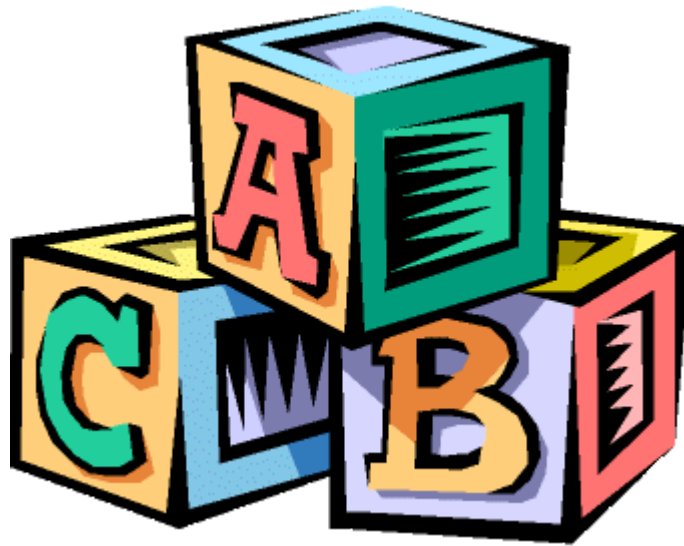


***NOVI SCHOOL DISTRICT  
COMMUNITY EDUCATION***

***Cat's Den***

24062 Taft Rd.  
Novi, MI 48375

***Toddler Parent Handbook  
2023 – 2024***



## **WELCOME**

Novi Community Cat's Den Toddler program provides a safe, warm and nurturing environment. Children are encouraged to express themselves, and to connect with their teachers and other peers. We value the uniqueness of each child. We look forward to working with you to provide a secure foundation for your child to ensure successful growth and learning.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Novi Community School District's Toddler program is to promote the physical, social-emotional and cognitive development of each child.

We believe:

- We believe that the positive experiences of infants, toddlers and young children are critical to healthy development
- We believe our Program will establish a foundation from which children can reach their full potential
- We believe our Program will provide a safe, nurturing, stimulating environment that accommodates and embraces individuality and cultural differences.
- We believe that children benefit from practices that are well-grounded in research and based upon developmentally appropriate practice.
- We believe that parents are their child's first teachers and as a professional staff, we will work together in a partnership to promote the physical, emotional and cognitive development of each child.

We hope that your family will have a wonderful experience with the Novi Community Schools Infant & Toddler program.

Sincerely,

Novi Community School Cat's Den Staff

## **Developmental Screening and Gold Assessment**

We are providing you the link to a great developmental screening tool on the Toddler website. Ages and Stages Developmental Screening Questionnaire is available for all children through age 5. This researched tool gives parents information about where their child is regarding many areas of development. After you answer some questions about your child, you will receive feedback with some ideas to implement to keep your child moving forward. If there are any areas of concern, you will also receive suggestions of things to do or where to go to seek additional help. Join parents nationwide who want to know how to best support their child as they grow! We will also be using the Gold Assessment throughout the year that your child is with us. This developmental assessment will give us valuable information that will help guide for instruction and experiences for our young learners.

## **Educational Programs**

### **Toddler**

Class Size: 12; 1 Caregiver to 4 Toddlers Ratio

The toddler program serves children from 12 months to 36 months. The toddler classroom is designed to provide stimulating experiences that are driven through their own inquisitiveness. Our Program utilizes the **Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos**. This curriculum focuses on daily experiences, offering guidance on engaging children in playing with toys, imitating and pretending, enjoying books and stories, creating with art, and much more. It helps teachers and caregivers be intentional about the daily experiences they provide, while giving them the flexibility to respond to the changing interests, abilities, and needs of the children in their care.

### ***General Toddler Schedule***

- Arrival, sharing, circle time
- Small group activities and art projects (ie; painting, cutting, puzzles, learning centers)
- Snack time
- Outside Play
- Lunch
- Rest Time
- Large group activities (ie: free play, story, music, creative movement)
- Small group activities
- Snack
- Cleanup time
- Parent Pick up

## What your child will need on their first day at Cat's Den

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Diaper ointment along with a completed non-prescription med form
- Blanket
- Comfort device (Pacifier, teddy, etc.)
- Change of clothes
- Snacks (2) and Lunch (additionally, breakfast is an option if dropped off before 7:30)
- Beverages supplied by parents must be labeled with the child's first, last name and date.

