

VASHON MAURY COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

Where families grow and learn together

VMCP HANDBOOK 2005

ABOUT US

Vashon-Maury Coop Preschool is a non-profit organization that has been in operation since the early 1970's. Originally formed by island parents, Co-op Preschool differs from other preschools in the instrumental role parents take on in the classroom and in the Preschool community as a whole. The Co-op Preschool is a place of learning and growth for the entire family.

We offer four classes for ages ranging from just walking to pre-K five year-olds. We are run by a volunteer parent board and currently employ two teachers. We are affiliated with South Seattle Community College which provides each of our classes with a parent instructor.

As a cooperative, we, the members, are entirely responsible for the operation of the Preschool including, among other things: decision-making, working in class, and raising operation funds. Participation in the Co-op requires time and energy.

So why choose Co-op? It's simple: what you give, you get back. And more. To choose Co-op is to join a community of children, parents, and teachers who share the bond of a young child being raised. We parents certainly have a common goal: to give our children a strong beginning. You are your child's first teacher, but this does not mean that you must do the job alone. Children, even very young children, often have needs which extend beyond the resources of parents. Adults, too, are in need of some guidance on the path of parenthood. The cooperative school is unique in that you and your child enroll in the program together.

There are many benefits of this shared involvement: One is that parents and children experience a high quality Preschool program together; another is the gentle and gradual transition towards the independence of the kindergarten-ready child; another is the way in which parents learn a great deal about early childhood issues and education; and lastly but so very importantly is how parents and children become a part of a network that lasts far beyond the Preschool years.

At VMCP, the emphasis of our program is the social development of the child. Of primary importance is the building of a child's positive self-image, self-esteem, and self-confidence. We strive to create a warm, accepting atmosphere for children to explore their world through art, music, stories, and play. Small and large motor skills are developed through a wide variety of carefully chosen toys, games, puzzles, activities, projects and play structures. The curriculum for each age group is thoughtfully planned to suit the particular interests and capabilities and to encourage physical, intellectual and socio-emotional growth.

The cooperative serves parents too. Parents participate weekly in the classroom. In doing so, they develop skills in group cooperation. Parents and children work closely together, giving parents the opportunity to observe and interact with children in a supported environment. Time spent in the classroom also gives the parents the chance to know and to develop trust with the schoolmates of their children as well as with other parents. Additionally, monthly meetings geared specifically for parents are included in the co-op program. Conducted by the SSCC Parent Instructor, these meetings cover a range of topics relating to parenting and family living. Besides giving parents a place to discuss classroom activities, the meetings give us the opportunity to share our concerns and experiences as well as to offer support to each other.

Knowledge, friendship, support, growth...The benefits of cooperative Preschool are boundless. As are those of any strong community.

We welcome you.

MEMBER OBLIGATIONS 2005 - 2006

In order to assure a successful and productive year for our Co-op, we have outlined below the minimum commitment required of each Co-op member family. Please read this carefully and ask for clarification if you have questions. Thank you!

1. Pay tuition fully and promptly each month. (See Tuition Information, Scholarship Information following and VMCP Standing Rules, located at the school).
2. Work your assigned day in the classroom each week. (See VMCP Bylaws and VMCP Standing Rules, located at the school).
3. Attend all required parent meetings. (See VMCP Bylaws and VMCP Standing Rules located at the school).
4. Support the Preschool's fundraising activities. (See Fundraising following and VMCP Standing Rules located at the school).
5. Provide snack on a rotating schedule. (See Snack Rules).
6. Fulfill the duties of your co-op job. (See VMCP Standing Rules located at the school).
7. Assist in cleaning the Preschool at the end of the school year. An all-school end of the year cleaning is held the week following the last week of school. (See VMCP Standing Rules located at the school).

