**Madison School**

**for**

**Young Children**

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**Family Handbook**

Revised February 2025

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**Philosophy**

The process of discovery and learning begins in early childhood. These experiences are stepping stones for shaping a child’s perception of the world and of themselves. At MSYC, we provide your child with a safe, nurturing learning environment with lots of opportunities for discovery and exploration. Within this environment, individuality is respected and children learn that their questions and ideas matter. We encourage children’s independence as well as their intellectual, social/emotional, physical, and creative development. The teachers’ guide an enriching, developmentally appropriate curriculum that draws on the children’s natural curiosities, interests, and experiences. We value an inclusive environment that respects the distinctive qualities of others and individual aspects of themselves. We partner with families to promote and enhance the child’s development and growth.

**Accreditation**

MSYC is accredited by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). In order to become NAEYC accredited, MSYC has voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, invited external professional review to verify compliance with the Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs, and has been found in compliance with these Criteria. The Criteria can be found at [www.naeyc.org./accreditation](http://www.naeyc.org./accreditation) .

**Family Involvement**

We welcome you to schedule visits with your child’s teacher to visit the class to read a book, help in the garden, or share a hobby or talent. Teachers communicate regularly via e-mail or on Procare to share classroom happenings. Please take time to read these communications. They are helpful springboards for conversation as you talk with your child about their day. You will also receive updates from the director via e-mail to address any new business or information, and to keep families abreast of special events.

Drop off and pick up is done at the door however, we open our classrooms for parent pick up every Friday from 4 pm onward. This will give you the opportunity to take a look around the room with your child.

Family conferences are offered twice a year, but we will always accommodate to meet any time in between.We plan zoom and in person conferences to accommodate working families.

Once your child enters one of the 3+ program there are a few meetings that we strongly encourage you to attend:

* Open House/Orientation meeting - teachers share an overview of their program and answer questions
* Fall Family Conference - At this conference you and the teacher will have an opportunity to discuss your child and share goals for the upcoming school year
* Spring Family Conference- At this conference the teacher will review your child’s progress and share a portfolio of your child’s work.

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We appreciate your feedback. Please feel free to approach the teachers or the Director with any questions, concerns, or ideas you may have. We are generally busy attending to the children at drop off time, but feel free to leave a message via the school email or on Procare and the teacher will call you back or the admin will email you within the day.

**Special Needs Policy**

Madison School for Young Children will make every effort to meet the needs of your child physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially within our abilities based on our staffing, ratio, and facility resources. We will work with families in making necessary plans to accommodate your child in our program. If we lack the expertise, facility requirements or staffing to be able to accommodate your child’s needs we will help you find additional professional support or a more appropriate program. We look forward to working with you at every stage of your child’s development to ensure a warm, secure environment for your child to grow and learn.

**Operational Information**

Address: 42 Old Post Road, Madison, CT, 06443

Phone: 203-245-3414

E-mail: msychildren@gmail.com

Fax: 203-245-1614

Hours of Operation: 7:30am-5:30pm Monday-Friday

**Closings**

The Madison School for Young Children schedule will coincide with an academic calendar. The following is a list of scheduled closings or early dismissals. Dates and times vary each year. You will receive an updated calendar each September.

 Labor Day Closed

 Thanksgiving Recess Closed Thursday and Friday

 Winter Recess 12/24-1/1 Closed

 Spring PD day (see calendar) Closed

 Memorial Day Closed

 Independence Day Closed

 Preparation/Building Maint. 4 days in total. 2 prior to each new session.

**Any closings or delays due to weather or emergency will be communicated via Procare.**

**Enrollment Information**

We require all families to visit our school with their child before enrolling their child to observe and to speak with staff. This will allow families to make an informed decision about the appropriateness of the program for their family and for us to determine appropriate class placement.

New children typically start MSYC beginning with the summer session, or at the start of the fall session, however enrollment is on-going when there are openings. We do keep transitions within the program to a minimum and children do not typically transition from one class to the next mid session. This establishes a sense of belonging and community within the group and for the child.

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It is important that your child visits the school before they start. Please plan to schedule a visit with your child a week prior to starting. The director and teachers will help to coordinate a visit and an individualized transition plan for your family.

**Transition Days**

**A child’s first two (2) days are transition days**. Infants and toddlers should be picked up by 12pm. Children ages 3 and 4 should be picked up at 1pm. Five year olds can move right to full days if they have been enrolled in a full time program up until their start at MSYC. Transition days may be extended or modified to meet the needs of the child. The teachers will be working with you to make this transition as smooth as possible as your child adjusts to a new environment.

**Thoughts on Separation**

* Mastering separation feelings is a life-long process.
* Separation can cause anger and fear, but when children are allowed to work through these feelings with support, they develop autonomy and learn to self regulate their emotions.
* Any change in experience (ex. new baby, moving, illness, death of a pet) awakens separation feelings. We should be proactive in addressing change as it occurs throughout the year as new life events occur.

 **What you can do:**

* Talk about changes as they occur.
* Encourage your child to put feelings into words. Say things like “I know this is a hard time, but you will be safe and the teachers will take care of you.”
* Assure your child you will return … “I will be back after lunch/nap.”
* Avoid telling the child, “Don’t cry, or Be good!”
* Be confident when saying “goodbye.”
* Partner with your child’s teacher to create a transition plan or to address separation issues as they arise.

**Establishing a Drop off Routine**

Children are dropped off at the door to a teacher. This helps to establish a calm, quiet morning in the classroom as the children begin their day. We suggest you establish a predictable drop off routine with your child. Be assured that any crying or clinging that occurs at the door always ends very quickly once you leave, and we will comfort your child to help them settle. Teachers will work with families to individualize drop off plans or routines if a child needs one.

