



Seeks to Nurture an Inclusive and
Diverse Community

Parent Handbook
2022-2023

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Mission, Values, Program Objectives & Program Activities

MISSION

The seed is the gateway through which the future possibility of the living tree emerges. The medium or environment surrounding the seed provides the resources needed for the embryo to flourish as a valuable adult of the future generation. The child has the most important work to accomplish: self - formation. The Montessori environment - built and intangible - is a catalyst for that formation.

At Yellow Acorn Montessori our mission is:

To encourage the social, emotional, and cognitive development of the child by providing a **comprehensive Montessori education**, cultivating independent thought and foundational skills as well as awareness of their environment; empathy for others, and social ease and confidence.

To establish within a child the intellectual, emotional, and physical rigor needed to become a self-motivated learner, flexible thinker, and creative problem solver, and support their ever-increasing curiosity about the world in which they live.

To help our students to grow up to be successful global citizens and nurture a sense of close-knit community within the families we serve.

VISION

We are a school that combines highly respected Montessori teaching methods with other proven education practices to develop 21st-century skills. We provide the core elements of knowledge, and the richest learning experience possible for children ages 3 to 6. We seek value in education for sustainable development and a kind, inclusive society at the preschool age. We believe that learning should prepare learners of all ages to find solutions for the challenges of today and the future.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

To achieve our mission, we are guided by the following program objectives:

- Adhere to the eight characteristics of the authentic Montessori experience: confidence, self-discipline, intrinsic motivation, the ability to handle external authority, academic achievement, spiritual awareness, and responsible citizenship
- Introduce the children to the joy of learning
- Foster inner security and curiosity
- Promote self-confidence
- Develop initiative, concentration, and persistence
- Encourage a positive attitude towards lifelong learning
- Build a strong foundation for future growth
- Sustain positive interaction, and compassion for others
- Nurturing the nature in our curriculum

PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

A Typical Day

Children arrive in the morning, after COVID screening, changing into their indoor shoes, greeting and a quick circle time, they have the morning to choose work independently or in small groups. In a classroom up to 19 children, different activities can be going on at one time. This leaves every child with the opportunity to choose an activity they are interested in and work with that activity for as long as they want to. Children are given the opportunity to develop concentration, order, cooperation, independence, and a love of exploration. During this time the guide or directress in the classroom is giving individual or small group lessons while observing what children are choosing to work on.

Generally, at the end of the morning, the class rejuvenates with a short snack break and gets ready to go outside for recess prior to coming together for a gathering. During gathering the class will sing songs, talk about the weather, and calendar, and do/talk about projects important to the entire group.

Around 11:15 am, the children get ready for lunch.

Children set their tables and enjoy lunch with their classmates before cleaning up and getting ready for the afternoon. Younger children may sleep or rest after lunch and the older children may choose materials to work with or have an early snack in the afternoon after they rest for about 45 minutes. At times, there are group projects going on that the children will work with through the afternoon.

At 2:45 pm the full-day children go home.

This schedule may change according to children's needs and/or classroom. Ideally, the Primary program students receive a three-hour uninterrupted work cycle each day followed by group gatherings, lunch, and recess once children are normalized.

Daily Schedule	
8:45 – 9:00	Arrival and Greeting
9:00 – 9:15	Circle Time/Story Time
9:15 – 9:45	Work Time Activities
9:45 – 10:00	Snack Time
10:00 – 10:30	Recess
10:30 – 11:00	Music/Art
11:00 – 11:15	Group Lesson
11:15 – 12:00	Lunch
12:00 – 1:00	Rest Time
1:00 – 1:15	Snack Time
1:15 – 2:00	Work Time Activities
2:00 – 2:15	Circle Time
2:15 – 2:45	Recess
2:45	Dismissal

| Oversight

Yellow Acorn Montessori is affiliated with the American Montessori Society and licensed as a small child day care center with the New York State Office of Child and Family Services.

A copy of the Office of Children and Family (OCFS) regulations can be found in our classroom, website, or given upon request.

Our licensor, Denita Kizer – Tel: 914-801-3252

New York State OCFS
Westchester Regional Office
117 East Stevens Ave. Suite 300
Valhalla, NY 10595

The OCFS Child Care Complaint Line is 1-800-732-5207

| Hours, Arrival and Dismissal, School Year Calendar

HOURS

Yellow Acorn Montessori students will be in session from 8:45am – 2:45pm. Our program will run from September 6 - June 23.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

A structured policy for dropping off and picking up children helps facilitate smooth transitions to and from school. Formally transferring responsibility for children ensures their safety, is conducive to their joy and provides the opportunity for necessary and meaningful communication between their caregivers.