TUITION INFORMATION

1. A \$40.00 registration fee is paid once per year. It is non-refundable and must be paid each year upon enrollment.
2. South Seattle Community College (SSCC) tuition of approximately \$90.00 (or \$10 per month) is due yearly. This amount goes to SSCC via the Instructor, not to VMCP. This fee subsidizes our Instructor in the classroom as well as our parent education classes and seminars. Your SSCC tuition is included in your monthly tuition total.
3. VMCP tuition is an annual amount; which is divided into nine installments (September through May). Tuition is due the last week of each month for the following month. After that a \$5.00 late fee applies. If you will be gone for more than a week on vacation or illness please let your Parent Coordinator know. Your full tuition will always save a spot in class for your child. If we do not receive it or hear from you for two weeks we will call the next person on the waiting list to fill your spot.

Please make checks payable to VMCP and note child's name and class on the check each month. Tuition should be placed in the tuition box on the wall in the hallway near the class file folders. No cash accepted in payment box.

4. A total monthly tuition reduction of \$5.00 will be allowed for families with two children enrolled, provided more than 46 children are enrolled in the Cooperative. For families of twins, with both children in the same class, the \$10 SSCC tuition fee is only required to be paid per family in the class and not per child. Those families with multiple children in the same class are only required to pay \$10 per month.
5. For new enrollees, tuition will be prorated for the month of enrollment on a space-available basis only.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

We currently have three types of scholarships available to families:

VMCP's own scholarship program, a.k.a. "Friends of the Co-op": This program provides scholarships (up to 50%) to families who would otherwise not be able to attend Preschool. The funding for these scholarships comes through donations from the community and from VMCP members as well as from a yearly allocation from our school's budget. Generally 5 -6 families per year benefit from this program. Applications and more information may be obtained from the Scholarship Chairperson.

South Seattle Community College Scholarship: This scholarship covers up to half of the monthly tuition per quarter. Recipient must be a member in good standing for a minimum of one quarter. Contact your SSCC Parent Education Instructor for an application or for more information.

Emergency Scholarships: This scholarship is funded directly from the school's budget and is designed to assist families in an emergency situation who would not otherwise be able to continue to attend Preschool. Contact the Scholarship Chairperson.

FUNDRAISING

In order to keep the tuition costs reasonable at the Preschool, funds must be raised in additional ways. The success of our fund-raiser takes some of the financial burden off the parents of the students. Every family is required to participate in our fundraising efforts.

Each year the school holds a fundraising Auction, usually in the spring. Having a fun, successful auction requires the collaborative efforts of all our families. Each family will have an auction job in addition to their regular Preschool job requirement unless the auction job carries a double value. If this should be the case, both the auction and Preschool job requirements would be fulfilled.

No family is exempt from working on the auction.

Additionally, every family must help with procurement of items for the auction. Each family is required to procure one or two items to the value of \$100.

You will be hearing MUCH more about the Auction as the year goes on.

SAFETY RULES FOR OUR PRESCHOOL

The following are the safety rules we need to follow in the Preschool. These rules not only keep us in compliance with our liability insurance, they are also designed to keep everyone safe, hold down the germs and protect everyone's health and well-being. **THESE RULES ARE MANDATORY AND MUST BE FOLLOWED BY EVERYONE.**

In the Classroom:

1. Children using hazardous tools or equipment (carpentry tools, cooking equipment, etc.) must be supervised by an adult on a one-to-one basis.
2. Toys or objects discovered in the mouth of any child shall be set aside in a box in the kitchen to be cleaned with snack dishes.
3. If any adult discovers any broken or unsafe equipment in the lab, please bring it to the attention of the Parent Coordinator or the Safety Chairperson.
4. Any block building activity shall be kept below the shoulder of the shortest child in the room, to prevent injuries.
5. All cleaning and hazardous materials must be kept in a locked cupboard out of reach of the children.