**Arrival and Departure**

Children must be accompanied by an adult to the door to ensure proper supervision. A teacher will meet the child at the door and escort them to class. At the end of the day pick-ups occur either at the same door or on the playground. Your children’s belongings will be packed and ready. There is a walkie talkie at each door to communicate with staff inside in the event you arrive and the door is unattended.

Classrooms are open to parents at pick-up time on Fridays after 4pm. Feel free to visit your child’s classroom at this time.

Scheduled drop-offs occur from 7:30am-9:15am. Teachers **may not leave** the classroom after 9:15 to answer the door. This would leave the room out of ratio and compromise the supervision of the children. If you are going to be late please contact the teacher or office so we can make arrangements to meet you at the door. We understand you may need a late arrival for medical appointments, evaluations and other early intervention services. If there will be an ongoing appointment that requires a regular modification

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in attendance, please contact the office to coordinate a transition (into school) plan. We have found that it is difficult for children to transition into the program once the day is in full swing. For this reason children will not be admitted in for a partial day past 12pm.

Double transitions can be very difficult for children since this change in routine requires flexibility and strong self-regulation skills. A double transition means two separate drop-offs; a child is dropped-off at school, then picked-up for an appointment and then dropped back to school. Please schedule accordingly so that there is only one drop-off per day for your child.

Some children may need extra time or attention in order to settle in after drop-off. We will always work with you and your child to make drop offs as easy as possible. If children cannot transition in and settle within a reasonable amount of time, the family will be contacted to pick-up the child.

The names of all persons (other than the guardians) who are authorized to pick up a child, must be listed on the child’s release form. The person will be asked to show us picture identification. If the person picking up is not listed on the child release form, the guardian will be contacted to approve the release of the child.

**Arriving to School, Ready to Learn**

Children should arrive dressed comfortably on a daily basis with a water bottle that will travel indoors and outdoors with them. We recommend sneakers or sturdy shoes. If your child cannot tie their own shoes they will need shoes that slip on or have velcro closures. We do not allow flip flops, crocs or open toed shoes on the playground. The children engage in all kinds of messy play both indoors and out. Busy children often end up wearing some of their projects and play on their clothing. Please keep this in mind when choosing clothing for school. Children are required to be dressed appropriately for each season. We will go outside daily. Please see the section labeled ‘What to Bring to School’ for weather appropriate clothing. We do keep a few extra items of clothing on hand if a child needs to borrow clothing, but our selection is limited in size and quantity. If a child does not come to school with appropriate clothing for the weather and we do not have something to borrow, we will call and ask that you bring the item needed to school. It is not an option to remain inside during scheduled outdoor time.

 Any soiled clothing is placed in plastic bags and sent home that day for laundering.

**Attendance**

Children in our Infant and Toddler as well as our Pre-K programs are scheduled for 5 days. Children entering into Preschool may choose either a 3 or 5 day option. Choosing this option is subject to availability and scheduling. Please email your child’s teacher and the office if your child is going to be out for any reason.

**Preschool Eligibility**

Children are preschool eligible beginning at 2.9 years of age (32 months). Preschool classrooms have ratios of 1 teacher to 10 children and the group size in the class is 20 children. Children will be eligible for preschool when they are 2.9 years of age or at the next natural transition time at MSYC.

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## **Records**

A child's records will be kept confidential and will not be available to anyone who is not directly involved in his or her care. Guardians have the right to review and add information relevant to their child’s file and may request deletion of information, which will be deleted unless prohibited by state and/or federal law.

A written release of records must be signed by the guardian in order to share records with individuals outside of MSYC. All individual screening results and assessments will be used to plan an appropriate curriculum for your child and all results are kept confidential.

A state licensor may review a child's record at his/her discretion to ensure state requirements are being followed. Under such circumstances, all records will be kept confidential. A copy of the child's records will be forwarded to parents upon written request from the parent.

**Accidents/Injuries/Illness/Incidents**

Teachers will write accidents/injuries/illness/incidents reports when one is required. These are sent via Procare. Parents are notified immediately once the notification is sent, however, best practice at MSYC is that parents receive a phone call prior to sending a report if a child needs a pick-up due to illness or

injury. Minor scrapes or bumps are still logged and parents are notified immediately through Procare, teachers are available to speak further should families request to.

**Personal Belongings**

Children keep their belongings in a cubby. **Please label all personal items**. We do not allow toys from home, but children can bring in one (1) special soft item that fits in a cubby bin for rest time.

**Sunscreen and Insect Repellent**

Please supply your child with a bottle of sunscreen which is clearly labeled with their name. Label using masking tape and a permanent marker ensures the name will not rub off with use. We ask that you apply sunscreen before arrival and we will re-apply as needed. Insect repellant will only be used on children 2 months and older. Insect repellent is optional.  **We do not apply aerosol sunscreen or insect repellents**.

## **Rest**

Children who attend the program for more than 5 hours daily will have a rest period each day. MSYC uses nap rolls (bottom sheet, light blanket and small pillow all in one) for rest time which secure to the cots for children ages 1 and older. Parents purchase these from MSYC, cost is about $30. The sizes of the cots are specific. We understand that older children may not sleep. We teach older children that resting our bodies and our minds is important for staying healthy. We help guide children into a calming, restful state and keep rest periods to a developmentally appropriate time frame.

**Fees**

A non-refundable registration fee of **100.00** per child will be charged upon enrollment. Registration and re-enrollment fees are used for materials your child will need to participate in the program. These items are kept at school and replaced annually. A non-refundable security deposit of **350.00** is due upon acceptance into the school to secure a spot. The security deposit will be applied towards the last month of tuition. The security deposit is forfeited should you terminate enrollment **without thirty (30) days**

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written notice to the Director or if you terminate enrollment before your child actually begins attending MSYC.

