

Tiny Tots and Kinder Ready

Parent Handbook 2019-2020



320 N. McDowell Blvd.

Petaluma, Ca 94954

Preschool's Direct Line: 707-778-4407

Main Office Line: 707-778-4380

Cityofpetaluma.net/parksnrec



Philosophy

Tiny Tots Preschool and KinderReady provides a safe and nurturing environment, which promotes the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and creative development of young children. We believe that a developmentally appropriate program should be provided for all children. A developmental program is one in which the curriculum is geared to the age appropriateness of children as well as individual maturational difference. Learning in young children is a result of interaction between the child's thoughts and experiences with his or her environment. Our programs aim is to provide for the whole child.

We believe that the role of our teachers is to facilitate the optimum social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of each child by being aware of the various stages of development and providing the appropriate learning experiences. At Tiny Tots Preschool and Kinder Ready, play is recognized as the natural vehicle by which a child learns. It is through play that the child exercises curiosity and imagination, learns to concentrate, tries new ideas and practices grown-up behavior. The value of play cannot be overstated. Children must also be allowed to move about in an environment which offers a variety of attractive, stimulating, and interesting activities. Giving ample opportunity to make choices, benefits children by enhancing self-esteem, encouraging independence, and developing a sense of responsibility for his or her own actions.

Creativity is seen as an attitude or way of thinking about one's environment, which comes easily to the young child. We believe that it is the nurturing adult's role to enhance and refine creativity within each child by showing respect for their ideas, encouraging self-initiated learning, respecting individual differences, providing a variety of media through which creativity can be expressed, modeling creative behavior, and reducing the pressure of evaluation and competition.

A child's experience at Tiny Tots Preschool and Kinder Ready is seen as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, the family. In order to provide for the optimal development, we are convinced that it is essential to work with parents to meet each child's needs. In order to strengthen the child's relationship within his or her family, we provide a warm and caring atmosphere, fostering a sense of security, self-confidence, and individual worth.

Staff

Tiny Tots Preschool employs a dedicated and well-educated staff with extensive early childhood experience. Our staff is committed to creating a safe, fun, and developmentally appropriate school experience. Every teacher is fingerprinted and receives a background check.

The Tiny Tots staff are CPR and first aid certified through the American Heart Association and/or the American Red Cross.

Staff meet regularly for planning sessions, and are encouraged to pursue ongoing Early Childhood Education workshops and conferences to remain informed of the current issues, trends and tools in Early Childhood Development.

The Director is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, as well as a member of Sonoma County Chapter. She is also involved in the Sonoma Cares Program, developed to assist Early Childhood Educators in taking classes and attending workshops on the

latest information and issues in early childhood.

Curriculum

Each day is spent encouraging our children to learn and have fun with friends their own age. The curriculum is based on selected themes and is implemented through various techniques, including art, music, stories, creative play, and cooking. Activities are geared with the developmental and skill levels of the children considered.

Periods of active play and quiet times are varied. Weather permitting, we provide daily outdoor curriculum and free play or in poor weather - indoor play in one of the rooms at the Community Center.

Our planned classroom layout helps the children to develop. Using the center approach, the children move around freely and learn by doing. As they change activities, they meet different groups of children. They learn to work and talk with others. They meet problems and solve them. They grow in confidence and self-respect.

Our curriculum is designed to accommodate maturational differences in children through the use of centers. Centers enable children to make choices and learn through active exploration of the materials available combined with interaction with their peers and adults. Centers provide experiences with such cognitive skills as differentiation, classification, separation and other basic thought processes. Experiences are of concepts, creativity and socio-dramatic play. We provide small and large group activities so that children learn to develop social skills such as waiting for one's turn, sharing, listening to others, and verbalizing their feelings and knowledge of the world around them. Time is also provided for large motor skills, group times, music, and stories.

Licensing

We are a license exempt preschool. This is granted to preschools that have open enrollment on a month to month basis and for half day programs where the children do not attend more than 12 hours a week per program. As a City-sponsored recreation program our goal is to meet or exceed the health and safety standards the State recommends. Any questions you may have concerning the quality of our program may be discussed with the Director. We value the trust you place in us when you enroll your child in our preschool programs.