Parents/caregivers are responsible for parking their cars and walking their child to the daily health screening outside of the Main Entrance. Kindly hold your student's hand while walking in the parking lot and do not leave your child unattended even for a minute to talk to another parent or use your phone. Parents/caregivers are required to wait for the health screening to be cleared. Upon completion of the process, the child will remain with the Head Teacher until all students have arrived.

Children should not be left outside the facility prior to opening hours. Staff will positively acknowledge each child's arrival by warmly greeting children and parents. For example, by going down to the child's level, making eye contact, smiling, and calling the child by name. On arrival each day, parents and staff will share information briefly that might be relevant to the care of the child that day. For example, a change in a child's health status, development of a new ability, any

change in diet, or requests for any supplies such as clean clothing Separation is handled sensitively by staff when a child appears anxious to leave the parent. For example, by providing affectionate physical comfort to the child by holding, talking, or singing, helping the child to become involved in an interesting activity, providing something that will comfort a child such as a photo of his/her parents, and always assure a child with a concrete example such as “Mommy will come after the goodbye song”.

POLICY FOR DROP OFF AND PICK-UP (Revised for COVID-19)

Children will be dropped off at 8:45am at the front entrance. Parents must park in the front parking lot and walk children to the door.

All families and visitors will only have access to the back door of the facility or entry area. Only children and staff who are required for daily operations and to maintain the ratio will be allowed inside the building and classrooms. Visitors will only have access to the front door of the facility or entry area.

Daily temperature checks and health screenings will be performed on all staff and children upon arrival and throughout the day. If needed, we may stagger the drop-off timings.

Please do not enter the facility if you or your child is waiting for COVID test results or has any of the following symptoms:

- Fever 100 or higher
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Respiratory symptoms
- Chills
- Repeated Shaking with Chills
- Muscle Pain
- Headache
- Sore Throat

Anyone including all visitors, staff, and children that has a fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or exhibits respiratory symptoms, including cough or shortness of breath will not be allowed to enter and/or stay.

Staff conducting daily health screenings will use appropriate masks and gloves as needed. Please do not leave any siblings alone in the car while dropping off the child, call us and if possible, a staff member will aid.

Parents may be asked to stagger arrival and drop-off times if multiple parents arrive together, and social distancing is not maintained. Staff will walk the children to their classroom and walk them back to their parents or cars at the end of the day.

PICKUP

Parents/caregivers or legal guardians are responsible for picking up their child from the designated pick-up area such as the front/main entrance of the building. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons authorized to take a child out of the facility should be filled out neatly in the

enrollment forms, along with clarification/documentation of any custody issues/court orders. The legal guardian(s) of the child should be established and necessary documentation should be provided. A parent or authorized person picking up a child from the school must sign the child out in the designated sign in/sign out log. If a previously unauthorized individual drops off the child, he or she will not be authorized to pick up the child without first being added to the authorization record by the parents or legal guardians.

CHANGES IN PICKUP PERSON

To ensure the safety of your child, if he/she will be going home from school with a different family member or a designated person,

- A person picking up the child must be at least 18 years old.
- Person picking up the child must be named on the child’s enrollment form as an authorized person and/or written permission from the parent must be provided to a staff member, at the drop off time. Only authorized persons with valid identification will be allowed to pick up from the school. The staff member may verify the identification before releasing the child. Verbal permission, text message, or phone message will not be accepted as valid forms of communication to facilitate the release of the child. Permission slips are attached with this packet, in case of an acute emergency, an email can be sent to the head teacher. Parents will ensure that the pickup person will transport children in age-appropriate car safety seats.
- Kindly be on time to pick up your child. If a child is not picked up at the end of the day and we are unable to contact both parent and emergency contacts, the staff member will stay with the child until the premises close or staff is no longer available to care for the child. At that time, staff will contact Child Protective Services and a full written report of the incident will be documented.
- **Late pick-up fee:**

15 minutes late	\$5.00
30 minutes late	\$10.00
1 hour late	\$20.00

Important: If we have not heard from you and are unable to reach a caregiver or parent within one hour of dismissal, Child Protective Services will be called.

