

# LOS ALTOS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CHILDREN'S CENTER PRESCHOOL

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## PARENT'S HANDBOOK – 2020-21



# CHILDREN'S CENTER PRESCHOOL

*"A Loving Place to Play & Grow"*

The Children's Center is a play-based preschool where learning through play supports the whole child. Through experience and practice children will grow socially, emotionally, physically, and academically. We provide a safe place for children to become independent thinkers while developing positive self-concepts. We believe self-regulation and resilience are direct results of learning through play. By "doing" and "experiencing" children construct internal building blocks for both personal growth and life skills, with the greatest benefits coming from a child's body and mind working together. It is our commitment to provide a loving, respectful, and joyful place for all children to play, learn, and grow.

Our program provides both structured and unstructured time each day. We understand young children need many opportunities to choose activities from our carefully prepared environment. One of our key goals is to help each child learn to balance their roles as a contributing and cooperative member of a social group, and as an individual who needs to think, dream and contemplate.

Our developmentally appropriate program provides a safe, nurturing, Christian environment. Principles of love and respect guide our children as they learn and grow. We believe that all people are children of God, and that a diversity of races, cultures and perspectives are gifts which enrich us all.

The Children's Center Preschool offers a weekday program for children ages 2-5. Our regular preschool classes begin in September and run through early June. In addition, we offer a two-week Summer Camp in June/July for our currently enrolled students.

Thank you for considering the Children's Center for your child's preschool. For more information, please check out our website: [www.childrenscenterpreschool.org](http://www.childrenscenterpreschool.org). You may call the office if you have any questions at **(650) 941-5411** or e-mail [childrenscenter@laumc.org](mailto:childrenscenter@laumc.org).

Alternatively, follow us on Facebook LAUMC Children's Center Preschool and Instagram (@childrenscenterlosaltos).

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

Our programs focus on social development and learning through play. Each year's class builds a strong foundation on the previous year's program in curriculum experiences and activities offered. The classrooms are set up to invite exploration and foster a lifelong love of learning. Our staff is deeply committed to the young child and the importance of early childhood education. Each class has a maximum of ten children.

**TWO'S:** To register in our Two's program, we expect children to have turned 2 by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The focus of this class is on social development and learning through play. Separating from parents, learning to take direction, and being nurtured by people outside of immediate family are important parts of being two years old. The building of trust and growing peer awareness are enhanced by a safe environment that provides a foundation for learning.

T/TH	8:45 – 11:45 AM	\$4,385.00
MWF	8:45 – 11:45 AM	\$6,220.00

**THREE'S:** We recommend this class for children who turn 3 by the month of September. The emphasis in our Three's class is to encourage further socialization by reinforcing how a child's choices affect their relationships and environment. There are greater expectations for participation and age appropriate play practices. This class fosters independence, creativity, cognitive growth, and motor coordination. Children are introduced to phonemic awareness, patterning, number sequencing with value recognition and following both verbal and visual directions.

MWF	8:45 – 11:45 AM	\$6,260.00
M-F	8:45 – 11:45 AM	\$10,605.00

**PRE-KINDERGARTEN:** We recommend this class for children who turn 4 by the month of September. The intent of this class is to further support the development of social awareness, emotional intelligence, and Kindergarten readiness skills. Critical thinking, science, sequencing, sorting and classification, matching, number values, phonemic awareness, problem solving, storytelling and following multi-step directions are all incorporated in our curriculum. Children develop their gross and fine motor skills while working in large and small groups. Through play and collaborative group work, children come to appreciate the value of cooperation and contribution. The children are encouraged to take risks, helping them discover how the process of learning is often more valuable than the outcome. The mastering of appropriate academic and social skills are the cornerstones of this program.