First Day of Preschool

Welcome to Preschool! The first day of school is an exciting milestone in your child's life. Your child is embarking on a journey that will lead them on many roads of discovery and learning. As wonderful as this new experience may be, it can also be quite stressful for the young child. New situations and change can, at times, be unsettling for all of us. For many children this may be their first experience of separation from parents or care givers. It is common for even the most

outgoing child to be anxious the first day of school.

We have provided a few suggestions for assisting your child during this time. Remember the preschool staff will be available to provide support and assistance; making your child's first school days happy days.

- Prepare your child for the new school experience by explaining what to expect. Answer all your child's questions directly and honestly.
- Convey a positive attitude. Young children are aware of your feelings. Your enthusiasm will assure the child that school can be a fun and exciting place.
- Establish a routine involving both the night before a school day as well as morning preparation. Rituals and routines will add predictability and are comforting in unfamiliar situations.
- Bring something from home. This is acceptable and often reassuring in helping the child with the initial adjustment to school. The item may be a treasured blanket or even a photo from home.
- Clearly state to your child where you will be and when you will return. It may also be helpful to discuss what will happen when you are reunited.
- Maintain a clear good-bye routine. This may include warning the child you are leaving in 3 minutes, a kiss and hug, a wave from the door. Once you tell your child you are leaving it is important to follow through. Extending the good-bye with 'Ok, just one more kiss, and then I really have to go' tends to heighten anxiety rather than relieve it. Avoid sneaking out, as this seems to encourage children to become less trusting and making the second day of school even harder.

Again, please know we are here to help make the first day of school a happy transition and we look forward to an exciting and fun year!

Daily Schedule

- 8:30 Drop-Off
- 9:00 Morning Circle / Parents Leave
- 9:40 Indoor Activities (Tiny Tots)
KR Group Activities (KinderReady)
- 10:35 Clean Up
- 10:40 Story & Snack
- 11:10 Outdoor Activities
- 11:55 Return from Park
- 12:00 Pick Up



Teeny Tiny Tots

Teeny Tiny Tots is for children ages 16 months (who are stable walkers) - 36 months. This program gives your tot a chance to engage with other children in a safe, stimulating, and creative environment. Enjoy circle time, arts and crafts, singing, music, and games focused on enhancing motor development skills. A parent or adult must accompany the child (please no additional older or younger siblings.)

Tiny Tots

Ages 3-5 mixed age group: This program provides a safe, nurturing environment to grow and learn. Your child is offered the opportunity to learn social skills, gain self-confidence, form friendships, and gain the necessary skills to prepare them for Kindergarten. In an age appropriate environment, they will develop fine and gross motor skills and expressive language. Educational presentations and field trips are also provided. Children must be potty-trained.



KinderReady

Ages 3-5 mixed age group: This class is designed for children who will be entering Kindergarten in the Fall. These children will work in small pullout groups with the Get Set for School Program. These children will participate in skill building activities within the classroom. The younger children in this program will have integrated learning for their cognitive, physical, social and emotional development at an age appropriate level. The curriculum provides learning opportunities for language development, reasoning, science, math, fine and gross motor skills. Teachers will continue to develop the curriculum throughout the year to meet the needs of the children. Students work in whole-class and small groups with their teachers.

Lunch Bunch

This program is an opportunity for your child to share lunch with friends and teachers in the preschool classroom. The children bring a lunch and enjoy free play with their friends under their preschool teacher's supervision.

Please pack a lunch that includes easy, healthy food that your child will eat. Please do not send food that needs to be cooked or warmed up. Include a drink and utensils if needed.

Centers



Dramatic Play: The dramatic play center provides the necessary equipment for role playing. It helps stimulate the imagination and aids in the development of language skills. It also plays an important role in the development of empathy.

Art: The art center is a place where children can express themselves using a variety of media. The young child's main concern is the process of their art not the product. They are free to explore their creativity at their own level of learning.

Library: Children learn the value of reading through many happy experiences with books. They find that books give them pleasure and information. They begin to tell stories themselves – sometimes using the flannel board or puppets. They learn that pictures have meaning and that they are able to use pictures to help them tell a story. Through these activities the children's language grows, preparing them to read themselves.

Science: The more the young child knows and understands about this world, the more independent and confident they can become. The classroom plan encourages the child to ask questions, to look for answers, and to be aware of what is going on around them. The science table shows them that their interests are important to others. Experiments, pets, and growing plants give them new experiences to think about and new words to try out.