Everything brought into Cat's Den MUST be labeled with the child's first and last name and date

All food that is meant to be left in the room for the week, must be brought in an unopened original container.

We look forward to seeing you on your first day at Cat's Den!



## **Entering the building**

All families will enter the building through door 40. Toddler parents will tap the window of the toddler room for entry into the building. It is extremely important that you do not allow anyone else to enter the building as you come and go. Please be sure the door closes tightly behind you as well.

## **Sign in sheets**

Each classroom has a sign in/out sheet. Parents/guardians must sign their child in/out daily. If someone other than the parent is picking up, this person needs to be listed on your emergency card and be prepared to show a photo ID.

## **Parent Participation**

Parent involvement is welcomed and encouraged. To establish and maintain a strong school-home connection, which benefits children, we offer the following ways for families to be involved:

- **Volunteering in the Classroom**: Talk with your child's teacher about how you can be involved as a volunteer. We would love to learn about our diverse families through a special story or project!
- **Parent Orientation**: Takes place at the start of the school year to support relationships and welcome families to our program.

## **Meals and Snacks**

Parents are to provide lunch, snacks, and beverages/formula for their child. All food and drink containers must be labeled with the child's full name. We do have a refrigerator and cupboards to store food as needed. All food that will be stored in the room for the week must arrive unopened and in its original container. Here are some resources on nutrition and healthy choices. Parents are welcome to breastfeed their child at our site and will be provided a private comfortable space.

Nutrition	My Plate (USDA)	<a href="http://www.choosemyplate.gov">www.choosemyplate.gov</a>
	American Dietetic Association	<a href="http://www.kidseatright.org">www.kidseatright.org</a>

## **Discipline Policy**

Children who are having difficulty for any reason will be redirected to another activity with teacher assistance. In the event that a child's behavior is likely to result in harm to the child, others or property, or seriously disrupts group interaction, the child may be separated briefly from the group. Interaction between the child and staff member will take place immediately following the separation to guide the child.

## **Biting Procedures**

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary behavior that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children at the center is our primary concern. The center's biting protocol addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our center:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite people!"
- Children will be encouraged to use their words.
- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation. The biter will be given something to do that is satisfying. (Frozen teethers, frozen wet cloths, etc.)
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water. If it is determined that there was a blood exposure further steps need to be taken under [Procedure for Incidents involving Blood Exposure](#). The child that bit may be sent home for the rest of the day when skin is broken. The child may return the following day.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident. Appropriate forms will be filled out (Incident Report).
- **Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.**
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.

## **Health Information**

### ***Accident and Safety Procedures***

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and parent or emergency contact person will be called if a child needs emergency treatment. Emergency phone numbers and evacuation procedures are posted in each classroom.

### **Health and Communicable Diseases**

Children enrolled must have received all age appropriate immunizations or a valid waiver from the health department **prior to the start of school**. An **updated** immunization record must be turned in every time an immunization is given.

The green Health Appraisal form must be completed and signed by a physician after June 1st. The Health Appraisal Form needs to be turned into the Preschool office no later than 30 days after start date.

**Please do not send an ill child to school or if he/she does not feel well enough to participate in all activities.**

If a child becomes ill, has an incident, accident, or injury while in class, the parent will be notified by phone to pick up the child if needed. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be called to pick up the child.

If a child will not be attending class due to illness or other reason, please leave a message for the teacher.

The teacher and/or Child Care Services department must be notified if a child has a contagious disease such as chicken pox, measles, pink eye, head lice, etc. Please keep your child at home for at least 24 hours after fever breaks or upon taking medication for contagious illnesses.

Parents will be notified, by the teacher, if students have been exposed to a contagious disease such as chicken pox, measles, pink eye, head lice, etc.