MWF	8:45 – 11:45 AM	\$6,300.00
M-F	8:45 – 11:45 AM	\$10,645.00

**VIRTUAL LEARNING:** Each child will receive a weekly instructional kit, which will consist of an art and cognitive project for each day of instruction, which the children will complete with their teaching team via Zoom. During the Zoom sessions the children will also experience Zoo-phonics, music and movement, flannel boards, story books, science math/counting calendar, pre-reading skills and yoga which will be age appropriate and fun. The children will have the opportunity to virtually socialize and mix with other classmates. Each class has a maximum of ten children.

MWF	11:15 – 12:00 PM	Pre-K	\$1,170.00
MWF	1:15 – 2:00 PM	Pre-K	\$1,170.00
T/TH	1:15 – 2:00 PM	3's	\$810.00

### SUMMER PROGRAM

The Children’s Center offers a two week “Summer Fun Zone” in June/July. Students who have attended the Children’s Center during the current school year are eligible for enrollment. You may enroll your child in one, or both weeks of the Summer Fun Zone program.

### EXTENDED CARE OPPORTUNITIES

- ❖ **EARLY CARE:** Children enrolled in the three-year-old and Pre-K programs are welcome to start the day earlier than their class begins. Early Care is available from 8:00 AM. The cost is \$10.00 in their stable group.
- ❖ **LUNCH:** Children enrolled in the three-year-old and Pre-K programs have the option to stay for lunch. This is an opportunity for children to share mealtime with their friends under the kind guidance and support of teachers. The lunch period is 11:45 AM – 12:45 PM, and includes outdoor play, eating with their stable group and often a story time to round out the “lunch experience”. Lunch costs \$16.00. Children bring their own **PEANUT FREE** lunches.
- ❖ Extended care fees for Early Care and Lunch are added to your account and invoiced monthly.
- ❖ Two year olds are welcome to experience Early Care and Lunch starting in January.

## THE PRESCHOOLER'S DAY

- **ART EXPLORATION:** Art experiences that are child-driven and open-ended are an important part of developing self-expression. A wide variety of art media and tools encourages children to recreate their own reality, using representational art forms that demonstrate how children see their physical and social worlds. It can be both fun and inspiring to paint with things like Matchbox cars and golf balls, or to create recycled-materials collages. The process is more important than the product!
- **BIKES & OUTDOOR PLAY:** The outdoor areas provide a natural contrast to the classroom with fresh opportunities for social interaction, physical and imaginative play, collaboration and problem solving. We offer two outside yards featuring play structures, sand, grass areas, and toys. A bike path with many different bikes choices, help children at all stages to further develop gross-motor skills. From two-year-olds not quite ready to pedal yet, to five-year-olds riding around on balance bikes.
- **GYMNASTICS:** Kim Kludt, of Start Fitness, leads your child's class in gymnastics each week. The class focuses on gross motor skills, core strengthening, balancing, and age-appropriate tumbling. Parachute play and movement to music, are fun elements to this program. This program is designed for three year old and Pre-K aged children.
- **CALENDAR TIME:** Teachers gather the older students each day on the carpet area to welcome and celebrate the day. This valuable time is used to help establish and reinforce routines and social concepts, such as, greeting each other, exploring the days of the week, weather, seasons, patterns and basic counting. Depending on the class, students often take turns standing up next to the teacher to help guide the class through these discussions, offering low-pressure and fun opportunities to be comfortable with public speaking.
- **CIRCLE TIME:** A teacher-led time that differs in length and scope depending on the age of the class. Music, movement, flannel stories, books, games, puppets are all a part of the circle "magic". Learning how to participate in the circle group is a skill that prepares children for other large group activities. Many social, emotional, and academic skills are built upon and practiced at Circle Time.
- **COGNITIVE:** These activities are specifically chosen for the children by their teachers to introduce or enhance skills in the classroom. A variety of engaging activities are modeled and selected to support: attentiveness, memory, thinking, following directions, fine motor development, recognition and value of numbers, visual discrimination and classification, recognition of upper-and-lower case letters, phonemic awareness, patterning, sequencing and task reasoning to finding solutions. Children actively participate in self-directed projects with concrete materials, fostering initiation, independence, follow-through, and completion.

