



Shark Room Orientation

Welcome!

The Sharks would like to extend a warm welcome to their new friends! We have a maximum of nineteen fun-loving and busy two to three and a half year-olds - with three primary staff. The room is arranged into different learning centres, which are changed according to the children's interests. Children have opportunities to participate in numerous activities including arts and crafts, indoor and outdoor games, gym time, circle time, music class, cooking activities, fit n' fun in the spring, field trips, as well as the celebration of various special occasions.

Program

At this age, the children are very curious and like to explore a lot. As such, we do a lot of sensory experiences and messy art activities. We encourage independence during these activities – so don't be surprised if your child comes home with a little glue in her hair, paint between his toes or goop on her shirt. While we provide paint and/or water shirts for the children to wear, getting messy is inevitable. We recommend sending your child in older clothing or providing older clothing for them to wear during such experiences. In addition, the children gain valuable life skills while participating in such activities – they work cooperatively with the other children, negotiate differences, solve problems, and develop new language skills, while having a great time and often creating a masterpiece in the meantime!

Educators ask that children come into the program before 9:00 in the morning. This allows for the children to benefit from our programming and get “settled in” before a lot of our outside and lunch transitions happen.

Children are observed while at play and their interests are recorded by the Educators. Activities and play centres, based on the children's observed interests, are set up and documented on a planning flow chart which is posted in the room. GCCS uses an online communication tool called HiMama to inform parents of the activities that children are offered each day. Activities are also documented and displayed throughout the classroom. Feel free to spend some time in the classroom to learn more about what your child does each day!

From September to the end of June the Sharks participate in a music program every Wednesday morning. At 9:00 am a music instructor comes in and shares her love of music by singing, playing the guitar and encouraging children to participate in a number of music activities. She introduces them to new instruments and a different variety of music.

The Sharks go outside twice a day unless it is -18 degrees Celsius or colder with the wind-chill (please see the Weather/Temperature Policy in the Health and Safety

Manual). Educators will make a judgement call on whether -18 is too cold depending on the ages of the children in the room at the time. Please see “what to bring” for winter gear. The Sharkies go to the gym when available on cold afternoons.

Self -help skills

Throughout the year, there is an emphasis placed on self-help skills, independence and learning different problem solving strategies. The children are encouraged to put on and take off their own outdoor clothing– including footwear (shoes with velcro rather than tie-up shoes are preferable ☺), put their toys away after they’re done playing with them, wash their faces and brush their teeth as well as scraping their plates and putting them on the tray to go back to the kitchen. Help is offered when the children are struggling. One of the Sharks goals is for the children to be serving themselves most of the time at snack and lunch by the end of June.

Leadership skills and independence are developed through such avenues as peer mentoring (the older children help the younger), being the ‘teacher’s helper’ (leaving the room to get or put away toys, going to the kitchen to get snacks, preparing art activities, etc.), providing open-ended art experiences, getting input from the children for planning purposes along with providing choices throughout the daily routine.

Child Guidance

When children encounter a problem, they are encouraged to deal with it in a number of ways. These may include using their words to talk about the problem and describing their feelings, experiencing natural consequences to their actions, and making different choices based on them, trial and error, or asking questions and thinking of solutions. We talk of feelings often and incorporate feelings into our programming.

Nap Time

We have a two hour nap time in the Shark room from 12:30 to 2:30pm every day. We provide cots for children, lower the lights, turn on relaxing music and rub children’s backs. It is our philosophy that children under three years old sleep when they need to sleep. We do not try to “force” them to sleep neither do we keep children awake when they want to sleep. Please see an Educator if you have any concerns about nap time.

We look forward to building and maintaining positive relations with all of the families we work with. Parents are welcome to come observe their child(ren) or actively participate in the program at any time during the day. Educators attempt to make themselves available at the beginning and end of days, however, the children always take priority. As such, if the staff are busy dealing with a child or another parent, feel free to set up an appointment – during which time, you have their undivided attention. It is our wish that each child has a positive experience in the Shark Room every day.

