

Welcome to the Toddler Program at Bright Horizons at Charlestown Navy Yard!

We are so glad to have you here with us!

Our center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Teachers' hours vary by day and week. The children gather together in the morning and afternoon, so you may drop-off or pick-up your child with a teacher from another classroom. Within our community of caring our teachers are some of the best and make every stride to know all of the children.

Our goals are:

- ▶ To meet your child's individual needs throughout the day.
- ▶ To do our best to keep a consistent routine between home and childcare.
- ▶ To respect all parenting philosophies provided that they fit within the boundaries of our policies and procedures.
- ▶ To do our best to make sure your child is cared for, kept safe, and has a positive environment in which to learn and grow.

In the first few weeks, you may notice:

- ▶ Your child's sleeping patterns may be altered as children adjust to new sounds and stimuli in the classroom.
- ▶ Your child's eating habits might vary, as children can equate feeding times with trust and trust is established as child/teacher bonds develop.
- ▶ Toddlers may experience separation anxiety when parents leave for work. This is a great time for teachers to bond with children by comforting them.

We promise to do our best to make the transition of leaving your toddler and going off to work as smooth as possible. Please don't hesitate to call or stop by any time to check on your child. Once again, welcome! We can't wait to get to know you and your family!

Warmly,

Laurie, Courtney, Alice
and the entire Bright Horizons at Charlestown Navy Yard Team

Important Information

What You Need to Bring:

Please label all of your child's belongings with his/her full name, including clothes, cups, food storage containers, and lunchboxes. Try to check your child's supplies weekly. We will let you know when supplies are running low.

- ☐ At least two complete changes of clothes, including socks and an extra pair of shoes if possible
- ☐ A sweater/sweatshirt as the indoor and outdoor temperature may be different
- ☐ Appropriate outdoor apparel such as a hat and closed-toe shoes with backs for summer and boots, snow pants, mittens, hat for winter
- ☐ A pacifier (if desired) and soft toy (if desired) for nap.
- ☐ Breakfast and afternoon snack with milk and/or water are provided but please feel free to provide extra snacks if you would like
- ☐ Children will begin to use small, plastic cups to drinks throughout the day. These will be provided here.
- ☐ Diapers/pull-ups & wipes; we recommend providing several week's supply. Feel free to order them online and have them shipped directly to us. Our mailing address is Bright Horizons at Charlestown, 55 Constitution Road, Charlestown, MA 02129.
- ☐ Diaper cream, if needed (you will need to complete Ointment Authorization form to accompany)
- ☐ Sunscreen (you will need to complete the Sunscreen Authorization form to accompany this)

Things to Note:

- ▶ Our center is a Nut Safe center. Please be advised that this means that families, teachers and staff must refrain from bringing any products that contain nuts into the center. This includes all foods, lotions and ointments including almond products like milk and butter. We ask that families and staff check to screen-out products that contain nuts or are prepared in a factory where nuts are present.
- ▶ We do ask that you do not bring in toys from home. These tend to cause tears when lost, broken or when other friends want to borrow. However, if your child needs a comfort item, please bring only a stuffed animal for naptime, which is to remain in their cubby or nap bag. Books for circle and/or rest time are always welcome.

Toddler Curriculum

The first few years of a child's life are crucial to the development of personality and intellect. This is a period during which learning takes place at an accelerated speed. At Bright Horizons, we provide the sense of security and loving care that toddlers need to thrive during this stage of intense development.

Since toddlers are focused on achieving independence, the teachers provide responsive, individual attention as each child deals with positive experiences as well as frustration. Our curriculum takes advantage of the rapid growth of gross and fine motor skills. The Toddler Program focuses on five key developmental areas:

- ▶ Sensory and perceptual development
- ▶ Self-help skills
- ▶ Language skills
- ▶ Physical and Motor skills
- ▶ Social and Emotional Growth

Current research confirms the importance of learning in the first three years of life. How and what children learn affects them throughout their lifetime. In the Toddler Program, our goal is for them to learn, among many other things:

- ▶ That they are loved, respected and safe
- ▶ That everyone has needs, wants and feelings
- ▶ That they can communicate their needs and wants and trust that they will receive positive responses
- ▶ That they are competent learners
- ▶ That they respect one another
- ▶ To concentrate and focus on their exploration, activities, and interests
- ▶ To care for their own physical needs (i.e., undressing, dressing, toileting, washing their hands, wiping their nose, eating skills)
- ▶ To develop verbal language (sign language too!)
- ▶ That everything has a name (and sign)
- ▶ To develop physical coordination
- ▶ To learn how things work
- ▶ To behave in culturally appropriate ways
- ▶ To identify the special kind of person they are becoming

Meals

Independence, self-help skills, and language are encouraged throughout your child's toddler experience. Your child will be encouraged to help set the table for mealtime, gather placemats, plates, silverware, etc. – as well as begin serving his/her own food; all with as much as he/she can with minimal assistance. Children are encouraged to “use their words” when they need assistance. Teachers work very hard to provide the best environment for each individual child. Please let us know if there are any special concerns your family has regarding mealtime.