- **SMALL GROUP:** The class is divided into smaller groups to encourage learning in a structure different from the whole-class environment. The groups might work on a special project, go for a nature walk, listen to a story, or share in fun, informal conversations. Participation in smaller interactive groups fosters reciprocal discussions, listening skills, cooperation, and compromise. This very important part of the day supports deeper relationships between children and strengthens the bonds between teacher and student. Children also have the chance to share their feelings and ideas with the group, to gain confidence in expressing themselves and expressing their individuality.
- **SNACK:** The children are provided a peanut-free snack each day. Snacks typically include fresh fruit, various crackers and water. It is not only a chance to socialize in a small group setting, but an opportunity for the children to practice manners and routines they can use at home, on play dates, or when they are out with family and friends. Please refer to our “Protocols & Procedures for reopening September 2020” for snack time COVID-19 protocols.

## POLICIES

**ATTENDANCE / ILLNESS POLICY:** Regular attendance and prompt arrival helps children feel more comfortable and secure attending preschool. If a child seems unwell, has excessive nasal congestion, discharge or an elevated temperature, they should not be in school. Please report any communicable disease, or COVID-19 transmission or other COVID-19 related symptoms to the office immediately. If a child becomes ill at school, we will care for the child as needed while we call the parents or emergency contacts to take the child home. Please refer to our “Protocols & Procedures for reopening September 2020” for health screening protocols.

**BIRTHDAYS:** At the Children’s Center we know how important your child’s birthday is. A special “peanut free” snack will be provided by the Children’s Center in celebration of your child’s birthday. For summer birthdays, there will be one classroom celebration at the end of the year and the school will provide a special treat. We do not celebrate summer birthdays in the two’s program.

**CALENDAR:** The school year usually begins shortly before Labor Day and ends in early June. We typically follow the Los Altos School District calendar for most holidays and vacations. A Children’s Center calendar with the exact days and events is included in the start of the new school year information packet. On occasion, we are closed for LAUMC campus-wide events, which are also on the calendar.

**CONFERENCES:** Parent-teacher conferences are held once a year for three-year-old and Pre-K children. These informal Zoom meetings are for the purpose of sharing observations and discussing the developmental progress of each child based on observations and individual assessments.

**DISASTER INFORMATION:** Should a disaster or major emergency occur during school hours; an evacuation may be necessary. Having an accurate completed “Identification & Emergency Information LIC 700 form and a “Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment LIC 627B” form is *critical*, as this will be the information available to us during an emergency. Please choose your emergency contacts carefully. These contacts should be people familiar to your preschooler within a 10-minute drive of the preschool and who could come to pick up your child in a disaster. Please consider choosing people who are in two different areas; in emergencies like an earthquake or fire, phones may be inactive, and roads may be closed.

**DISCIPLINE / GUIDANCE:** We practice loving, positive discipline. We guide our children to learn through their own experiences, and to develop the skills needed to control impulsive behavior and delay gratification. We are dedicated to the premise that one does not need to feel worse in order to behave better. Behavior improves as discouragement lessens. A child’s dignity is always respected. We do not use discipline that shames or belittles. If a child displays any severe behavior issues or patterns, teachers will discuss this immediately with parents. Most behavior and discipline concerns are common and ordinary and are handled between the teacher and child. We do consider biting a serious behavioral, health, and safety concern, requiring immediate action. If a child bites another student or a teacher, we will contact parents to take the child home for the remainder of the day.

**DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:** State law requires that all children be signed-in prior to entering their classrooms. Anyone may bring a child to school; however, only parents or authorized persons may sign a child out at dismissal time. We will only release a child to someone who has been authorized by a parent. We will check and match ID’s of any person authorized to pick up a child that is unknown to us. Please notify the office if an unauthorized person is picking up your child. We will not release a child to anyone who is not authorized by the parents. Please refer to our “Protocols & Procedures for Reopening September 2020” for COVID-19 arrival and departure procedures.

