

Koala Room

Welcome Packet

Welcome to the Koala Room! We are excited to share with you in this amazing time of your child's life! We look forward to developing a mutually cooperative and respectful relationship with you to better support your family. We know that enrolling your child in child care can pose challenges for you. Some of these challenges are unique to your family's situation and some of these challenges are experienced by many families. We strive to be nurturing, loving, compassionate, sensitive, supportive, encouraging, stimulating and understanding. If you ever have any questions about your child's time spent with us, please do not hesitate to ask.

We have put together this packet to cover several items which we think are helpful as your child begins spending time with us.

- Thoughts for your child's transition into a new room
- Supplies for your child's first day
- Seasonal information
- Tips for drop offs
- Ideas for birthday celebrations and potty training
- Favorite Koala Recipes to explore
- What a day in the Koala Room looks like

A Toddler's Creed

If I want it, it's mine!

If I give it to you and change my mind later, it's mine!

If I can take it away from you, it's mine!

If I had it a little while ago, it's mine!

If it's mine, it will never belong to anyone else, no matter what!

If we are building something together, all the pieces are mine!

If it looks just like mine, it's mine!

We look forward to getting to know your family! If you ever have any questions, please ask! We know drop off/pick up times can be hectic, you are also welcome to call us: 262-6222 (nap time from 1 – 3 is best) or email us: koalaroom@gmail.com

Thanks

Transitioning into a new room

For each child, the transition into a new child care environment is experienced differently. For some it can be intimidating, for others it can seem like they jump right in and begin exploring with their new friends. No matter what it looks like, each child benefits from a gradual ease into the daily routines and life of the room. If your schedule allows, we encourage your family to visit the Koala Room prior to your child's first official day. This allows your child to explore the new environment, new friends and new teachers with the reassurance of their parents right beside them. This also provides us as teachers a chance to get to know your child and their favorite things in order to better support their first few days with us. We know that each family has a unique work situation, so please keep in touch with us as you think about planning visits in the classroom. We may be able to offer suggestions about the best times to visit the room.

Home Visits

A home visit is a special time where a teacher comes and visits your child (and family) in their home. Often the child is so excited to have a teacher visit, they run around showing off all their favorite things: favorite toys, favorite books, favorite blankets! Visits typically last 30-45 minutes and show your child (and family) that they are so valuable, their teacher wants to come and visit their home. The home visit is a great resource especially if your child is likely to have a tricky time transitioning into the new room. Let one of us know if you would like to schedule a home visit for your family.

Supplies to bring your first day

Label, label, label every item with your child's name!

- **Diapers and wipes.** Your child will use the diapers you send to school. Typically a large package of diapers will last about two weeks. We will send home a reminder when your child's stack is running low, but feel free to check on their supply anytime. Each time you bring in a package of diapers, we ask that you send in a package of wipes. Wipes are shared by all the friends in the Koala Room. You may send in any brand you choose, but we prefer the wipes to be unscented. Even if your child is potty trained, we still use wipes for messy faces and will occasionally ask you to send in a pack.
- **Diaper cream.** If your child uses diaper cream (even if just occasionally) we ask that you send some in for us to use as well. This is considered a medication, and needs to be accompanied by the Request for Administration of Medicine form (included in this packet)
- **Spare Clothing.** We explore with our whole bodies both outside and inside the Koala Room. Sometimes we get messy. Having an extra set (or a few extra sets) of clothes, allows your child to fully engage in their ideas without worrying about getting dirty- we can just change clothes! Even though the paint, glue and markers that we explore are washable, we still recommend dressing your child in "play clothes" just in case.
- **Blankets for nap.** During nap time your child is provided with a cot to rest on. Please send in blankets, pillows, etc to make your child feel more comfortable. Each child has a cubby to store these items in and they will be sent home each Friday to be washed. If your child sleeps with a stuffed animal or other comfort object, this item is welcome at school as well. As you send in these items, notice the small cubbies in the hallway. A full size pillow won't fit in the cubby, but a travel size pillow fits perfectly!
- **Family photo and All About Me book.** These are just a couple ways for your child to stay connected with their family while they're at school. We will add your family photo to our wall of families. This is favorite spot for the children to gather and point out the different family members in their picture. The All About Me book can be filled with pictures, words and drawings of your child's favorite things. We'll put the pages into a book for your child to read throughout their time with us.

Other supplies that may be needed

- **Pacifiers.** If your child typically uses a pacifier at home, they may bring it to school as well. Labeling on a pacifier often rubs off during the day, so we ask that you relabel it each day. If your child's pacifier is used just as a transition object, we can show you a special place to keep it until the end of the day.
- **Items from home.** Your child is welcome to bring a book or stuffed animal from home to use at school. Please be aware that items from home are well loved during the day and may get lost, dirty or broken. Aside from a book or comfort item we cannot be having objects from home brought into the classroom.

