



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

LEARN, GROW AND THRIVE

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM
AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW



THE LEARNING CIRCLE YMCA
A branch of the Summit Area YMCA

When you entrust your child to the Y, we strive to fulfill our promise to make each day an opportunity for your child to **learn, grow and thrive**. We aim to make our facility a home-away-from-home, where your child feels confident and secure to learn new things and discover his/her potential.

The Learning Circle YMCA is the area's premier childcare provider serving over **250** children in our all-day programs.

Our **mission** is to develop and nurture the potential of every child, to provide opportunities that promote healthy living, and to encourage social responsibility through inventive programs.

The YMCA is the **largest non-profit provider of child care** in the country. We are attuned to the budgets and busy schedules of single parent and dual-career families. A variety of program options are offered so you may work secure in knowing that your child is being cared for and educated in a safe, constructive and stimulating environment.

Positive role models are critical to a child's development. That's why our full-time child care and school age child care programs are staffed with **experienced teachers** all of whom are required to complete 10 hours of **ongoing annual training** and are **certified in CPR and First Aid**. Our staff understands the cognitive, physical and social development of children to help them feel safe, supported and connected so they can thrive.

We weave our core values of **caring, honesty, respect and responsibility** into all that we do, because we believe that foundational values and skills learned early in life form the building blocks that lead to a happy, healthy and centered person.

Our child care programs are licensed by the State of New Jersey.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK ARE:

- THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
- WHAT CHILDREN LEARN
- CARING AND TEACHING
- PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES
- HOW CHILDREN DEVELOP AND LEARN

OUR CURRICULUM FOCUSES ON THESE ESSENTIAL LEARNING AREAS:

- APPROACHES TO LEARNING
- ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
- MATHEMATICS
- SCIENCE
- SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- VISUAL/PERFORMING ARTS
- SOCIAL STUDIES/FAMILY AND LIFE SKILLS
- HEALTH/SAFETY/PHYSICAL EDUCATION
- TECHNOLOGY
- WORLD LANGUAGE

Our Creative Curriculum has been developed in accordance with the New Jersey Department of Education's "Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards of Quality". The Creative Curriculum tool is based on the child development theories of **Piaget, Erickson, Maslow, Gardner, Smilansky and Vygotsky**. It is also based on **Brain Research** and **Resiliency Research**. The curriculum gives teachers a framework for ensuring that the academic and emotional needs of all children are met.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR CHILDREN AGES 3–5 YEARS:

STANDARD 1

STANDARD 2

STANDARD 3

STANDARD 4

STANDARD 5

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

- | | |
|----|--|
| S1 | Children listen and respond to environmental sounds, directions and conversations. |
| S2 | Children converse effectively with different audiences in their home language, English, or sign language for a variety of purposes related to their experiences. |
| S3 | Children demonstrate emergent reading skills (e.g., print awareness, knowledge and enjoyment of books, phonological awareness) |
| S4 | Children demonstrate emergent writing skills. |

MATHEMATICS:

- | | |
|----|---|
| S1 | Children demonstrate an understanding of number and counting. |
| S2 | Children demonstrate an initial understanding of numerical operations. |
| S3 | Children begin to conceptualize measurable attributes of objects and how to measure them. |
| S4 | Children develop spatial and geometric sense. |

SCIENCE:

- | | |
|----|---|
| S1 | Children develop inquiry skills. |
| S2 | Children observe and investigate matter and energy. |
| S3 | Children observe and investigate living things. |
| S4 | Children observe and investigate the Earth. |
| S4 | Children gain experience in using technology. |

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- | | |
|----|--|
| S1 | Children demonstrate self-confidence. |
| S2 | Children demonstrate self-direction. |
| S3 | Children identify and express feelings. |
| S4 | Children exhibit positive interactions with other children and adults. |
| S5 | Children exhibit pro-social behaviors. |

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS:

- | | |
|----|--|
| S1 | Children express themselves and develop an appreciation of creative movement and dance. |
| S2 | Children express themselves and develop an appreciation of music. |
| S3 | Children express themselves and develop an appreciation of dramatic play and storytelling. |
| S4 | Children express themselves and develop an appreciation of visual arts (e.g. painting, sculpting, and drawing) |



CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR CHILDREN AGES 3–5 YEARS:

STANDARD 1

STANDARD 2

STANDARD 3

STANDARD 4

STANDARD 5

HEALTH, SAFETY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

- S1 Children develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.
- S2 Children begin to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices.
- S3 Children begin to develop an awareness of potential hazards in their environment.
- S4 Children develop competence and confidence in activities that require gross and fine motor skills.