Children that rest at MSYC will be provided a nap roll that is designed to fit our cots. Nap rolls are $30. This fee will be added to your tuition bill.

**Tuition is** **billed monthly on the last day of each month for the upcoming month**. Tuition is collected through Procare, a program that automatically withdraws funds from the account of your choice.Established fees will not be adjusted regardless of the number of days the program meets during the month and regardless of the number of days a child is absent from the program. Tuition must be paid on time, in full to not disrupt enrollment. In the event that MSYC refers any past due fees or tuition to an attorney-at-law for collection the person executing this agreement as the child's guardian shall be liable to MSYC for any costs of collection including a reasonable attorney’s fee.

There will be a 25.00 charge for all transactions that are returned for insufficient funds.

Procare provides families the ability to access their own monthly and yearly statements for dependent care reimbursement or tax needs. Families can access these statements by logging on to their parent

portal from a desktop or laptop or app, look for the invoice or statement tab and filter the dates on the report to meet their needs.

MSYC is open from 7:30 am. to 5:30 pm., Monday through Friday. The school will be closed for all major holidays. Children are expected to be picked up by 5:30 pm.

MSYC will provide families thirty (30) days notice of changes in fees or program closure.

**Late Pick-Up Fee**

Families that do not pick up their child or children at their scheduled time will be required to pay an additional fee to MSYC as follows:

If the scheduled pickup time for your child is **prior** to **5:30 pm** and the child is not picked up on time, you will be required to pay a fee of 15.00 per hour for every hour or part of any part of an hour the child is at MSYC.

If a child has not been picked up by 5:30 pm additional fees will be charged.

For each child that is picked up after **5:30 pm** (closing time), the family will be charged twenty five ($25.00) DOLLARS for each Ten (10) MINUTE segment or part thereof after 5:30 pm.

Fees incurred because of late pickups will be added to your account.

Families will be asked to make other arrangements for care if more than three (3) late pick-ups occur within a 6 month period.

**Holidays**

Full tuition payments are due even when MSYC is closed in observance of a holiday. Holidays and planned closures are accounted for in the tuition and are built into the cost of attendance.

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**Closings**

Full tuition is due when MSYC is closed due to inclement weather or conditions which interfere with our ability to provide service such as but not limited to loss of power, water, or heat. MSYC will announce closings via ProCare messaging services. Please see below.

**Weather Related Delays, Full and Partial Closings**

Madison School for young Children assess weather conditions early in the morning to determine if delays or closures are necessary. While the exact time of these announcements can vary depending on the specific circumstances of each weather event, decisions are typically made and communicated to families as early as possible to allow for planning.

We disseminate notifications about school closures, delayed openings, or early dismissals through multiple channels, including the Procare smartphone, and social media platforms such as Facebook and instagram .

It’s advisable for parents and guardians to monitor these communication channels, especially during winter months, to stay informed about any schedule changes due to inclement weather.

**Summer Schedules**

Children enrolled full time (5 full days) may reduce their enrollment to a minimum of 2 (½ tuition) full days for the 9 weeks of the summer session without losing their spot for the fall session. Summer schedules must be submitted and approved in the office one month (30 days) prior to the commencement of the summer session in order to be granted a schedule and tuition reduction for the summer. After that, full tuition will be charged.

If a parent pulls a child out of the program entirely for the summer, his or her spot will not be held for the fall.

**Plan for Children Not Picked-Up By Closing**

If a child is not picked up by 5:30pm the staff will attempt to contact the family. If the family has not been reached within ½ hour the emergency contact will be called. If the emergency contact can not be reached following steps will be implemented:

1. The staff in charge will notify the director.
2. The staff in charge and the director will continue attempts to reach someone on the a guardian or an emergency pick up

If after one hour, no parent or emergency contact has been reached the police may be contacted.

**Notice of Termination**

**Thirty (30) days written notice** must be given to the Director to terminate enrollment. Regular tuition payments will be required for 30 days following written notice. The security deposit will be applied to the last month of tuition due.

MSYC reserves the right to immediately discharge any child who interferes with the programming for others or poses a threat socially, emotionally, or physically to him/herself or others. We hope to catch

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problems and develop intervention strategies long before a behavior becomes a chronic problem. Therefore, parents will always be informed of a child’s behavior the day of an incident, and they will help to develop intervention strategies in dealing with the issue. Please see our Guidelines for handling behavioral issues for more detail.

At our sole discretion, we also reserve the right to terminate a child’s placement without notice based upon a breakdown in the relationship between the school and the child or his/her parent.

**Photography Policy**

Each teacher has access to a mobile device to take photographs. Photography is used as a means to communicate with parents. Teachers take pictures of children at work and at play to provide parents with a glimpse into their child’s day at MSYC. Photographs are also used as part of our assessment portfolios. Photographs of your child may be displayed in the classroom or in class and school newsletters that are distributed to other MSYC families.

**Photography Release for Print, Electronic and Social Media**

At times MSYC posts pictures to Facebook and Instagram or uses photographs on our website. This is an optional release form parents/guardians may sign. Please see your child’s enrollment form to sign off indicating preference.

**Celebrations**

MSYC promotes non-food celebrations. We celebrate birthdays in class by recognizing the child. Each teacher has their own way of recognizing birthdays in the classroom. Families are welcome to come in on their child’s birthday to join the morning meeting as a special guest. The family may read a book, play a musical instrument or sing a special song to celebrate the special day. We do not distribute birthday gift bags or token gifts. These items are best saved for private parties.

**Cooking with Children**

Cooking with children is an enriching experience. Any foods used in the classroom as part of the

curriculum will be approved by the Director and will adhere to safe food handling, preparation and storage guidelines. All produce will be thoroughly washed prior to eating. To guard against allergic reactions we do not allow parents to bring in prepared food to share with the class.