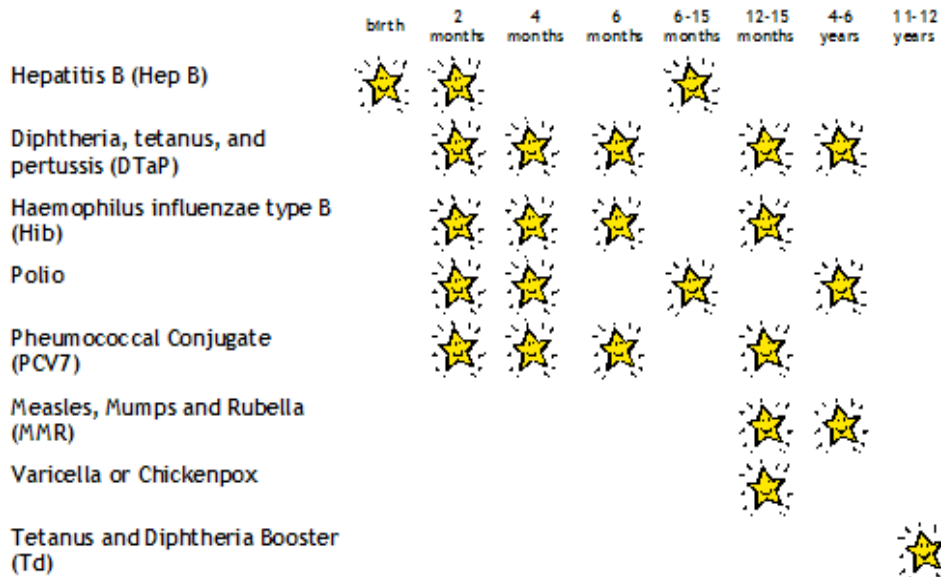
**Children are not permitted to have any medication, prescription or nonprescription, in their possession during school hours.**

The following is a list of specific communicable diseases or illness symptoms that exclude a child, staff and volunteers from attending school:

Disease/illness symptoms	When child may return
Fever 100 degrees or above	Fever free for 24 hours without a fever reducing medication
Vomiting	24 hours symptom free
Diarrhea	When stools are formed and symptom free for 24 hours
Nasal Discharge (yellow or green mucus)	Discharge is not thick yellow green and/or if the child has been on antibiotic for 24 hours
Chicken Pox	After all skin lesions have dried
Strep Throat	After 24 hours of antibiotic treatment
Pink Eye or Conjunctivitis	When eyes are mucus free or on medication for 24 hours
Ringworm or Pinworms	After 24 hours of physician prescribed treatment and kept covered
Lice	When infestation and nit free as a result of treatment with a medicated shampoo
Unidentified rash	With physician's clearance
Influenza	With physician's clearance or fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours
Roseola	After rash clears
Croup	After free of viral infection and child is not long having difficulty breathing



## **Immunization Schedule**



**Parents** will be notified via telephone when the school observes changes in the child's health, child experiences accidents, injuries or incidents, or when the child is too ill to remain in the group.

**Staff and Volunteers** will be excluded from our program if they have symptoms of illness (see chart above) or have a communicable disease. Parents will be notified that a child, staff, and/or volunteer have contracted a communicable disease and the symptoms of that disease.

### **Medication**

If it is necessary for your child to take medication while attending our programs the following applies:

- We will not give the first dose of any medication
- We do not give over the counter medicine without a doctor's note
- All medication must be in the original pharmaceutical container with the Doctor's name and child's name and prescribed dosage.

Please do not give your child any medicine (this includes aspirin, Tylenol, throat lozenges etc.) to take on his/her own.

### **Communications from Teachers**

Parents should call the classroom phone number or email the teacher (see the classroom directory) with concerns, absences, etc. Parent suggestions and feedback are encouraged. Staff will also share information on our website and our closed FaceBook group.

Parents of both infants and toddlers will receive a daily sheet that will give an overview of their day, food intake, diaper changes, etc.

### **Divorced/Separated/Guardians**

According to the Michigan Department of Child Day Care Licensing: “Until custody has been established by a court action, one parent may not limit the other from picking the child up from your (preschool program) care. It is not within your (preschool program) legal right to withhold a child from a parent; unless there has been court action which limits one parent’s right to the child.” Novi Preschool will request a copy of the Judge’s order establishing custody be on file in order to prevent a non-custodial parent access to their child.