SOCIAL STUDIES, FAMILY AND LIFE SKILLS:

- S1 Children identify unique characteristics of themselves, their families and others.
- S2 Children become contributing members of classroom community.
- S3 Children demonstrate knowledge of neighborhood and community.
- S4 Children develop an awareness of cultures within their classroom and their community.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- S1 Children demonstrate initiative, engagement, and persistence.
- S2 Children show creativity and imagination.
- S3 Children identify and solve problems.
- S4 Children apply what they have learned to new situations.

WORLD LANGUAGES:

- S1 Children know that others may use different languages (including sign) to communicate and will express simple greetings, words and phrases in a language other than their own.
- S2 Children will participate in cultural activities and celebrations to develop an awareness of diverse cultures.

TECHNOLOGY:

- S1 Navigate simple on screen menus.
- S2 Use electronic devices independently.
- S3 Begin to use electronic devices to communicate.
- S4 Use common technology vocabulary.
- S5 Begin to use electronic devices to gain information.



CURRICULUM THEMES

SEPTEMBER ALL ABOUT ME

I am Special
My Senses
My Family
Making Friends



OCTOBER COMMUNITY HELPERS

My Community
Fire Safety
Apples
Pumpkins



NOVEMBER FALL INTO FALL

Colors of Fall
Leaves
Giving Thanks
Excellent Evergreens



DECEMBER ON THE GO

Cars
Trains
Planes
Boats



JANUARY WINTER WONDERLAND

New Year
Winter Clothes
Snow and Ice
Winter Animals



FEBRUARY HEALTHY ME

My Body
My Feelings
My Teeth
Nutrition



MARCH MANY CULTURES

Alike and Different
Many Families
International Week
Books From Around the World



APRIL SENSATIONAL SPRING

Lifecycle of a Butterfly
New Life-Chicks
Caring for the Earth
Gardening



MAY ANIMAL KINGDOM

Farm Animals
Mothers and Babies
Pet Parade
Zoo Clues



JUNE JUST ADD WATER

Pond Life
A Fish Tale
Father Knows Best
Splash Into Summer



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT PRESCHOOL

RATIO:

The ratio in Preschool classrooms is ten children to one teacher.

ENRICHMENT:

The children go to the Summit YMCA branch for swim class. Schedules are determined by the Summit YMCA Aquatic Director and subject to change.

The children go to the Summit YMCA branch for gym class. Schedules are determined by the Summit YMCA Branch Program Director and subject to change.

Preschool enrichment and special programs are scheduled throughout the year. Programs include, but not limited to: gardening, community helpers/professionals, music/theater enrichment, special guest readers, etc.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES:

Parents are invited to participate in parent/teacher conferences during their child's time in Preschool. At conferences parents have the opportunity to track their child's development and view their child's developmental portfolio. Parents may contact their child's teacher at any time throughout the year to discuss their child or to arrange an additional conference. We may request an additional conference with a parent also. We encourage parents to attend these scheduled conferences.

NAP/REST:

The children continue to nap/rest in Preschool. The state requires that all children under five years of age be given the opportunity to nap/rest. If a child does not nap after being on their mat for 30 minutes, they are given quiet activities to do. Teachers are not allowed to withhold naps/rest at a parent's request for any reason.

"The Preschool program is creatively structured to make learning look like play. Our son, Aiden, proudly shares his art projects and songs he learns. He doesn't realize the books, drawings, music enrichment, and other activities support the themes taught each week, such as transportation or weather. The bus trips to the YMCA, playtime outdoors, and swim classes are among his favorite activities. Our son has become more independent from his experiences in the preschool program and its wonderful teachers."

