



SHALOM ALEF שלום



early
childhood
center

Developmental Milestones

Shalom means peace! Our Shalom program serves children 3-4 years old. Based on their birthday children may do 1 or 2 years of Preschool. Preschool children are of the perfect age to be pursuers of peace, whether it be to help bring a sense of calm to the classroom or learn to solve their own problems. In addition, children at this age are full of wonder as they develop a sense of trust in their teachers, a sense of competence in themselves, and the ability to initiate activities. Throughout the week the preschool children have the opportunity to: engage in teacher initiated curriculum in the morning and afternoon that meet the Minnesota Early Learning Standards; participate in swimming lessons, have music and art with specialists; and develop and use their large muscles during various motor times. Children in the Shalom classrooms have time throughout the day to explore and play with materials in the classroom during free choice time; this could range from developing fine motor skills with puzzles, connectors at the table, scissors, or different writing tools, building with blocks on the carpet, looking at books or sharing the stories with friends, pretending with dramatic play materials or experimenting with materials in the sensory table. In addition to this, naptime is shortened to two hours; children are expected to clean up after themselves after meals and play; and children demonstrate more Independence with toileting, hand washing, and dressing. Daily notes are no longer used in the classroom to document a child's individual day, however checklists are used to denote children's sleeping and eating patterns and an overview of the day is posted on the classroom door.

The Shalom daily schedule and weekly curriculum is designed for children to develop the following skills during the year:

- Trust and emotional security through recognizing and describing their own emotions, using their words instead of actions to express their emotions, beginning to understand and respond to others' emotions, and responding to praise, limits, and correction.
- A positive self concept by beginning to experiment with own potential and showing confidence in own abilities.
- Easily interact with a group of children, familiar adults, sustain interactions by cooperating, helping, sharing, and expressing interest, and seeking adult help when needed for emotional support, physical assistance, social interaction or approval.
- Problem solving skills using their words and other constructive strategies.
- Curiosity by showing an eagerness and interest in discovering and learning new things and feeling comfortable taking risks and showing persistence.
- Imagination and invention as they try out various roles in play or with make-believe objects, discover various ways to use materials, and approach tasks and experiences with flexibility.
- Listening skills by understanding non-verbal and verbal cues, listening with understanding to stories, directions, and conversations and following two step directions.
- Speaking skills by communicating needs, wants and thoughts through non-verbal gestures, actions, expressions, or words, use language for a variety of purposes, initiate, ask questions, and respond in conversations with others, and begin to use an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.
- Emergent reading skills by responding to stories being read or told, guessing what will happen next in the story, retelling information from a story, and recognizing and naming some letters of the alphabet.
- Emergent writing skills by using scribbles, shapes, pictures or dictation to represent thoughts or ideas.
- Ability to use large motor equipment, increasing body strength, balance, control, coordination, flexibility, and stamina, and move body through a space with a purpose.
- Utilizing small muscles with control, coordination and using hand-eye coordination to perform a variety of tasks, and explore with tools such as spoons, crayons, puzzles, paintbrushes, and scissors.