**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (EOP):** The care and safety of your child in all situations is of utmost importance at the Children’s Center. We are very proud to have a comprehensive and detailed Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), created and updated through years of experience. We have worked with the Red Cross, the local police department, and researched preparedness best practices to keep current on evacuation procedures. We hold fire drills, practice lockdowns, and multiple earthquake drills throughout the year.

**HOLIDAY OBSERVANCES:**

The Children’s Center celebrates holidays throughout the year. These celebrations are designed for the preschool child and are age appropriate.

**MEDICATION:** Please refer to the **INCIDENTAL MEDICAL SERVICES – PLAN OF OPERATION** section in this handbook.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Each classroom teaching team offers a set weekly timeslot for Zoom office hours. This time is available for parents to meet and discuss their child’s progress and share information. If you are unable to meet teachers during these specified office hours, you may arrange an alternative time with the teachers.

### **PROPER CLOTHING:**

It is our goal for all children attending the Children's Center to safely and fully explore their environment. Please dress your children for play. Sturdy, closed-toe rubber soled shoes and socks are a must. No *crocs, sandals, or boots*, please! We know this can be a challenge, but it helps ensure your child can fully and safely enjoy their day. Everything that comes to school should be labeled with your child's first and last name as well as classroom number. If your child is missing an item, please telephone the office as we maintain a lost and found area.

### **REFUND POLICY:**

**Registration** payments are refundable and transferable and are applied to 4/19/2021 – 6/08/2021 of the 2020-21 school year.

**Tuition** for children withdrawing from the Children's Center after the school year has started, tuition for both in-person and Zoom/Take Home Packet programs are nonrefundable and nontransferable. In the case of a school wide shut down, due to property damage, a public health emergency, or a natural disaster, tuition is nonrefundable and nontransferable.

**REGISTRATION PROCEDURES:** Please always call for updated information or check our website.

- Currently enrolled families have first **priority** and may reserve a space for the next school year on a first come served basis.
- LAUMC members, alumni & wait list priority families have **second** priority.
- All remaining spaces are open to the general public for registration.
- Classes are contingent on enough enrollment and staffing.

To enroll: -

- please submit a completed application.
- If space is available you will be required to enroll in Smart Tuition, our financial platform used for emailing and invoicing families. A \$50.00 annual administrative fee will be applied to your account by the financial institution.
- The Children's Center will charge your account a Registration fee, which is 20% of the annual tuition, please see payment schedule.
- The Children's Center will also charge your account \$100.00 nonrefundable, nontransferable application fee.

If your child is unable to enroll due to lack of space, he/she will be placed on the Wait List. Applicants that are not offered enrollment will have Wait List priority for next year's admission. This priority is voided if a space becomes available, is offered, and declined.



**SECURITY:** There are many gated entrances on our campus. We check them continuously and ask that you close all gates as you pass through. One of the first things we tell the children is: “Only teachers and parents open doors and gates”. We have excellent teacher/child ratios and the children are always supervised. The front double doors to the Children’s Center remain locked while school is in session. Entrances and exit areas of the school are under surveillance by LAUMC’s security cameras, which are monitored in the office.

**SEPARATION ANXIETY:** Some children experience separation anxiety at the beginning of the year. This is not unusual. Encouraging your preschooler and sharing your confidence in them will work wonders in building their self-esteem and coping skills. If you give them a quick and confident hug and tell them you will see them when school is over, they are less likely to be concerned. When children discover they *can* go to school on their own, they are on their way to building a strong sense of self.

**SMART TUITION:** This program is used for both invoicing and a payment service. We also email parents using this platform. Please include a primary and secondary email address if both parents prefer receiving notifications from the Children’s Center. Once enrolled, you will be able to pay by check, credit card, or by debiting your checking or savings account. Smart Tuition’s service number is 1-888-868-8828.

**SNACKS:** We provide a **PEANUT FREE** snack. We do not serve snacks containing peanut products. If your child suffers from food allergies, we ask that you provide his/her own peanut free snack food. There is a snack menu posted outside each classroom, and ingredient listings are posted in the kitchen.