-Jill H., TLC Preschool Parent

DEVELOPMENTAL PORTFOLIOS:

A developmental portfolio is kept to record the child's development in different areas of learning.

USES OF THE PORTFOLIO:

- Show a child's growth over time.
- Help plan instructions that will address the needs of the child.
- Identify areas of learning that may require additional support.
- Share with parents at conferences.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:

Birthday celebrations are very important to the children and to us. In an effort to keep all our children safe, food will no longer be the focus of our birthday celebrations. We will continue to celebrate each child's birthday in a way that is special to him/her and safe for everyone. There are children in our classrooms with very severe allergies. The parents of these children know how important it is to control the foods they are served or exposed to. To make the day special for the children we will make crowns, cards, and birthday books. The teachers will ensure that every child enjoys their special day. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT PRESCHOOL



CATCH

(Coordinated Approach to Child's Health)

In Preschool the children participate in the CATCH program. The CATCH Program is a physical activity and nutrition education program. It was designed to keep children active by engaging them in specific structured activities and to teach them about good nutrition. The children are introduced to tasty and healthful foods that they help to prepare.

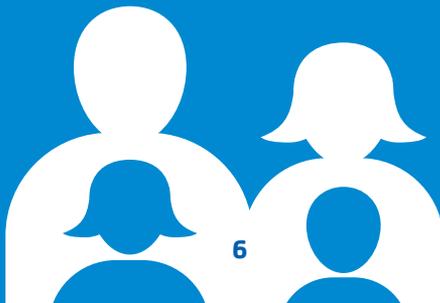


PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

As parents, you are your child's first teachers. We hope to build a partnership of mutual respect and trust as we work together to care and educate your child.

WAYS PARENTS CAN BE INVOLVED:

- Attend Parent information nights and conferences.
- Volunteer at the Center.
- Share your ideas, interests and talents with us in the classroom or at special events and special programs.
- Teach us about your culture.
- Join the Parent Teacher Organization as a parent representative for your child's class.
- Support the Y's Annual Campaign to raise funds for financial assistance for families in need.
- Give us constructive feedback about how we can improve our center programs and offerings.



THE LEARNING CIRCLE YMCA YOUNG EXPLORERS SUMMER PROGRAM JULY AND AUGUST



DISCOVER THE WORLD!
AGES 3 AND 4 (7:00AM – 6:00PM)

The Young Explorers is a first summer experience for preschool children. Each week the explorers will investigate a new theme in a fun, exciting way that combines activities and special events. The children will swim at the Summit YMCA Branch and enjoy daily water-play. All meals are included in program fees. We provide breakfast, lunch and a snack. Extended care is available to 7:00pm for an additional fee.

PAST SPECIAL EVENTS INCLUDED:

Turtle Back Zoo Visit
Teddy Bear Tea Party
Hawaiian Hulaaloo
TLC Summer Camp Art Show
Mad Science Show
Soccer Clinic
Summer Olympics
Young Explorers Treasure Hunt
End of Summer Ice Cream Party/Slide Show

WEEKLY THEMES INCLUDE:

Red, White, & Blue
All Ball Week
Ooey Gooey Science
Under The Sea
Fitness Week
Animal World
Red, Yellow, Blue & Glue
Kitchen Kreations
So Long, Summer



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Individuals and families may apply for financial assistance for membership or programs such as childcare and day camp. We make Financial Assistance available to those in need, and it is based on a number of factors including total household income and number of dependents in a household.

The process is confidential and application forms are available at each of our three branches or online at www.theSAY.org.

Applicants must live or work within the Summit Area YMCA service area: Springfield, Millburn, Short Hills, Summit, New Providence, Berkeley Heights, Gillette and Stirling.

THE LEARNING CIRCLE YMCA

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The Summit Area YMCA is one of the area's leading charitable 501(c)3 organizations. Our programs and services are open to all through our financial assistance programs made possible through the generosity of our members, donors and partners. To help us help others, make your tax-deductible donation today at www.theSAY.org