Yellow Acorn Montessori School Academic Calendar 2022-2023

August 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January 2 - Holiday Recess
January 16 - MLK Jr. Day

20 school days

September 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

February 20 - Presidents Day
February 20 - 24 - Winter Recess

15 school days

September 5 - Labor Day
September 6 - First Day of School
September 26-27 - Rosh Hoshannah

17 school days

October 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

23 school days

October 5 - Yom Kippur
October 10-11 - Sukkot (BC)
Sheminin Azteret - October 17 (BC)
Simchat Torah - October 18 (BC)

16 school days

November 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

April 3-7 - Spring Recess
April 12-13 - Passover (BC)
April 27-28 - PT Conf. Days

13 school days

November 11 - Veterans Day
November 24-25 - Thanksgiving

19 school days

December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

May 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

May 26 - Shavuot (BC)
May 29 - Memorial Day

21 school days

December 1-2 - PT Conf. Days
December 26-30 - Holiday Recess

17 school days

June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

June 19 - Juneteenth
June 23 - Last Day of School

16 school days

(BC) - indicates Building Closure so YA is not in session

Total School Days in 2022-2023: 177

In the event that YA exhausts all snow days, we will be in session on November 11, February 20, June 19

Important Dates

- September 6 – First Day of School
- December 1-2 – Parent/Teacher Conference
- April 27-28 – Parent/ Teacher Conference
- June 23 – Last Day of School

Holidays and Building Closures

- September 6 – First Day of School
- September 26-27 – Rosh Hoshannah
- October 5 – Yom Kippur
- October 10-11 – Sukkot (Building Closure)
- October 17 - Sheminin Azteret (Building Closure)
- October 18 – Simchat Torah (Building Closure)
- November 11 – Veterans Day
- November 24-25– Thanksgiving Recess
- December 26-30– Holiday Recess
- January 2 – Holiday Recess
- January 16 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- February 20 – President's Day
- February 20-25 – Winter Recess
- April 3-7 – Spring Recess
- April 12-13 – Passover (Building Closure)
- May 26 – Shavuot (Building Closure)
- May 29 – Memorial Day
- June 19 – Juneteenth
- June 23 – Last Day of School

Admission and Disenrollment

Any parent who wishes to enroll their child in Yellow Acorn Montessori must complete an Application for Admission, which can be found on our website or requested through the Director of Operations. Please refer to the **Yellow Acorn Montessori Parent Tuition Agreement** for information regarding the annual tuition schedule. Any parent who wishes to disenroll their child must complete the Disenrollment Form and submit it to the head teacher. Note that parents are liable for full tuition for any early withdrawal from the school.

FAMILY DISCOUNTS

We offer a multiple child discount for each additional child (does not apply to after school).

PAYMENT AND LATE FEES

Yellow Acorn accepts Checks and money transfers through Zelle. Payment is due on the first day of each month unless otherwise noted. A late charge of \$10.00 per payment will be assessed on all payments received five (5) days after the due date. \$35 fee will be charged if a check is returned to us for any reason.

The parent(s) understand that enrollment requires a commitment for the entire school year from September to June. Tuition and fees are non-refundable, and the parents recognize that they are obliged to pay for the entire academic year from September 2022 – June 2023 even if they withdraw the Student from the School. There will be no reduction for absences, and holidays of partial months.

The parent(s) further understands that in signing the tuition agreement, the Parent(s) are agreeing to abide by the terms described herein regarding the payment of tuition and fees: No refund or cancellation of the tuition or fees will be made by School for absence or withdrawal of the Student before June 2023.

Should the School have to file a lawsuit to collect any money due under the tuition agreement, then the Parent(s) agree that, in addition to any tuition and other fees owed, the Parent(s) shall also pay the reasonable attorney's fees and court costs of the school incurred in connection with the lawsuit.

The school uses an installment tuition payment plan to assist Parents with the management of the remaining tuition due. Any fees relating to the use of a tuition payment plan will be the responsibility of the Parents.