Sensory: Play experiences with sensory materials are important for the young child. A child needs to feel that they can control and manage their world. Pouring water and shaping sand help them to have this feeling. Using different mediums, the child can experiment without fear of making mistakes. Examples of sensory mediums are cornmeal, water, sand, playdough, etc.

Table Activities (Manipulatives): Table Activities and manipulatives allow a child to test themselves at problem solving. Matching games let them test their growing ability to see that certain things go together. Puzzles and pegboards give the child practice in coordinating their hand and eye movements. Number games help the child learn what numbers really stand for by giving them objects to count and handle.



Block Building: The block building center is a place where children learn scientific concepts firsthand. Generalizations about balance, gravity and space are understood long before their names enter the child's vocabulary. Even more importantly, block building furthers the growth of scientific thinking involving inquiry, invention, and discovery.

Pick Up and Drop Off

Separation Tears

- Saying good-bye can be difficult for children and parents. We make every attempt to help you with this transition.
- A teacher may distract your child by taking him/her out of the classroom briefly until they calm down and can return. Getting involved with a tabletop activity is a great way to help calm tears. Sometimes a classmate may be helpful and offer to be a special friend for the morning.
- Once you are back at home or at work, please feel free to call us anytime to check on your child's adjustment.
- If circumstances seem to be beyond our control, we may call you and ask that you return.

Arrival

- Circle is at 9am, we ask that you have arrived and your child is ready to participate by that time.
- All children must be signed in and out each day by a parent or legal guardian.
- We realize that there may be a large number of parents coming to sign their child in and out each day. We ask you to be patient and courteous at these times. We encourage friendly parent to parent socializing at this time. We ask that you move into the classroom properly so that strollers, etc., do not cause a bottleneck at the clip-board area.

Dismissal

- In the event that you are delayed in picking up your child, please call us to let us know that you are delayed so we can tell your child that you are on the way. If this policy is abused, a late charge payable to the teacher will be enforced. A charge of \$10.00 for every fifteen minutes after 12:00 pm will be assessed.
- For the children's safety, when picking up your child we ask that parents wait until their child is dismissed from closing group by the teacher.
- Children will only be released to those individuals who have been authorized, in writing, by the child's parent or legal guardian. Parents must indicate on the Emergency Form those individuals who are authorized to pick up children.
- For dismissal to someone not approved by you on the registration form, we ask that you provide a note, in writing, that your child may be released to someone else for the day.
- Engage your child in conversation about how the day went. Be sure to check his/her cubby for special treasures made during class time. Your child is proud of these and wants to share them.

Clothing

- Comfortable, washable play clothes and strong shoes (no sandals or flip-flops) suitable for outdoor playground use are encouraged.
- We realize that at times children like to wear dress up shoes or cowboy boots to school; however, many tears have resulted because of slippery soles on the sidewalk and playground equipment.
- Don't forget jackets or sweatshirts for the outdoors as we try to allow for outdoor play whenever weather permits.
- Please mark your child's name on all jackets, sweaters, and sweatshirts.

Discipline

We favor a positive approach to discipline which guides children's behavior in order to foster good human relationships. We find that behavior problems can be avoided by planning an environment that is stimulating for children and conducive to the development of positive self-image. At no time will threats, physical punishment or belittlement be used. We stress the importance of establishing positive relationships between teachers and children.

- If a child needs to be disciplined for a behavior that is inappropriate or has the potential for being self-destructive, our staff will provide a safe environment to help the child control his or her behavior. Notes will be sent home to keep you informed.
- If the time should come that we need to consult with parents, we will ask for a conference.
- We feel that in the best interest of the child, there should be consistency from school and home.
- We can arrange outside resources to help you with concerns you may have about your child's behavior.
- We have a responsibility to keep all children safe at Tiny Tots and children who cannot comply with appropriate behavior may be asked to find another program that can serve their needs more affectively. Every effort will be made to give your child a positive first learning experience.

Communication

- You may reach us by calling our classroom at 778-4407 or the front office at 778-4380.
- We do have voice mail and messages may be left for us. Non-priority phone calls will be returned after the children have left for the day, or the following day if you call after we have closed.
- E-mail: Roberta: rguerra@ci.petaluma.ca.us. Or Front Desk: parksnrec@ci.petaluma.ca.us
- We keep parents informed through file notes in your child's cubby, our Shutterfly website, and e-mails.
- Formal parent conferences are not held. However, our staff is available if you wish to discuss your child's progress or any other issues you may have. If a formal conference is desired, speak with your child's teacher and an appointment will be made.
- Most brief communications can be done at arrival or dismissal time, provided it does not interfere with the teacher's relationship with the other children in the class.