At least one staff member is trained in Servsafe protocol and will review classroom cooking activities planned by the staff.

Candy is not allowed in school.

We never use food as a reward.

**Screen Time**

We **do not** use TV’s, or DVD’s at MSYC. Teachers do have computers and ipads in the classroom for professional use however, they are not available to the children.

There is absolutely no screen time allowed for children in the infant/toddler program. From time to time older children will do some guided investigation for educational uses or physical activity **with** the teacher on the classroom ipad.

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**Weather for Outdoor Play**

Children play outdoors except when weather or air quality poses a significant health risk. Scheduled outdoor activities and times may be shortened when conditions approach unhealthy limits. We monitor air quality for ozone alerts from the National Weather Service. We use the Child Care Weather Watch chart at <https://www.c-uphd.org/documents/wellness/weatherwatch.pdf> to guide decisions on when to shorten outdoor activity based on the temperature conditions. Precipitation (rain or snow) does not preclude outdoor play unless a child’s inner clothing becomes wet.

Children who have asthma or other health conditions that affect their outdoor play, must have a care plan prepared in collaboration with the child’s health care professional to maximize their ability to play outdoors.

**Physical Activity and Screen Time**

Young children need physical activity to develop healthy bodies, brains, gross motor and social skills. Children sleep, learn and exhibit greater self-regulation when physical activity is part of their daily routine.

Teachers will promote developmentally appropriate physical activity to help prevent overweight/obesity and practice lifetime healthful habits. Teachers have plans for physical activity both in the classroom and outdoors.

**Infants to 12 Months**

* Babies not yet crawling spend 3-5 min (more if they like it) on their tummies interacting with teachers each half day while awake.
* Infants are not seated for more than 15 min. at a time except at meals
* All infants play outdoors twice a day when weather permits. Outdoor play may include a stroller ride in addition to but not a substitute for gross motor play outdoors (once mobile).

**Toddlers and Pre-School, Pre-k aged Children (12 mo-6 years)**

* Children have outdoor play every day except in adverse weather conditions that require shorter periods outdoors. Toddler 1 hour am and ½ to 1 hour pm. 3 and older 1.5- 2 hours in am and 1-2 hours pm
* Children have 60-90 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per 8 hour day

**What to Know and Bring to School:**

 **Infants (12 months and younger)**

**Sleeping:**

Infants must be able to sleep in a crib (not on a teacher, in a swing or inclined chair). Families will provide a snug fitting sheet (pack and play size, elastic) for sleeping. Sometimes sleeping habits that work at home are not something we can do or are allowed in a group setting. If an infant is unable to settle for a nap in a crib with the typical gentle rocking and back rubbing we normally provide, his or her enrollment may be postponed until independent napping is mastered. Parents will be required to pay full tuition to hold the spot.

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Children under 12 months of age are put to sleep on their backs, in a designated crib. No child under 12 months is allowed to use a blanket. Infant’s (under 12 months) clothing may not be comprised of hoods, ties or strings for sleeping, do not send your child in these clothes. We do not place any objects in the child’s crib with them other than a pacifier (nothing may be attached). Infants under 12 months may not be put to sleep using sleep positioners, swaddles, any sleep sack with a weight (nest suit) or merlin suits unless ordered by a physician. Should your infant arrive asleep in a car seat, they will be moved to their crib. Crib sheets MUST be tight fitting. Pack and play size sheets work best. Do not send regular sized crib sheets. Please make sure there is always a clean back up sheet in your child’s cubby. Initially the children nap according to their own schedules but as the school year progresses they will begin the transition to the nap schedule at MSYC. The children will begin transitioning to a cot once they are a year old.

MSYC Under Twelve Month Sleep Regulations

Infants under twelve months of age shall be placed in a supine (back) position for sleeping in a well-constructed, free standing crib or other piece of equipment designed for infant sleeping and appropriate for the particular child, with a snug fitting mattress covered by a tightly-fitted sheet unless the child has written documentation from a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse specifying a medical reason for an alternative sleep position or alternate piece of equipment.

When infants can easily turn over from the supine to the prone position, they shall be put down to sleep on their back, but allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer for sleep.

No items including, but not limited to, pillows, soft bumpers, toys and blankets, including weighted blankets, weighted sleepers, and weighted swaddles, shall be placed with an infant in a crib or hung over the side of a crib or other piece of equipment designed for sleeping except for a pacifier without attachments unless the child has written documentation from a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse specifying a medical reason for its use. Bibs and garments with ties or hoods shall be removed from infants that are placed to sleep. No toys or objects shall be attached to sleeping or rest equipment.

No infant shall be put to sleep on a sofa, bed, couch, soft mattress, waterbed or other soft surface. No infant shall be put to sleep or allowed to remain asleep in a child restraint system intended for use in a vehicle, an infant carrier, a swing or any place that is not specifically designed to be an infant bed unless the child has written documentation from a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse specifying a medical reason for their use.

No infant shall be swaddled unless the child has written documentation from a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse specifying instructions and a timeframe for swaddling the infant.

Infants under twelve months of age shall be physically observed at least every fifteen minutes to assess the infants breathing, color, temperature and comfort.

No child under three years of age shall have access to teething necklaces, teething bracelets or other jewelry that could present a choking or strangulation hazard.

Written policies and procedures for sleep arrangements shall include the requirements of this subsection and shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the areas where infants under twelve months of age sleep.

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The operator shall document that the child’s parent(s) has been informed of the child care center or group child care home’s policies and procedures for sleep arrangements prior to enrollment and reviewed as needed during the period of the child’s enrollment.