A nonrefundable registration fee of \$1,000 is due upon acceptance of the child. The tuition deposit shall be applied to the June 2023 tuition provided the student is still enrolled in the school at that time. The remaining tuition and fees may be paid in any options mentioned above. A late fee is imposed by the school when tuition is delayed. The school reserves the right to dismiss a student for the reasons outlined in the document titled "Discipline Policy and Termination of Enrollment", which can be found in the Enrollment Package, if any, or which has otherwise been provided to the Parents. If the School deems such measures to be necessary, either in the interest of the Student or the School, it may do so with a written letter to the parents. Except for a pro-rata portion for the period in which the student attended the school, any tuition paid by the parents will be refunded.

ABSENCES

If the child is absent from the program, there will not be any compensation for the tuition. Our schedule is based on five days a week. It is not possible to offer make-up classes or change the schedule if your child is absent.

| Forms

We are required by law to have certain forms and information in your child's file. The list is as follows: Day Care Registration (Blue card – front and back), Medical Statement, Medical History Emergency Release, Photo Consent Form, Emergency Alert Contact Form, Behavior Management Policy, Individual Health Care Plans, Summary of School Policy, Rest/Nap Policy. Each medical form is valid for one year from the date of your child's physical. No child will be admitted into the school without these forms.

If your child has a Severe Peanut/Food Allergy that requires medication, you will need additional Medical Forms pertaining to the child's individualized medical plan and/or anaphylactic action plan, completed by their Doctor and yourself. All staff members will be made aware to catch the early symptoms and how to follow the emergency medical care plan written by your healthcare provider for your child.

Enrollment forms which are in this Parent Handbook packet must be completed and returned to school no later than 8/10/2022.

| Food

Parents will provide healthy snacks, lunch, and a medium sized water bottle. Label each item clearly with your child's first and last name with a permanent marker. We prefer upright, soft sided lunch boxes with handles. Lunchboxes will be kept in the refrigerator as per OCFS and health department regulation. Please send warm food in a thermos to eliminate the use of the microwave. Send containers that your children can open and close easily. Below are some suggestions for a small size lunch box and insulated food jars. Several options are available in terms of size and design of the lunch boxes but we suggest that you buy something as below so we are able to accommodate all lunch boxes in our refrigerator.

[Amazon.com: Simple Modern Kids Lunch Box-Insulated Reusable Meal Container Bag for Girls, Boys, Women, Men, Small Hadley, Disney: Minnie Rainbows: Kitchen & Dining](#)

[Amazon.com: Skip Hop Food Jar, Dino : Clothing](#)

Yellow Acorn will provide healthy snacks on special occasions and healthy non-perishable snacks will be available to the children if the child wishes to have some more servings after finishing their snack and lunch. Fresh filled water jugs will be kept out for the children should they run out of their water.

We are a nut free classroom, and we operate in a Kosher building. A suggested list of Kosher

items is attached with this packet. Parents must be mindful of the food allergies in your child's class. The allergy list is posted outside of the classroom and can be obtained from the head teacher. Refrain from sending any food that is processed in the same facility that processes the nuts.

Information on Healthy living

At Yellow Acorn Montessori, we strive to promote healthy living habits for our children. We share the following information with you about healthy food and beverage choices and the prevention of childhood obesity. At Yellow Acorn we ask that parents provide a healthy lunch and snack for their children, in accordance with the Kosher guidance above. In addition to healthy food, Yellow Acorn will:

- 1) Engage children in daily physical activity.
- 2) Ensure staff supervise children at meal times and models appropriate table manners and conversation.
- 3) Include healthy eating habits as part of our classroom curriculum.

The following should be encouraged at home to help your child establish healthy living habits:

- 1) Offer fresh fruits and vegetables often and encourage children to try new fruits and vegetables.
- 2) Allow your children to help with food preparation, table setting and food planning at home.
- 3) Cook and bake with your children.
- 4) Chart how many different fruits and vegetables your family eats each week.
- 5) Eat meals together as a family.
- 6) Talk about healthy foods that your family likes to eat.
- 7) Stay active as a family by going outdoors and participating in outdoor activities.
- 8) Limit screen time and model this for your children.