“Just Playing”

When I am building in the block area, please don't say I'm "just playing". For you see, I'm learning as I play, about balance and shapes. Who knows, I may be an architect someday.

When I'm getting all dressed up, setting the table, caring for the babies, don't get the idea I'm "just playing". For, you see, I'm learning as I play; I may be a mother or a father someday.

When you see me up to my elbows in paint or standing at an easel, or moulding and shaping clay, please don't let me hear you say, "He is just playing". For, you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm expressing myself and being creative. I may be an artist or an inventor someday.

When you see me sitting in a chair "reading" to an imaginary audience, please don't laugh and think I'm "just playing". For, you see, I'm learning as I play. I may be a teacher someday.

When you see me combing the bushes for bugs, or packing my pockets with choice things I find, don't pass it off as "just play". For you see, I'm learning as I play. I may be a scientist someday.

When you see me engrossed in a puzzle or some "plaything" at my school, please don't feel the time is wasted in "play". For, you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate. I may be in business someday.

When you see me cooking or tasting foods, please don't think that because I enjoy it, it is "just play". I'm learning to follow direction and see differences. I may be a cook some day.

When you see me learning to skip, hop, run and move my body, please don't say I'm "just playing". For, you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm learning how my body works. I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday.

When you ask me what I'm done at school today, and I say, "I just played", please don't misunderstand me. For you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work. I'm preparing for tomorrow. Today, I am a child and my work is play.

~Author Unknown

www.stepbystepcc.com

Things Needed

- ✓ Diapers and diaper cream(If not potty trained)
- ✓ Blanket and cuddly toy for naptime(many children enjoy having a pillow as well)
- ✓ Extra change of clothes or two (including socks and underwear)
- ✓ Inside and outside shoes/boots
- ✓ Bathing suit, towel and wide brimmed hat (for summer)
- ✓ Hat, winter jacket, snow pants, water proof boots and extra mittens (for winter)
- ✓ Rain jacket, splash pants, and rain boots (for spring and fall)

Toilet Training

Most children will go through the process of toilet training while in the Shark Room. The bathroom is equipped with two child-sized toilets and urinals. During toileting times, children are encouraged (but not **forced**) to sit and try to use the toilet (or urinal) – even

when still in diapers. This helps familiarize them with the process. Oftentimes, the children will follow the example of the children who are potty trained, and with a little positive reinforcement, will often take an interest in using the toilet, thus beginning the process themselves.

While staff encourage and support the children during potty training, it is important that there is consistency between daycare and home. Parents are encouraged to discuss their potty training plans – and/or concerns - with the staff, and work together to discover what works best for the child, setting them up for success. *Note: We are well aware that there will be accidents, and are understanding of that. Simply ensure that your child has several changes of clothes – until they get the hang of it.*

A Few Suggestions:

- Dress your child in clothing that is conducive to toilet training (onesies, overall and button-up pants are difficult to get off when a child ‘really needs to go’. It is best to dress them in clothing that they can pull down and up on their own).
- Pull-ups/training pants offer the children a sense of independence over diapers as they can pull them up and down on their own on an as-needed basis.
- Talk about the advantages of being toilet trained (feeling comfortable and dry, getting to do “big boy/girl” things, etc.)
- Discuss expectations with the child prior to beginning.
- Develop a reward system and offer lots of praise (i.e. stickers, tattoos, or a small toy offer lots of incentive)
- Try to devote 3 days in a row and give your child your complete concentration.
- When first starting out, have child sit on the toilet every 30-45 minutes. Using a timer can be helpful to both parent and child as a reminder. Allowing the child to push the button on the timer gives them a sense of independence and control over the situation.
- Keep the child company on the toilet; read books, sing songs, etc.
- When putting a child in underpants, it is important to be consistent with it – using a diaper for sleeping only... even when going out. Alternating between both causes confusion for the child and may delay progress or result in regression.

*****Please note, it is mandatory that your child be toilet trained by the time they enter the Sunshine room*****