**Meals:**

At MSYC, we encourage families to provide nutrient rich snacks and lunches. Teachers model healthy choices and proper manners by sitting with children during meal times. We encourage healthy choices from meal components of grains and breads, meat and meat alternatives and vegetables and fruits. Nutrient rich foods are low in fat, added sugars and sodium. Families provide food that is safe for children by clearly labeling food with the child’s name and storing foods at an appropriate temperature until eaten. There is a refrigerator in the classroom to store bottles at stable temperatures. Separate freezer space is available for storing an extra portion of labeled breast milk. For infants, store bought

baby food must be supplied in factory sealed containers and bottles must be prepared by the family. Bottles are heated by placing in a container of pre-heated water. Uneaten formula or breastmilk is discarded one (1) hour after first offered. All food items, extra bottles will be sent home daily.

We do not offer children younger than 6 months solid food or juices unless recommended by the child’s health care provider and supported by the parent.

It is recommended that beverages for infants (birth -11months) will consist only of:

* Breast milk (preferred) or iron-fortified infant formula labeled with the child’s full name and the date it was expressed or prepared. Breast milk or formula will be discarded after 1 hour if it is unfinished by the child or left unrefrigerated; and
* Water without added ingredients for infants ages 7 months and older when it can be served in a cup

Please send enough pre-made bottles for your child to last through the day. It is recommended to either keep one extra supply of frozen, dated and labeled breast milk or pre-mixed, ready to feed formula in case of emergency. All bottles should come to school transported in an insulated lunchbox on icepacks prior to tranfer to the refrigerator.

To avoid choking hazards we do not offer children under age 4: hot dogs, whole or cut: whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas; hard pretzels; raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

In the event that a child brings food that has spoiled we will call the family to bring lunch. We will discard any food that has reached its expiration date.

Children may not share lunches and snacks brought from home with other children and families may not bring in food to share with the class. This policy is in place to protect children with food allergies.

**\*MSYC is an Allergy Aware School. Do not send foods with nuts for meals or snacks**

**Clothing:**

3 seasonal changes of clothes, extra socks, shoes to be kept at school - soft shoes for indoors help keep socks on in the cooler months, even if they are not walkers. Every child needs seasonal outdoor wear; warm clothes for the cold weather, rain suits as they approach 1 year old along with boots. Parents will be contacted if extra clothing is needed.

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**Supplies:**

Disposablediapers (we do not use cloth diapers) ,wipes, \*\*diaper cream, \*\*sunscreen, \*\*bugspray (6 months and older), pacifier (if needed with nothing attached), 1 extra pack and play sized crib sheet, 3 bibs, extra formula or breast milk (frozen) to store at school. A reusable shopping bag is best to transport supplies to and from school.

\*\*These items will require Non-Prescription Medication Forms, please see last page for attachment.

**\*Please note: Children under 3 years old may not use or have access to teething necklaces, teething bracelets or other jewelry that could present a choking hazard.**

**Toddlers (12 months-36 months)**

**Sleeping:**

Children who attend the program for more than 5 hours daily will have a rest period each day. For Toddlers, the typical rest time begins around 12:45pm and lasts until 3pm. The lights are turned off, soft music plays and teachers will offer to rub children’s backs if they would like. MSYC uses nap rolls (bottom sheet, light blanket and small pillow all in one) for rest time that secure to the cots for children ages 1 and older. Parents purchase them from MSYC, cost is about $30. The sizes of the cots are specific. Using these nap rolls eliminates unnecessarily long amounts of set-up and breakdown of cots daily. The amount will be charged to your family account.

**Meals and Snacks:**

At MSYC, we encourage families to provide nutrient rich snacks and lunches. We encourage healthy choices from meal components of grains and breads, meat and meat alternatives and vegetables and fruits. Nutrient rich foods are low in fat, added sugars and sodium. Families provide food that is safe for children by clearly labeling food with the child’s name and storing foods at an appropriate temperature until eaten. Ice packs are required for perishable foods, and thermoses for warm foods.

Families should pack children who are here five (5) hours or less, one (1) snack and a nutritious lunch. Any child enrolled over that amount should come prepared for two (2) snack sessions. At MSYC, we like children to have options and recommend families pack at least two choices for morning and afternoon snack when possible. Please provide all utensils necessary.

At snack and meal time our teachers sit and eat with the children, engaging them in conversation, modeling healthy food choices and encouraging age appropriate table manners.

It is recommended that beverages for children (ages 1 and older) consist of:

* Whole milk for children younger than 2;
* Low-fat (1%) or fat-free unflavored milk for children ages 2 and older;
* 100% juice when it can be served in a cup (limit of ¼ cup or 2 fluid oz. per day for ages 12-23 months and ½ cup or 4 fluid oz. for ages 2 and older
* Water without added ingredients, e.g., flavors, sugars, sweeteners, and caffeine.

To avoid choking hazards we do not offer children under age 4: hot dogs, whole or cut: whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas; hard pretzels; raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

In the event that a child brings food that has spoiled we will call the family to bring lunch. We will discard any food that has reached its expiration date.

Children may not share lunches and snacks brought from home with other

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children and families may not bring in food to share with the class. This policy is in place to protect children with food allergies.

**\*MSYC is an Allergy Aware School. Do not send foods with nuts for meals or snacks**

**Clothing:**

3 seasonal changes of clothes, extra socks, indoor shoes (crocs are fine for indoor shoes). Every child needs seasonal outdoor wear; warm clothes for the cold weather including heavy coat, mittens, hat, boots, snowpants, etc., and rain suits with boots. It is not optional to stay indoors, parents will be contacted if clothing is needed.

**Supplies:**

Disposablediapers (we do not use cloth diapers) ,wipes, \*\*diaper cream, \*\*sunscreen, \*\*bugspray. Lunchbox, water bottle, ice packs, thermos, A reusable shopping bag is best to transport supplies to and from school.