At snack and lunchtime children are encouraged to ask for or locate any utensils he/she may need- we have baskets of utensils available at each table. We provide both a morning and afternoon snack with milk or water to drink. Snack is a choice both in the morning and in the afternoon.

Bright Horizons at Charlestown Navy Yard is a **Nut Safe Zone**. We ask that families do everything possible to ensure that any food sent in (including lunches and special snacks) does not contain nuts, or traces of nuts of any kind.

All meals should be brought in a lunch box labeled with your child's name. Use an ice pack to keep items cold and use a thermos to keep items warm. We do not have enough refrigerator space to put lunch boxes in the refrigerator. We are also unable to heat any items.

Toilet Training

All of our toddler classrooms have a diaper changing table as well access to a bathroom with small toilets. Children that are interested in using the toilet will be encouraged to explore the bathroom area under the supervision of a teacher. They may wish to sit on the toilet and attempt use or simply have their diaper changed while standing up in the bathroom. There is no set age that children begin to toilet train. Each child will have their own experience that is as unique as they are. Through ongoing communication teachers and families will decide together when it may be a good time to begin the toilet training process.

Rest Time

All toddler children are given the opportunity to rest in the afternoon, between approximately 1:00 and 3:00 PM. A crib sheet and blanket are required for those children staying through rest time. State regulations require that bedding be laundered once a week. Your child's teacher will help to remind you to bring your child's bedding home at the end of your weekly schedule. Each child is assigned a mat at school that will be sanitized at least once a week. A favorite doll, stuffed animal, or “blankie,” is also welcomed at rest time. Children who choose not to sleep during this rest time are provided with “quiet” activities such as puzzles and books to keep them engaged while other children rest.

Separation Anxiety

Children sometimes experience anxiety when they are separated from their parents for the first time or are in a new setting. Some children enter happily and adjust quickly. Some children will have difficulty the first few days. Some children experience separation anxiety as a delayed reaction a few days or weeks after entering the toddler program.

If your child should experience signs of separation anxiety, the toddler team is ready to provide you and your child with needed support and assistance. They may suggest some of the following ideas:

- ▶ Spend a brief time together in the classroom before you leave for work
- ▶ Bring photographs of your family for your child to have in the classroom
- ▶ Have a special place to say good-bye
- ▶ Say good-bye and let your child know when you will be back (after lunch, nap.)
- ▶ Talk with your child's teacher about what things your child enjoys and how your child is comforted
- ▶ Talk to your child's teacher about a code that you develop with him/her to know when you need her to step in and comfort your child.

Biting in the Classroom

Why do children bite? In even the best childcare programs, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infants and toddlers, and sometimes even among preschoolers. This can be scary, frustrating, and stressful for children, parents, and teachers when it happens. But, however unfortunate, this is a natural phenomenon (not something to blame on children, parents, or teachers), and there are no quick and easy solutions to the problem.

If a child is not around other children very much, he or she probably would not bite—because neither the causes nor the opportunities would be present. A bite is powerful, quick, and effective, usually inspiring immediate and dramatic reactions. Some of the likely causes of biting suggest ways of handling the biting:

- **Teething**—When teeth are coming through, applying pressure to the gums is comforting, and babies will use anything available to bite. Providing a teething ring or acceptable objects to bit will lessen an infant's need to bite other people
- **Impulsiveness and Lack of Self-Control**—Babies sometimes bite because there is always something there to bite. This biting is not intentional in any way; it is just a way to explore the world.
- **Making an Impact**—Young children like to make things happen, and the reactions that occur when they bite someone are usually pretty dramatic.
- **Excitement and Overstimulation**—If some young children become very excited, even happily so, they may behave in an out-of-control fashion.
- **Frustration**—Too many challenges, too many demands, too many wants, too little space, and too many obstacles may lead a child to bite, especially before he or she has the capability to express frustration through using language.

When biting happens, Bright Horizons' response will be to:

- Care for and help the child who was bitten
- Help the child who bit to learn other behaviors
- Work with the child who bit and their family to be consistent in our responses to biting
- Examine our program so the biting will decrease and eventually stop
- Provide articles of information to all families regarding biting

Maintaining Confidentiality: The name of the child who bit as well as the name of the child who was bitten are kept confidential. We do not want a child to be labeled on the basis of one behavior. Oftentimes, a child will report who bit him or her. While parents/guardians may learn the name of the child, they will not learn it from us. Bright Horizons has a policy of confidentiality, and it is a cornerstone of professionalism in the early childhood field. We cannot practice select confidentiality and ultimately expect to build trusting relationships with parents.