**TOURS:** Due to the Santa Clara Public Health Authorities mandate, the Children’s Center is not allowing visitors on campus during the COVID-19 restrictions.

**TRANSPORTATION:** LAUMC does not provide transportation. We ask that the white curb areas be used only if you have a sleeping baby or a sibling that is ill. Our office staff is happy to assist at drop-off or pick-up; please do not leave a young child unattended in your car. **HANDICAP SPACES ARE TO BE USED ONLY BY THE DISABLED WITH PROPER PLACARDS**

**TUITION ASSISTANCE:** As part of the ministry of the Los Altos United Methodist Church, the Children’s Center offers financial assistance to families in need. The “Tuition Assistance Request” forms are available in the office and are due with your application for enrollment. Award letters will be mailed in early June. These awards are applied toward the tuition payments and not the registration deposit. Tuition Assistance is not available for the two-year-old program.

**TUITION PAYMENTS:** The annual tuition is divided into three payments. Registration is 20% of the annual cost. The remaining two tuition payments, each 40%, are due at the time of the 1st semester and second semester. These two tuition payments are nonrefundable and nontransferable. For children who enroll at the Children’s Center *after* the school year has started, tuition is calculated and charged on a pro-rated basis. Current tuition rates are located on our website.

## INCIDENTAL MEDICAL SERVICES – PLAN OF OPERATIONS

**EMERGENCY TREATMENT:** You have given permission by completing LIC 627B “Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment” and LIC 700 “Identification & Emergency Information”. This will be implemented only in extreme situations. We will make every effort to reach parents and/or emergency contacts should such a situation arise. *Please keep us updated if phone numbers or emergency contacts change.*

**HEALTH & SAFETY:** A child’s health and well-being is our most important responsibility. Our priority is to keep children safe. Parents must keep children home and notify the school if their child has been infected with a contagious disease, rash, an elevated temperature, cough or other COVID-19 symptoms. It is essential in these cases for the school to know what the child’s symptoms are, so please call the office as soon as possible (650-941-5411).

**IMMUNIZATIONS:** We require our students to be immunized in accordance with the current laws of the State of California.

**MINOR INJURIES AND ILLNESS:** If a child has been slightly injured at school with a non-emergency incident (scrape, bruise, bump) an “incident report” will be completed and given to the parents with a copy placed on file at the Children’s Center. We will wash the area with water, issue a Band-Aid, and apply an ice pack, if necessary. In the event of a more serious injury, every effort is made to contact a parent, or the emergency contacts on file. If necessary, 911 will be called.

**MEDICATIONS:** Please dispense medications prior to arriving or after leaving school, and request prescriptions with 12-hour dosages from your physician or health care provider.

If prescription medications, nonprescription medications and topical nonprescription medications need to be dispensed at school, parents must complete LIC 9221 Form, “Parent Consent for Administration of Medications”, indicating the beginning and ending date the child is to receive the medication. In addition, parents are required to: -

- Provide information on possible side effects of the medication.
- Bring medication in its original container in a clear bag.
- Ensure that prescription medication includes a prescription label with specific dispensing instructions and a current date.
- Do not store medications in lunch bags, backpacks, or any other personal belongings.
- Provide a physician’s written instructions any time the manufacturer’s instructions require physician dosage to differ from the age and weight information on the label.

A log will be kept at the Children’s Center indicating who administered the medication, and the date and time given.

**EPI PEN:** If the child has a medically prescribed EpiPen, the Children’s Center staff will:

- 1) Use it in accordance with the directions, and as prescribed by a physician, and in emergencies only. The EpiPen will only be used in the event of an allergic emergency as prescribed by a physician and will be administered in accordance with the emergency medical treatment plan as supplied by the parents for the child. The use of this device is for emergency supportive therapy only and is not a replacement or substitute for immediate medical or hospital care.
- 2) The Children's Center will always keep the EpiPen ready for use and it will be stored in the Emergency backpack.
- 3) The EpiPen will be protected from exposure to light and extreme heat.
- 4) We will note the expiration date on the unit and request a replacement from the parents prior to that date.
- 5) The Co-Directors will call 911 and the parents, or authorized representative immediately after administering an EpiPen.
- 6) If 911 is called, we will notify Community Care Licensing Division Regional Office within 24 hours. Written notification (LIC 624) "Unusual Incident Report" will be sent to CCLD Regional Office within 7 days. Copies are also given to the parents, placed in the child's file, and kept in the Director's office.