\*\*These items will require Non-Prescription Medication Forms, please see last page for attachment.

**\*Please note: Children under 3 years old may not use or have access to teething necklaces, teething bracelets or other jewelry that could present a choking hazard.**

**Toilet Training:**

Learning to use the bathroom is a developmental milestone in children’s lives. We believe a strong partnership between home and school will lead to success. Many strategies that are employed at home can be translated at school, however some we cannot accommodate (toilet watches, using ipads or electronics or giving tokens/food as reward). It is imperative to schedule a meeting prior to embarking on this journey with your child’s teachers to discuss a plan that sets your child up for success at home and at school.

Children that enter our preschool program do not need to be fully potty trained (accident free and independent about using the bathroom). However if a child is not potty trained by their third birthday the teachers and the family will meet to discuss the plan for the potty training. Our goal is to be a supportive partner in this process. If a child is not fully potty trained by 3.6 months of age, we will ask that the child take a two-week leave to toilet train. There is no tuition adjustment.

**Preschool and Older (32 months and older)**

**Clothing:**

3 seasonal changes of clothes, extra socks, indoor shoes (crocs are fine for indoor shoes). Every child needs seasonal outdoor wear; warm clothes for the cold weather including heavy coats, mittens, hat, boots, snow pants, etc., and rain suits with boots. It is not optional to stay indoors, parents will be contacted if clothing is needed.

**Meals and Snacks:**

At MSYC, we encourage families to provide nutrient rich snacks and lunches. We encourage healthy choices from meal components of grains and breads, meat and meat alternatives and vegetables and fruits. Nutrient rich foods are low in fat, added sugars and sodium. Families provide food that is safe for children by clearly labeling food with the child’s name and storing foods at an appropriate temperature until eaten. Ice packs are required for perishable foods, and thermoses for warm foods.

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\*Families should pack children who are here five (5) hours or less, one (1) snack and a nutritious lunch. Any child enrolled over that amount should come prepared for two (2) snack sessions. At MSYC, we like children to have options and recommend families pack at least two choices for morning and afternoon snack when possible. Please provide all utensils necessary.

At snack and meal time our teachers sit and eat with the children, engaging them in conversation, modeling healthy food choices and encouraging age appropriate table manners.

It is recommended that beverages for children (ages 1 and older) consist of:

* Low-fat (1%) or fat-free unflavored milk for children ages 2 and older;
* 100% juice when it can be served in a cup (limit of ¼ cup or 2 fluid oz. per day for ages 12-23 months and ½ cup or 4 fluid oz. for ages 2 and older
* Water without added ingredients, e.g., flavors, sugars, sweeteners, and caffeine.

To avoid choking hazards we do not offer children under age 4: hot dogs, whole or cut: whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas; hard pretzels; raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

In the event that a child brings food that has spoiled we will call the family to bring lunch. We will discard any food that has reached its expiration date.

Children may not share lunches and snacks brought from home with other

children and families may not bring in food to share with the class. This policy is in place to protect children with food allergies.

**\*MSYC is an Allergy Aware School. Do not send foods with nuts for meals or snacks**

**Supplies:**

\*\*sunscreen, \*\*bugspray, water bottle, lunchbox, icepack, thermos if needed, weather appropriate outdoor gear. A reusable shopping bag is best to transport supplies to and from school.

\*\*These items will require Non-Prescription Medication Forms, please see last page for attachment.

**Rest:**

Children who attend the program for more than 5 hours daily will have a rest period each day. For Preschoolers, rest time begins around 1:15/1:30 pm and ends around 3pm, Pre-K children typically begin to rest a little later. The lights are turned off and soft music plays. MSYC uses nap rolls (bottom sheet, light blanket and small pillow all in one) for rest time which secure to the cots for children ages 1 and older. Parents purchase them from MSYC, cost is about $30. The sizes of the cots are specific.Using these nap rolls eliminates unnecessarily long amounts of set-up and breakdown of cots daily. The amount will be charged to your family account.

We understand that older children may not sleep. We teach older children that resting our bodies and our minds is important for staying healthy. We help guide children into a calming, restful state and keep rest periods to a developmentally appropriate time frame. Children who do not fall asleep after 45 minutes or so are given quiet activities on their cot. Children may bring a stuffed animal from home to cuddle.

**Toilet Training:**

Learning to use the bathroom is a developmental milestone in children’s lives. We believe a strong partnership between home and school will lead to success. Many strategies that are employed at home can be translated at school, however some we cannot accommodate (toilet watches, using ipads or

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electronics or giving tokens/food as reward). It is imperative to schedule a meeting prior to embarking on this journey with your child’s teachers to discuss a plan that sets your child up for success at home and at school.

Children that enter our preschool program do not need to be fully potty trained (accident free and independent about using the bathroom). Families will need to supply diapers and wipes if necessary. However if a child is not potty trained by their third birthday the teachers and the family will meet to discuss the plan for the potty training. Our goal is to be a supportive partner in this process. If a child is not fully potty trained by 3.6 months of age, we will ask that the child take a two-week leave to toilet train. There is no tuition adjustment.

**Environmental Health**

MSYC has been endorsed as an Eco-Healthy Child Care® program. Eco-Healthy Childcare® endorsement verifies MSYC’s commitment to providing a healthy, safe and green child care setting for the children and families they serve. MSYC complies with the following standards:

**Pesticides and Pest Prevention:**We use non-toxic techniques inside and outside the facility to prevent the control of pests. If a serious threat remains and pesticide

application is the only viable option, parents and staff are notified in advance and a licensed professional applies the least toxic, effective product.