Toileting

- We are not licensed and our classroom is not set up to meet the sanitary code requirements of the Health Dept. regarding diapering; therefore our staff is unable to change disposable diapers or pull-ups. Please do not send your child to school wearing these. City Policy does not allow staff to accompany a child into the bathroom. Clothing that your child can easily manage by themselves is recommended. Elastic waist bands, no belts or snaps work best. Dress them for Success.
- We understand that 'potty related accidents' do happen and we are able to change your child if that should occur. You may keep a spare set in their cubby or we have clothing on hand. Please help your child in this area by dressing him/her in clothing that can be removed quickly when they hurry to the bathroom.

Cubbies

- Each cubby will be labeled with a child's name. Children may place their personal belongings in the cubby for the day.
- Check cubbies often for papers and information that need to go home.
- Your child also has a file folder for important papers; please check it daily.

Snacks

- Please provide your child with a simple, nutritious snack. (ie: granola bars, cheese & crackers, fruit, veggies)



- We obtain our information about a child's food allergies or restriction due to religious beliefs from the registration forms you completed at the time of enrollment. We are concerned about allergies that may cause serious illness from certain foods (e.g., dairy products, wheat, chocolate, juices, etc.)-- not food preferences.

Special Day Celebrations

- Celebrating your child's birthday with their classmates can be fun. The teachers will gladly work with you regarding our parents' part in this celebration.
- You may bring a favorite, simple and nutritious snack to share at mid-morning snack time with your child's classmates.
- We do not allow individual "goodie bags" being given to classmates.
- You will be notified of your child's "special day." These days are generally around his/her real birthday or if the birthday falls when school is not in session, it will be around the "half-birthday".
- We do have children who are allergic to certain foods so please check with your child's teachers for any restrictions.

Field Trips and Guest Speakers

- If we choose to go 'off campus,' the City bus will be our usual means of transportation for field trips. Parents may be asked to help us at these times.
- On occasion, we invite guests into the classroom to talk with children. Parents who would like to share their talents or vocation are always welcome. Let us know if you have something to share.
- It is important for your child to feel a part of the Tiny Tots Community. Events planned throughout the year may include: Back to School Night Potluck, Pumpkin Patch Picnic, Butter and Eggs Day Parade, Grandparents Day, Cookie Exchange with Santa, Spring Fling and End of Year Party.

Inclusion for All

- We welcome persons with disabilities to participate in any class or activity offered by the Petaluma Parks and Recreation Department. We will make reasonable effort to accommodate the participant's special needs so that they may enjoy the recreational opportunities offered by our department.
- The City of Petaluma prohibits discrimination in all its programs, facilities, activities, on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Health and Safety

Your Registration Form/Permission Slip lists pertinent health information that the staff needs. For that reason, we ask that you complete this form when you enroll and return it immediately.

Throughout the year, we ask that you keep us informed in writing of any matters that concern your child's health or safety, especially changes of telephone number and for your child's safety, names of other adults to whom you permit your child to be released. These changes will be made on the Registration Form/Permission Slip.

If your child needs to take medication during school hours please contact the teacher to give the school permission to administer medication. All medication must arrive at school in its original container, clearly marked with child's name, doctor's name, medication name, and dosage. Medications cannot stay in a child's lunchbox but must be stored in the school office away from children's reach.

***Staff reserves the right to cancel class at any time due to circumstances beyond our control ie: emergencies, flooding, severe illness, etc. Your child's safety is our number one concern.**

Fire and Earthquake Drills

Once a month we have a fire drill with the kids, we play a recording of the alarm sound so the children will know what it will sound like. We will announce to the children, "This is a Fire Drill." The children will gather along the fence on the patio and once all children are together we will walk to the picnic tables near the BBQ area. We take the 'Daily Sign-In Sheets' with us to do roll call.

In the event of a real emergency, we will go to this same area. We will alert you via phone call, text message or email. If the Community Center has been declared unsafe we will go to the Senior Center (11 Novak Drive). We will have our roster and emergency forms with us and will contact you.