For more information about healthy living, visit:

Choose My Plate

www.choosemyplate.gov

Eat Smart New York

www.otda.ny.gov/programs/nutrition

Core Nutrition Messages for Healthier Food Choices

www.fns.usda.gov/fns/core-nutritionmessages/default.htm

Physical Activity Guidelines for Children during COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/children/index.htm>

FOOD ALLERGY GUIDELINES:

Due to increasing food allergies in young children all classrooms are nut restricted, this means no nuts or tree nuts are allowed in the classroom area. Our staff strives to provide a

safe and healthy environment for all children. We follow these guidelines to the extent possible, but we do not guarantee that we can keep our environment completely free of food or other allergens that might cause a severe reaction. All children's allergies that require treatment must be documented by a medical professional, including symptoms that indicate a reaction is occurring and instructions for administering medication. Appropriate medical documentation forms must be completed and turned in before the start of school. We talk to the children about the importance of keeping the classroom safe and healthy for fellow classmates. We encourage frequent hand washing, especially before and after meals and snacks. We clean tables and other work surfaces several times a day, before school begins, before lunch, after lunch and at the end of the session. We do not permit the sharing of lunches or snacks. We post lists of allergies in the classroom and the teacher and staff are required to be familiar with every child's allergy. We make every effort to avoid serving foods that contain peanuts or tree nuts or may contain traces of such foods. If children have life-threatening allergies to foods, we ask that the family provide an acceptable snack to be kept at school and served as an alternative, as needed. At their parent's request, these children may sit apart from the others when eating snacks or lunch. We ask that parents speak with us regarding children with allergies in the classroom before sending in special snacks or treats. Our guidelines apply to all functions in the school where children are present.

If your child has special dietary requirements due to cultural background or family's lifestyle choices, do provide us with the alternative food for your child for the classroom celebrations and we will try our best to meet the specific needs of your child.

| Transportation

Parents are responsible for providing safe and timely transportation to and from the school. Yellow Acorn will not provide any busing to and from school while in session.

| Safety and Emergency Plans

Your children's safety is critical and they are supervised by the appropriate and mandated adult to child ratio at all times.

EMERGENCY DRILLS:

In order to be prepared for emergencies, we conduct monthly fire drills and two shelter in place drills per year. We ensure that all escape routes are designated. We teach children the evacuation procedures using developmentally appropriate language. In the event of an emergency, we will call or group text you to inform you of events and student collection locations.

Shelter in Place

To ensure the health, safety, and emotional needs of children in the event of emergency situations, Yellow Acorn Montessori will conduct two Shelter in Place drills annually. Staff will notify parents in advance of this drill. Staff will be fully trained on the school's Shelter in Place procedure, and children will be explained, in a developmentally appropriate way, why drills are being conducted. Yellow Acorn will maintain on file a record of each Shelter in Place drill conducted.

EVACUATION PLANS:

In Place Evacuation:

If an emergency occurs and “in place evacuation” is necessary due to events such as a tornado, chemical spill, etc. the children will be kept at the facility, inside the classrooms. The children will remain there under the care and supervision of their teacher until dangerous conditions subside. If children are exposed to toxic fumes or injured during the emergency, they will be transported to the White Plains Hospital Emergency Room by ambulance where they will be examined by a healthcare professional and the parents/guardians will be contacted.

On Site Evacuation:

If an emergency occurs and “on site evacuation” is necessary due to events such as a tornado, chemical spill, etc. the children will be kept at the facility, but they will be moved to the back playground, bike area, front parking lot or any other part of the building that is deemed safe. The children will remain there under the care and supervision of their teacher until dangerous conditions subside. If children are exposed to toxic fumes or injured during the emergency, they will be transported to the White Plains Hospital Emergency Room by ambulance or private vehicle where they will be examined by a healthcare professional and the parents/guardians will be contacted.

Off-Site Evacuation:

In the event that an emergency occurs, an “off-site evacuation” is necessary due to events such as a fire, flood, etc. The children will be relocated to our primary or secondary evacuation sites. Our primary site is the Scarsdale Public Library (54 Olmsted Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583). Our secondary site is Scarsdale Synagogue (2 Ogden Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583). The teacher will carry the pre-prepared Emergency Supplies Kit that can provide supplies for immediate needs as well as to sustain staff and children if sheltering in place is required for extended periods of time (e.g., 72 hours). Parents will be notified via phone call, and/or a text message that children have been evacuated off-site.

The children will remain at the alternate site under the care and supervision of our staff while parents/guardians are contacted. When parents/guardians are contacted, they will be informed of the situation and decide to pick up their child or authorize that care be provided for the remainder of the day. If children are exposed to toxic fumes or injured during the emergency, they will be transported to the White Plains Hospital Emergency Room by ambulance where they will be examined by a healthcare professional and the parents/guardians will be contacted.

