CONTACT

3. Chief Operating Officer
Josh Shenker: jshenker@tucsonjcc.org
4. Contact President + CEO
Todd Rockoff: trockoff@tucsonjcc.org



Family Involvement

10-HOUR VOLUNTEER REQUEST

The program requests that each family commits to volunteering 10 hours per year as family involvement enriches the lives of our students and helps strengthen our community. We appreciate your time and effort. Your volunteer hours can be fulfilled by:

- Volunteering in the classroom
- Serving as room parent
- Assisting on field trips
- Assisting with cooking and craft projects
- Serving on a committee
- Participating at a special event
- Organizing and maintaining the library.
- Getting the “word out” to our room parents.

In order to receive credit, please remember to record your volunteer hours on the sheets in the ECE office.

ROOM PARENTS

A room parent works with the lead teacher to plan and implement special classroom projects. These may include creative and literary projects, cooking, holiday celebrations, and art projects. Room parents are responsible for calling parents to remind them of

special events, for communicating classroom plans and major changes in procedures, and for requesting or disseminating information. There may be more than one room parent for each classroom.



Special Events + Jewish Holidays

Throughout the year we provide opportunities for faculty and families to engage in evening and weekend events focused on early childhood. Many events are completely arranged and conducted by the faculty, however, there are some events we do request help with. They include but are not limited to:

FACULTY APPRECIATION

Faculty Appreciation is held each May. This is a week for parents to show the teachers how much they appreciate all they do for the children. Parents are asked to donate money to purchase gifts and lunch for the entire staff.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO:

- Select a theme and appropriate decorations
- Purchase and wrap gifts
- Decorate, set up, serve, and clean up the day of the event

FAMILY SHABBAT

This is a huge family event and is the last gathering of the regular school year. Family Shabbat is held in the Jill Rosenzweig Memorial Sculpture Garden at the J.

STEAM SUNDAY

Local professionals and Early Childhood experts explore the phenomenon of our world and beyond! Play and experience the science of space, earth, life, physics, and more. Children are always seeking answers and this event will allow them to observe, predict, and form conclusions.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO:

- Set up and clean up
- Run tables

JEWISH HOLIDAYS

The snapshots (listed in chronological order) provide basic information about the Jewish holidays and festivals that we celebrate throughout the year. As a part of our educational program, children are introduced to Jewish culture and tradition. Before each holiday, you will receive more detailed information about how we will celebrate, as well as additional resources to help you share in what your child is learning. Families may be invited to help with schoolwide holiday celebrations.

SHABBAT also known as the Sabbath, lasts from an hour before sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. Shabbat is a weekly celebration of creation, and is an opportunity to rest and rejuvenate at the end of the week. To welcome in Shabbat, it is traditional to light and bless candles, bless grape juice or wine, and bless and eat challah bread. Havdallah is the traditional ceremony to say farewell to Shabbat, and several symbols including grape juice, spices, and light are used to help us separate Shabbat from the rest of the week.

ROSH HASHANAH is the Jewish New Year celebrated in the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar, Tishrei. Jews often eat apples dipped in honey for a sweet new year. Rosh Hashanah begins the ten day period known as the Yamim Noraim, the days of awe. During this period, we reflect on ways that we have missed the mark over the past year and aim to return to our best selves. Wishing you and your family a Shanah Tovah U'Metukah, a good and sweet new year!

YOM KIPPUR is the Jewish Day of Atonement. The day is spent reflecting on our mistakes over the past year and how we will strive to do better in the New Year. Jews who are of Bar and Bat Mitzvah age and older, and in good health may fast, and are encouraged to help feed those less fortunate than us by helping organizations that feed others. On a deeper level, Yom Kippur is an opportunity for us to reconnect with ourselves and our communities.

SUKKOT the Festival of Booths, is the one Jewish holiday during which we are commanded to be joyous. During Sukkot we remember the wandering in the desert after leaving Egypt and sit in the sukkah (booth). We also celebrate the fall agricultural harvest. Did you know that Sukkot is one of three pilgrimage festivals, and in ancient days, was one of the times when people made their way to Jerusalem? Pesach and Shavuot are the other two pilgrimage festivals.

SHEMINI ATZERET begins after the seventh day of Sukkot. Traditionally, this is the day the Jews leave their sukkahs and return to their homes. The holiday also marks the end of the annual cycle of weekly Torah reading. Simchat Torah, taking place the day after Shemini Atzeret in America marks the start of the new annual Torah reading.

Special Events + Jewish Holidays

Did you know that in Israel, Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are celebrated on the same day?

SIMCHAT TORAH means “joy of Torah” and on this holiday we celebrate the beginning of the Torah reading cycle. Simchat Torah is also a celebration of Jewish learning. Often times, the scrolls are unrolled for everyone to see. Did you know that the last letter of the Torah, lamed, and the first letter of the Torah, bet, spell the word lev (heart)? The Torah can be described as the heart of the Jewish people. Simchat Torah is the official end to the Jewish High Holy Day season that began with Rosh Hashanah.