**Air Quality:**We avoid conditions that lead to the excess moisture which contributes to the growth of mold and mildew.We do not allow vehicles to idle in our parking areas.We prohibit smoking and vaping anywhere on premise.

**Household Chemicals:** Our cleaning service uses fragrance-free, least toxic cleaning and sanitizing products. We use chlorine bleach only when and where it is recommended by state and local health.We do not use aerosol sprays of any kind. We use only no-VOV or low-VOC household paints.

**Lead:** Our building was built after 1978

We screen our toys for lead by searching [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

To reduce exposure to lead-contaminated dirt, we supply mats at each entrance and encourage wiping of shoes.

**Mercury:**We use digital thermometers and thermostats.We securely store all used batteries and fluorescent light bulbs.

**Furniture and Carpets:**Furniture is made of wood or low-VOC products with few items made of particleboard. Area rugs are vacuumed daily and professionally cleaned or replaced at least twice a year.

**Art Supplies:** We use only non-toxic art supplies.

**Plastics and Plastic Toys:**We avoid products made of PVC and use products labeled “PVC free” or “phthalate-free.”

We encourage families to choose baby bottles, sippy cups or drinking cups made with safer plastics such as polypropylene or polyethylene.

When using a microwave, we never heat food in plastic containers or plastic bags.

**Treated Playground Equipment:** We do not have playground equipment made of CCA treated wood

**Radon:** We have tested our facility for radon and the results are posted.

**Garbage Storage:** We teach children about composting in our garden.We always keep garbage covered to avoid attracting pests and to minimize odor. We recycle or reuse when possible.

**Education Awareness:** We create opportunities to educate families we serve on eco-healthy practices.

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**Health and Medical Policies**

**Sick Policy**

It is the goal of Madison School for Young Children to provide a safe and healthy environment for your child. We adhere to regular and proper hand washing procedures in

each classroom to prevent the spread of germs. When children are sick parents are expected to keep children out of school until they are well.

When is your child too sick to attend school? When they are displaying one of the following symptoms:

* Fever 100.4 or greater
* Diarrhea
* Vomiting
* Undiagnosed rash
* Red eyes with discharge
* Headache that will not respond to ibuprofen or acetaminophen
* Uncontrollable coughing that is disruptive to their ability to participate
* Any other symptoms that prevent the child from participating in the daily activities of the program at his or her normal level of activity

If your child develops any of these symptoms at school, you will be contacted and asked

to pick your child up immediately. If you cannot be reached within one hour, we will call one of your approved contacts. We will provide your child with a comfortable place to rest in the classroom with the primary teacher until an adult arrives to pick up. If your child is sent home for an illness at any time during the school day, he or she may not return to MSYC the following day. Following a day of rest and recovery, your child may return to school once he or she is symptom-free for at least 24 hours or has been treated for the appropriate time as determined by your child’s pediatrician. If your child has been seen by a doctor and is told he or she may return to school sooner than 24 hours, please provide a note from the doctor that clears the child to attend. MSYC reserves the right to revert back to their policy even in the event a doctor's note is provided on a case by case basis. In the event a doctor’s note is required for return to school, it should be on the healthcare provider’s letterhead with child’s name, date of illness and return, diagnosis and provider signature.

**COVID 19 Policy**

Covid-19 is spread through contact with an infected person’s respiratory droplets.

Common Covid-19 symptoms are: \*Fever greater than 100.4 fahrenheit, \*persistent cough, \*body and/or muscle aches, \*loss of taste and/or smell, \*muscle pain, \*fatigue, \*sore throat

MSYC will adhere to the following policy when a Covid-19 case is reported in the classroom:

* All families, regardless of their children’s age, will be notified of a Covid-19

positive case in the classroom. It will be the family’s choice to quarantine at home for 5 days.

Individuals who test positive for Covid 19 will adhere to the following policy; children that are not symptomatic may stay in school. If a child is symptomatic they may return when fever free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medicine and all other symptoms are improved as long as no fever has been present for 24 hours prior to return.

-All tuition and fees will be due in the event of illness or family decision to quarantine

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MSYC reserves the right to close a classroom for any illness to quarantine or under the guidance of local, state and school medical health consults.

**All infectious illnesses should be reported** to the Director so that an Infectious disease notification can be posted to alert other parents of any illnesses their child may have been exposed to. We do reserve the right to require a doctor’s note upon returning to the program.

**Absences**

Please email your child’s teacher and the office if your child is going to be out for any reason. If your child is out due to an illness that can be transmitted to others, please inform us so that we can be aware of what is going around the class and post illnesses that require notification.

**Medical Policies**

Upon enrollment, we require a current medical and immunization record for each child. (see attached) The records must be updated annually or as needed. The following link provides the schedule of recommended immunizations as identified by the American Academy of Pediatrics [www.aap.gov](http://www.aap.gov) .

We provide reminders when your child’s annual health update is due. If your child’s health form is overdue, you will be contacted by the school nurse or the director and you will need to provide an updated form in order for your child to remain enrolled. Except for medical reasons, children **are not exempt** from immunizations.

We will administer topical/oral medications (desitin, aquaphor, sunscreen, bugspray) upon request of the guardian. All medication requires a doctor’s order, even if it is an over the counter medication such as Tylenol. All Medication must be handed directly to a staff member that is certified to administer medication in order to ensure proper storage and for the staff member to review the doctor’s order. All medication must be in the original box. If it is a prescription, the prescription label must be on the box.

Inhalers and epi-pens kept at MSYC will be administered as prescribed by the doctor. You must provide the medication labeled in the **original containers accompanied by a doctor’s order and physician’s instructions in the form of a care plan.**

Before we will accept medication for on-going medical conditions such as asthma or serious allergies we require a face to face meeting between the parent and the Director or Assistant to the Director to review all of the doctor’s orders, care plan, and to discuss any modifications that may be needed to the child’s day or classroom. This may cause a delay in enrollment or disruption in attendance, please communicate all care and medication needs to the office/administration.