During the school year, we will have the Firemen visit as part of Fire Safety Month and we will be talking about being prepared for an emergency. Your child's safety is our main concern. All our teachers are CPR certified and the monthly fire drills assure us that in the event of an emergency we will know what to do to keep your children safe.

Illness Policy

The Staff of Tiny Tots and KinderReady are concerned about the health and well-being of the children in our program. Each morning as the children arrive, a "well check" is conducted on each child. This check is usually visual and most parents are probably not aware that it is being done.

We will be paying close attention to children who come to school with the following symptoms: nagging loose coughs, all runny noses, all runny eyes, children who are unusually tired, children who are unusually irritable, and children who complain of headaches, stomach aches, and ear aches. We may ask you to keep your child home or we may send them home if they come to school with any of these symptoms or combinations of these symptoms. Children who are on antibiotics should stay home for one full day, two is preferable.

The state requires that children be kept home if they have vomited, have or had diarrhea, or run a fever of 100.4 degrees or more the previous night; children may return to school after being symptom free for 24 hours. If your child has colored (green or yellow) nasal discharge, or has an unexplained rash, we will consider them to be contagious. Your child may return when the discharge is clear or when your child has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

In order to ensure a healthy environment for all children and staff, this policy will be strongly enforced. If you have any doubt at all if your child should go to school or stay home, please keep them home. Sometimes an extra day or two of rest can be the key to the ridding of a nagging cough, runny nose or runny eye.

Our goal is to have a healthy year, not only for the children, but for the staff as well. Communication and partnership are keys in making sure everyone is happy and healthy all year. We greatly appreciate your effort in helping us provide a healthy environment for the children.

Illness Policy at a Glance

- Fever (100.4 and above): Sent home or stay home until fever free for 24 hours WITHOUT the

use of fever reducing agents, i.e. Tylenol. If child is sent home, the child cannot return the following day.

- Vomiting: Sent home or stay home until vomiting has stopped for at least 24 hours.
- Diarrhea (2 or more loose stools in a day): Sent home or stay home until diarrhea has ceased for at least 24, or has a doctor's note of clearance.
- Nasal Discharge (green or yellow): We will consider the child to be contagious, especially if symptoms accompany, i.e. tired, coughing, slight fever, etc. The child may return when the discharge is clear or after being on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Rash: Sent home or stay home with unexplained rash. Child may return to school when rash is gone or with a doctor's note of clearance.
- Lice: Sent home at any sign of nit or lice in hair. May return when they are nit free. Will be checked daily for at least 14 days.
- Pink Eye: Sent home at first sign of redness, puffiness or discharge. May return after being on medication for at least 24 hours.

School Rules

Please review the Classroom Rules with your child:

- Do Not Run in the hallways. Please stay with your parent as you walk to and from class.
- Do not bring toys to school. Sharing is set up throughout the year with specific themes.
- When you hear the bell, it is time to clean up, everyone helps.
- We treat our friends kindly. We do not push, yell, hit, bite or speak mean to our friends or teachers.
- If you have a problem at school – you are hurt, sick, wet your pants, or feel upset, please talk to your teacher. We are here to help.
- When we go to the park, you need to hold the rope until your teacher tells you to let go. We stay inside the circle, in the bark area.

- If your child is having trouble following a school rule, we will speak to you about the situation and/or send a note home. Your teachers are available to answer any questions or concerns. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to improve your child's preschool experience.

- In addition to the rules within the facility, we ask that you also review the following Parking Lot Rules:
 - No Parking in Red Fire Lanes, Handicap Zones, or on the sidewalks directly in front of the Community Center.
 - Please watch out for all children in the parking lot.
 - Drive Slowly.
 - No running in the parking lot.
 - Please do not allow your child to use the handicap door unless it is really needed. Misuse of the button will result in the doorbreaking.

Scholastic Book Order

Shop Online: [scholastic.com/readingclub](https://www.scholastic.com/readingclub)

One-Time Class Activation Code: GRCYL

Good News! Scholastic Reading Club selections are ready for you to explore with your child monthly. Children read more when they choose their own books, so we encourage you to look online. Place your order at [scholastic.com/readingclub](https://www.scholastic.com/readingclub). Ordering online is the easiest way to ensure we get your order on time, plus there are more books to choose from. Don't forget that for every book you buy from Scholastic Reading Club, our class earns FREE Books and supplies – and we have our eye on some new additions!