HANUKKAH is the festival of lights! Celebrating the miracle of the oil following the Maccabees’ re-dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem, Jews add one candle to the hanukkiyah each night for eight nights. We use the special shamash (helper candle) to light the other candles. Traditionally, we eat foods cooked in oil, such as latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganyot (jelly donuts). It is a mitzvah (sacred obligation) to publicize the lighting of the hanukkiyah (nine branched candelabra). Since Hanukkah falls during the darkest time of the year, it has become custom to help bring light to others during the holiday.

TU BISHVAT is the Jewish Arbor Day. We celebrate the New Year of the trees and nature. In the 1700s, Jewish mystics began the custom of a Tu Bishvat Seder, during which we eat a variety of fruits and nuts and drink four colors of grape juice representative of the four seasons. Many also plant trees on Tu Bishvat.

PURIM In honor of Queen Esther who originally hid her Jewish identity from King Ahashverosh, kids (and adults, too) dress in costume. It is also customary to make and enjoy hamentashen, delicious three-cornered filled cookies. Did you know that Purim is the original gift giving holiday in the Jewish tradition?! One way to celebrate the holiday is to give gifts to friends and family, as well as those in need.

PESACH (Passover) commemorates the Israelites’ experience of slavery in Egypt and celebrates the exodus to freedom. The holiday begins with the Seder, a festive and interactive experience that includes the retelling of the Passover story and a delicious meal. There are several foods that

help to tell the story of slavery and redemption, including matzah, unleavened bread.

YOM HA’ATZMAUT is Israel’s Independence Day. While we bring Israel to life throughout the year in our program, this is a special opportunity to celebrate Israel’s birthday.

SHAVUOT means “weeks” and takes place seven weeks after Passover. Shavuot is a celebration of the receiving of the Ten Commandments and the agricultural wheat harvest. Today, Shavuot has also become a celebration of Jewish learning. It is customary to eat dairy and sweet treats because Israel is known as the “land of milk and honey” and because learning should be sweet!





ECE Calendar

2025 - 2026 ECE CALENDAR

JULY / AUGUST 2025

- Jul 24 – Aug 1: Teacher Planning + In-Service: ECE closed
- Jul 30 at 5pm or Aug 1 at 10am: Parent Orientations - Please choose one
- Aug 1 from 3-5pm: Meet Your Teacher(s) - children and parents invited to drop in and say hello!
- Aug. 4: First Day of School

SEPTEMBER 2025

- Sep 1: Labor Day: Fitness + Wellness open 7am-2pm, ECE closed
- Sep 22: Erev Rosh Hashanah: Tucson J/ECE closes at 4pm
- Sep 23 – 24: Rosh Hashanah: Tucson J/ECE closed

OCTOBER 2025

- Oct 1: Erev Yom Kippur: Tucson J/ECE closes at 4pm
- Oct 2: Yom Kippur: Tucson J/ECE closed
- Oct 6: Erev Sukkot: Tucson J/ECE closes at 4pm
- Oct 13: Erev Shemini Atzeret: Tucson J/ECE closes at 4pm

NOVEMBER 2025

- Nov 27: Thanksgiving: Fitness + Wellness open 7am-12pm, ECE closed
- Nov 28: Day After Thanksgiving: Fitness + Wellness open 7am-2pm, ECE closed

DECEMBER 2025

- Dec 25: Christmas Day: Fitness + Wellness open 7am-12pm, ECE closed

JANUARY 2026

- Jan 1: New Year's Day: Fitness + Wellness open 7am-2pm, ECE closed
- Jan 19: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: ECE closed

APRIL 2026

- Apr 1: Erev Passover: Tucson J/ECE closes at 4pm

MAY 2026

- May 21 – 22: Camp planning: ECE closed
- May 25: Memorial Day: Fitness + Wellness open 7am-2pm, ECE closed
- May 26: Summer Camp Begins

JULY 2026

- Jul 3: In observance of 4th of July
- Jul 22: Last day of camp
- Jul 23 – 31: Teacher Planning + In-Service: ECE Closed

AUGUST 2026

- Aug 3: ECE reopens for the 2026-2027 School Year

-
- Teacher/Family Conferences will be scheduled in November 2025 and March 2026.
 - When the Tucson J is closed, the entire building is closed.

2026 Summer Camp

Campers in the Tucson J's Early Childhood Education Camp experience developmentally appropriate programming from experienced educators while engaging in active learning and play. We take these energetic campers on a summer journey where they can experience an emergent play-based curriculum of inquiry, experiments, and fun! Campers receive bi-weekly instructional swim, weekly visits to the splash park, daily visits to the newly renovated preschool playground, and multiple trips to the indoor, air-conditioned Play Space.

Session dates will be included in the Camp Brochure + Camp Parent Handbook

2026 SUMMER CAMP: May 26 - Jul 22



Contact Us

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