All children between the ages of 6 months- 59 months must receive an annual flu vaccine by December 31st . Children who do not receive the flu vaccine and who do not have a medical waiver may not attend the program from January 1st until the end of flu season or until proof of immunization or a waiver is on premise. Tuition will be charged to hold a spot for after flu season.

Children that are unable to be vaccinated for medical reasons may not attend MSYC if there is an active case of the flu in the program. They may return when the school nurse deems the active case is no longer

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infectious. We reserve the right to exclude unvaccinated children up to 21 days after each active case of the flu.

**Classroom Procedures**

**Teacher Qualifications**

At MSYC we strive to hire teachers with the experience and education to support their position as early childhood education professionals. We require our full time teachers to hold a minimum of an Associates or equivalent in Early Childhood Education, however a BA in early childhood education or related field is the norm and the current requirement for all new hires. The director holds a MS in Special Education and a degree in School Administration.

**Supervision**

We maintain a minimum staff to child ratio of 1:4 for infants and toddlers under 2, 1:5 for toddlers chronologically 2 and in OEC approved space, and 1:10 for children in preschool (ages 2.9 years and older). We generally have extra staff floating to add additional support and supervision. We do not combine these groups, however should the need arise, a ratio of 1:4 will be maintained. Our full-time teachers are certified in CPR and First Aid and at least one teacher with each group is certified to administer medication. There are always at least two staff members (18 years or older) in the building for opening, closing and for late pick up.

The teachers at MSYC are not permitted to babysit for families that have children enrolled at MSYC.

**Support Services**

Ann Beccia, the Family Support Specialist, is a Masters level special education professional and assists with programming and implementation of I.E.P’s for children with special needs. As a special education teacher and administrator, she has been trained in identifying appropriate developmental milestones and behavior and is available for consultation to parents who have concerns about the cognitive, language, or social emotional development of their child. When children attend outside programs for special ed services a transition plan will be made with the parents, MSYC and the public school. We limit transitions to one arrival and departure per day from MSYC in order to keep transitions at a minimum for the child. Monthly Zoom meetings will be held with MSYC and the family to discuss the transition and to make modifications to the transition plan if needed. These meetings are required to maintain enrollment status at MSYC.

MSYC has a school psychologist serving as our mental health consultant. Their role at MSYC is multi-faceted. They are available to all the teachers to touch base and discuss any issues that are arising with individual children or large groups. Topics may be as specific as to how to support a particular child who is exhibiting a concerning behavior to broader topics such as establishing a peaceful and respectful classroom environment.

**Guidance and Behavioral Issues**

At Madison School for Young Children we believe that all children **can** succeed in a developmentally appropriate, high quality early childhood education program. We believe that it is the job of the teaching professional to tailor all aspects of the program (cognitive, social/emotional, creative, and physical) in order to meet the needs of each individual child in order to support growth and to foster success.

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Young children are just learning to navigate their way in the social realm. They are trying to figure out how to manage peer and adult relationships. They are also learning how to express their emotions, ideas and desires in a way that gets their needs met. We expect that young children will make mistakes as they explore this new territory.

Teachers are very careful to organize classroom rules and routines to limit potential conflicts. When children do make mistakes and become involved in conflicts or behavioral issues it is the teachers’ role to guide them through it. The teacher will respond to the child using words the child can understand and that support the learning that needs to take place in that particular situation. Children who have language are encouraged to express their feelings, find resolution, and if needed make amends. The teacher stands by to support the children if they need help with any part of this process

At MSYC we always inform the family of any behaviors that we feel are becoming problematic and need to be addressed. We then meet to share information about what is being observed at school and at home. This sharing of information will be in the form of an incident form in order to track patterns and make swift, effective changes for success. As partners we make a plan to address the behavior at home and at school. The teachers and family may also consult with the Director and community support services as they try to evaluate behaviors and support the child.

**Curriculum**

**At MSYC The Child Is The Curriculum**

At MSYC, nurturing teachers will support your child’s with developmentally appropriate, playful experiences in an engaging learning environment. The focus of the learning experiences, we feel, must be squarely focused on the child and emerge from their interests.

We embrace the open-ended, process-oriented nature of curriculum. When children are actively engaged, we never know what they are going to do with the experiences at hand. We are there to support and facilitate the learning that the children have initiated.

Teachers use the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS), a NAEYC approved curriculum, as the backdrop for the learning. CT ELDS address the

following domains at the appropriate developmental levels:

* Social and Emotional Development
* Physical Development and Health
* Cognition
* Creative Arts
* Language and Literacy
* Mathematics
* Science
* Social Studies

Assessment tools aligned to the CT ELDS, the DOTS, are used to determine how children are progressing across these domains of development. Written assessments regarding a child’s development in the above areas are provided in the Winter and Spring.

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Across all ages and domains, early learning experience will support children to: be creative, be inquisitive, be flexible, be critical thinkers, be purposeful and reflective, and to be social learners.

More information about the CT ELDS and how it is used to create curriculum can be found at [www.ct.gov/oec/elds](http://www.ct.gov/oec/elds) .

**Upon enrollment each family should read the handbook. Please initial each page where indicated and sign below. Return the entire signed copy of the handbook and keep a copy for future reference. A copy will be e-mailed to you upon enrollment.**

**I have read the MSYC Family Handbook and agree to adhere to the policies outlined in this document.**

**I have been informed of the behavioral/discipline policy, the use of positive guidance, and classroom management techniques. These were explained to me by the director or the assistant to the director in person, and I have read them in this document.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Guardian’s Signature**