Toddlers are still in a stage where sharing is very difficult. Throughout the day we encourage children to take turns, but at this stage in development we do not expect them to be able to share. When they bring a toy in from home, this having to share idea is too much for them to handle. The children often forget about their special toy from home until they see another friend with it. This leads to yelling, fighting and children getting hurt.

Our recommendation, if your child needs to leave the house carrying an object is to discuss it with your child. Make a plan to leave it in their carseat for them to discover after school.

Seasonal Specific Supplies

In the Summer we explore water play twice a week! We run through a sprinkler, splash in a water table and squirt water bottles. Send in a swimsuit, towel and water shoes (or other plastic footwear) At the end of the week, we will send these items home to be washed and returned for another week of water play!

Sunscreen: We ask that each family send in sunscreen for their child and fill out the Administration of Medication Form. We will apply the sunscreen prior to going outside on sunny days.

In the Winter we go outside as long as the wind chill is above 20* Each day send seasonally appropriate clothing in with your child. Specifically each child needs: a warm coat, hat, mittens/gloves and boots for snowy days. You are welcome to leave an extra set of these items in your child's cubby if they are not wanting to put them on each day.

For rainy days we will go outside and explore the sprinkles as long as it is not raining too hard. Please send in a raincoat and rain boots for these wet days.

Tips for dropping off and saying goodbye in the morning

Daily drop offs pose their own challenge separate from the initial transition into a new room. While you are welcome to come into the room and ease your child into their day, we've found that shorter drop offs tend to work best for children. If you prolong your departure, your child may begin to think that you are staying all day long! We found it is helpful for your family to establish a predictable routine that your family does each day. Often families will make a plan about what they are going to do when they get into the Koala Room. "We'll read one book together, or do one puzzle and then it will be time to say goodbye." Then be sure to stick to the plan!

Tears at drop offs are normal, and often your child will calm down within a few moments. If you want to check on your child, you may peer through the observation windows in the store room. This allows you to see your child, without them realizing you're there! Check with the office to borrow a key to the store room. If you have specific concerns or need more ideas for drop offs,

check with us!

Birthday Celebrations

We love celebrating your child's birthday at school. Instead of bringing in a sweet treat, we encourage families to send in a special gift for the child to give to the class on their birthday. They could give their favorite book, puzzle or a special art supply. If your child is really wanting to bring a treat to share, we ask that you send in some fresh fruit or fruit salad. The children enjoy the fruit as much as a sugary treat, and we love learning what each child's favorite fruit is.

Potty Training

There are as many different thoughts on potty training as there are people you will ask. We do have a packet of articles available if you would like some more information. Our goal with potty training is to have consistent messages at home and at school so your child will not be confused. Every day, each child is asked if they would like to try the potty. Often a child will gradually show increasing interest in trying the potty. We celebrate each potty attempt with a little song, "Claire sat on the potty!" or "Audrey peed on the potty!" Eventually they will begin "producing" on the potty and consistently staying dry throughout the day.

As you feel that your child (and your family) is ready to make the transition to underwear, try it! We recommend spending a weekend to try out "big kid underwear." This allows your child to have a large amount of time to try out the underwear, and get used to how they work. Keep us in the loop as you try these underwear weekends, so we can support your child at school too.

Once your child has a "successful" weekend in underwear (few or no accidents) we'll try it at school. We may experience several accidents your child's first few school days in underwear, so be sure their cubby is stocked with lots of extras. We recommend the thicker padded underwear to help with this transition out of a diaper.

Favorite Koala Recipes

Playdough Mix together:

- 3 cups of Flour
- 1 cup of Salt
- 3 Tbsp Cream of Tartar
- 2 Tbsp Oil
- 3 cups of Water
- Food Coloring

Mix ingredients together and cook over low heat until a ball of playdough forms. Once playdough cools, use popsicle sticks, rollings pins or cookie cutters to explore the dough.

Flubber Mix together:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of warm water
- 1 cup Elmers Glue
- Food Coloring

In a separate bowl mix together:

- 2 tsp Borax
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup warm water

After both bowls are well mixed, pour into 1 bowl. Wait a moment, then reach in and pull out the lump of flubber. Use your hands to work the mixture together for a couple of minutes to produce the best results.

Hint: If you make Flubber without food coloring, you can write on it with markers. Then as you work with the flubber together, the colors spread and mix!

Goop Place $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cornstarch in a shallow bowl
 Stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water

Once the ingredients are mixed together, roll up your sleeves and stick your hands in! As you work with the goop, squeeze some in the palm of your hands. Then open up your fingers and watch it run out of your hands.