6. Floors are to be kept free of spills, toys, paper and other tripping hazards.
7. Use bathroom bleach solution (see bathroom and diaper rules) for cleaning up any body fluid or products in the lab.
8. INCIDENT report forms are located in the file cabinet and shall be filled out any time a child is injured in the classroom. ACCIDENT report forms shall be filled out if the injury requires medical attention by a doctor. The teacher shall be available for help in completing these forms.

EMERGENCY PROCEEDURES

1. Please make sure your child's records are up to date on immunizations and emergency information. Please remember to note changes as they occur.
2. Please acquaint yourself with the location of the first aid kit and emergency evacuation procedures. Please look for safety information on bulletin boards.

TRANSPORTATION:

1. The Preschool is NOT responsible for carpooling to and from classes and Preschool activities with the exception of field trips. The safety and financial responsibility of each car pool is the sole responsibility of each participant.
2. For our liability insurance to be in effect on field trips, your auto liability insurance information, a copy of your driver's license and field trip permission slips must be on file. On field trips, there must be one adult to drive each car plus enough supervising adults in each car to be within physical contact of each child in the car.
3. Children shall never be left in a vehicle without adult supervision.
4. All occupants shall wear seat belts and/or other approved safety restraints.
5. The teacher shall advise the instructor of details of the field trip with enough advance notice to allow the instructor to report such information to the College.

SNACK RULES:

1. Check work schedule to see if you are Snack Helper. Snack Helper assists the Snack provider by washing tables, placing trays or whatever else is needed by the Snack Provider; other parents please join the class time (music, circle, etc.) and enjoy the children. Snack person: please be sure to check allergy list for your group.
2. Snack parent and helper must wash hands with soap and warm water before starting food preparation. Use paper towels for hand drying.
3. Snack tables, kitchen counter top and sink need to be washed with bleach/water BEFORE and AFTER snack. The teacher will mix up bleach/water daily and have it available in spray bottles (1 t. bleach to 1 gallon water). Spray surface to be cleaned and wipe with paper towels.
4. EVERYONE please note that sponges in the kitchen are in tubs and labeled for use. General Clean-Up, Snack Prep and Snack (spills, etc.). Please use appropriate sponge and return it to correct tub.
5. Snack dishes shall be washed with hot soapy bleach water and left in the rack to air dry.
6. Refer to chart in kitchen for snack set up procedures.
7. Snack parent is responsible for the trash. Please empty bathroom cans into kitchen. Tie up kitchen sack and take it home with you.

8. At snack time, supervise hand-washing of children and remember to wash your own hands. Children are to use tongs to serve their own snack.

BATHROOM & DAIPER RULES:

1. Adults, remember to wash your hands after using the toilet or helping children to use the toilet and supervise children's hand-washing. Hands should be washed with warm, soapy water and dried with paper towels.

2. For changing diapers:

Use the changing table in the bathroom only.

Cover table with a piece of butcher paper.

Wrap soiled diaper in plastic sack and take it home.

3. After changing diaper, throw away butcher paper and spray changing table with bleach/water and wipe off with paper towels.

4. When finished, wash hands with warm, soapy water and dry with paper towels.

ADDITIONAL RULES & REGULATIONS:

Additional rules and regulations (lice policy, fire exits, etc.) will be posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. All families are responsible for reading the board and are presumed to have done so.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency, we feel your child will be safely cared for. The Preschool is equipped with emergency supplies, but only for a short period of time.

Emergency procedures are as follows:

Children will remain in classroom. In the event the Preschool is an unsafe structure, we will walk the children to a pre-specified location (to be announced).

When we feel all children are safe and without injury, we will release carpools. All other children will remain at the emergency location until parent or authorized responsible party arrives.

We suggest all parents of non-carpooling children make prior arrangements with another parent each day you do not attend school with your child. Please indicate to your child which parent will be responsible for them in case of an emergency.

The Preschool needs to be notified in regards to any special concerns your child may have in the event of an emergency.

Contact the Preschool Safety Chair with any questions or concerns.