**FIRST AID SUPPLIES:** Supplies will be stored out of the reach of children.

**MEDICAL TRAINING OF STAFF:** All teachers have an up-to-date pediatric CPR and First Aid training certification. Training is provided by CPRRescue, 2021 Carousel Drive, Hollister, CA 95023, telephone 1-888-313-2444. [www.cprescue.com](http://www.cprescue.com) .

**RECORD OF FOOD ALLERGY & ANAPHYLAXIS CARE PLAN:** Parents are asked to communicate fully with the teachers and administration about their child's allergies. If the child requires medication during preschool hours, a completed "Food Allergy Action Plan" must be on file in the office before commencement of the school year. The child's doctor's name, phone number and specific written instructions are required. The child's medication will be kept in a Ziploc bag and must be clearly marked with the child's name and room number. The Ziploc bag will be stored in the classroom backpack.

A master "Allergy List" is posted in the school's kitchen which itemizes the child's name, classroom, allergy, medication and/or EpiPen.

**SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS:** As a general policy our staff does not administer injections. The only exception is the EpiPen in the case of extreme allergic reactions.

**STORAGE OF MEDICATIONS AND EPI PEN:** All medications will be kept in a Ziploc bag in the child's classroom emergency backpack. The backpack goes with the teacher during every transition in the school day and will be taken with the class in the event of an evacuation

**UNUSUAL INCIDENTS:** Should a child be involved in an unusual incident, parents will receive a written "Unusual Incident Report". This report will describe the nature of the situation and how the staff responded to it. A call will also be placed to the Duty Officer at CCLD (408-324-2148) within 24 hours to report the unusual incident. The "Unusual Incident Report" will be sent to CCLD

Regional Office within 7 days. Copies are also given to the parents, placed in the child's file, and kept in the Director's office.

### CHILDREN'S CENTER STAFF

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DOH</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
Maureen Adams	2019	Assistant
Joanie Ballog	1998	Teacher
Heidi Bliss	1998	Co-Director
Alli Capek	2018	Teacher
Merry Cohn	2000	Teacher
Alyssa Delagnes	2016	Teacher
Mary Desai	2007	Zoom Assistant
Ellen Douglas	2003	Classroom Assistant
Mike Gardiner	2006	Bike Assistant
Rosalind Garrow	2001	Teacher
Denize Gray	2002	Co-Director
Judy Inamori	2003	Classroom Assistant
Susan Kempe	1998	Teacher
Catherine Kibeti	2019	Teacher & Bike Assistant
Kim Kludt	1998	Gymnastics Teacher
Cathy Koehler	2009	Teacher
Danielle Lanthier	2006	Teacher
Kat Mandell	2012	Classroom Assistant
Chris Margaretich	2001	Teacher
Dana Mendes	1998	Zoom Assistant
Sydney Nordmann	2020	Bike Assistant
Dana O'Day	2017	Teacher
Nina Patel	2018	Teacher
Kerrie Ramans	2015	Teacher
Karen Rooney	2005	Zoom Teacher
Lorelei Russell	2003	Teacher
Lea Schlemmer	2003	Zoom Teacher
Laury Shattock	2005	Teacher
Mitch Smith	2015	Classroom & Bike Assistant
Bryn Stuebner	2012	Family Resource Director
Tracy Warren	2006	Classroom Assistant
Kate Webb	2009	Teacher
Jessica White	2015	Teacher

**All staff members have cleared Criminal Record and Child Abuse Index background checks. Teachers and administrators are certified in Pediatric CPR and Pediatric First Aid and Mandated Reporter Training.**