If you request notes and information sent to both parents, please let the parent and office know so we can mail out newsletters and school information.

### **Mandatory Reporting**

Novi Community Schools is mandated by Michigan law, Act No. 238, governing all schools and child care programs to report any suspected abuse or neglect of children in their care.

### **Photography**

Photos may be taken at school and during events. They may not be sold or copied for distribution. Signed permission forms will be given. Photos may be displayed in hallways, classrooms and the classroom website link.

### **Parking-Drop off and Pick up**

Everyone is expected to drive slowly in the school area.

In order to provide a better traffic flow during drop-off and pick-up times, **no parking is allowed in front of the Building.**

**Please Park in the designated parking spots for 15 minute drop off.** Please note that our program closes promptly at 6:00 PM. A late fee of \$20 will be charged if the child is picked up after 6:00 PM. An additional \$20 will be charged every 15 minute increments until the child is picked up. If this becomes an ongoing problem it can result in dismissal from our program.

#### **PLEASE NOTE: School Cancellation**



In case of inclement weather and school is canceled, all Community Education toddler classes will also be canceled. Announcements of school closings will be made by 6:00 a.m. on WJR-760 AM and WWJ-950 AM. You will also receive notification of school news through our School Messenger.

#### **Questions/Concerns**

Any questions, requests or concerns a parent/guardian may have, should first be addressed with your child's CARE Leader. Any issues that cannot be resolved by the teacher may then be addressed to the Early Childhood Director, Ann Hansen.

#### **Cultural Competence and Disability Plan**

Our Cultural Competence plan includes the following:

- Recognizing that parents are their child's first teachers and caregivers
- Partner with families to provide a culturally rich learning experience for ALL children
- Respecting the home cultures of all families
- Incorporating aspects of children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the program's curriculum

This will be reflected in our program in the following ways:

- Books, educational materials, lesson plans and decorations that reflect multi-generations, ethnicities, and cultures
- Parent involvement opportunities to share cultural background

**Disability Plan** includes the following:

Novi Community Education Early Childhood Program strives to provide appropriate developmental learning opportunities for all children in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality. Encompassed within the program are developmental assessments through Ages and Stages Questionnaire, which is completed in partnership with parents to ensure all children are achieving appropriate developmental milestones. However, if the child presents with a development delay, the staff will contact the local education agency (i.e. local school district) to initiate protocol for suspecting a developmental delay. All efforts will be made to continue the student in the least restrictive environment.

### **Background Screening**

All staff members have had a criminal record check through the Michigan State Police, a comprehensive background check required by licensing and an abuse and neglect check through the Michigan Department of Human Services. All staff and volunteers have sex offender registry clearance before having contact with a child. Any individual who is registered on the public sex offender registry is prohibited from having any contact with any child in care. In addition, all staff participate in blood-borne pathogen training and receive 16 clock hours of continuous education training annually. Volunteers will not be unsupervised with children that are not their own. Volunteer clearance forms can be found at:  
<http://www.novi.k12.mi.us/district/hr/hrforms/volunteers/>.

### **Discrimination Policy, Religion and School**

It is the policy of the Novi Community School District that no person shall, on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status or any other status covered by federal, state, or local law be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination during any program, activity, service, or in employment. Every effort will be made to have parents provide information regarding the celebration, traditions, and history of a variety of religious beliefs to present to children so that many nationalities are represented.

## *Directory*

### **Preschool & Child Care Services**

**Ann Hansen, Director** (248) 675-3430

E-mail: [ann.hansen@novik12.org](mailto:ann.hansen@novik12.org)

**Stacey Job, Coordinator**

E-mail: [stacey.job@novik12.org](mailto:stacey.job@novik12.org) (248) 675-3425

**Katy Shpakoff, Toddler CARE Leader** (248) 449-1712

E-mail: [kathleen.shpakoff@novik12.org](mailto:kathleen.shpakoff@novik12.org)

**Monica Simrak, Toddler CARE Leader** (248) 449-1712

E-mail: [monica.simrak@novik12.org](mailto:monica.simrak@novik12.org)

### **Website**

[www.novi.k12.mi.us](http://www.novi.k12.mi.us)