Major Disasters or Emergencies:

In the event that a major emergency or disaster occurs (such as major environmental hazards, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.) and/or a mandatory evacuation is ordered, children will be transported to a Red Cross designated mass shelter by private vehicle if an ambulance is not available. The children will remain at the Red Cross shelter under the care and supervision of our staff while parents/guardians are contacted. When parents/guardians are contacted, they will be informed of the situation and make arrangements to pick up their child. If children are exposed to toxic fumes or injured during the emergency, they will be transported to the White Plains Hospital Emergency Room by ambulance or private vehicle where they will be examined by a healthcare professional and the parents/guardians will be contacted.

Our Safety and Emergency Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. The review dates will be documented and the plan will be made available for immediate review by staff, parents, and Child Care Licensors during business hours or via email.

| Child Injuries and Accidents

Your children's safety is the highest priority. We inspect the classroom, bathroom and playground every day before the children arrive and children are always supervised during program hours. All our staff members are CPR, first aid, AED trained, MAT certified, and they have familiarity with the administration of EpiPen. Our staff members are trained to catch early signs of medical conditions that require immediate attention. Some of the medical emergencies that would require urgent medical care by health care professional are:

- Loss of consciousness
- Semi-consciousness
- Breathing difficulties
- Severe bleeding
- Unequal pupils
- Seizure
- Neck or back injury
- Continuous clear drainage from nose/ears after a blow to the head
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck or neck pain when head is moved
- Hives that appear quickly
- Very sick child who seems to getting worse quickly
- Repeated forceful vomiting
- Vomiting blood
- Severe abdominal pain that causes a child to double over
- Abdominal pain after a blow to the abdomen
- Possible broken bones
- Shock

In the event that your child is injured on the school premises, the teacher will inform you in person (at pick up time) about incidents such as minor scrapes. You will be informed about other injuries such as bumps to the head, large or small, by telephone after the incident occurs. You will be asked to read and sign an accident report at pick-up time on the day the accident occurs. If a parent is not picking up, we will email a copy to sign and be returned to us in a timely manner.

| Clothing

Two complete sets of extra clothes are required. If your child is in the process of toilet training, please send in a day worth of pull ups and wipes in your child's backpack and keep replenishing them every day. Please remember to replenish extra clothes each time your child wear's his/hers home from school. Dress children appropriately for work, play and according to the weather. Children should be clothed in a way so that they can dress and undress themselves independently. Shoes should be safe and comfortable for their growing feet, with balance and proper grip. Please avoid shoes with lights or party shoes that can make noise as they are not allowed for shelter in place/lockdown drills. We require one extra pair of weather proof, closed toe sneakers as naptime shoes. Kids grow fast at primary level and may require different clothing with every passing season so check their extra clothes periodically and replace as needed. All items must be labeled with your child's first and last name, including jackets, coats, hats, mittens, scarf etc. Costume masks are not allowed during Halloween celebrations.

| Rest Policy

To experience a supervised nap or rest time routine is an integral component in a full day program for 3-5 years old preschoolers. Rest time gives children a midday chance to physically rest and emotionally unwind, and it also helps children to stay healthy and alert during the afternoon. We usually take a nap after our lunch break. At the beginning of the year, we will observe and take time to understand every child's nap pattern. Once we establish some structure, we will try to be consistent with the plan. The children who have a hard time remaining quiet and still can rest their bodies for half an hour, and the teacher may assist them with a mindful activity. A peaceful, safe, supervised environment with dim lighting will be maintained during the naptime and the head teacher may briefly update the parents regarding your child's nap routine on a daily basis at the pickup time.

All children will rest in the classroom. All tables and desks will be moved to create adequate space for each child's cot, to allow for social distancing, and allow for caregivers to move freely and safely within the napping area in order to check on or meet the needs of the children. All children will be supervised during rest time. Each child will have their own labeled cot approximately 23"w x 52"l provided by the school and all cots will be covered with bed coverings. The nap cots will be cleaned and sanitized weekly, if COVID cases rise, the frequency of the disinfecting will change.

Parents will need to provide an all - in-one bedroll rest mat to place on top of the cot. Please do not send a sleeping bag that is bulky, or the one with loose pillow or blanket, or zipper on the side. We have a limited space, bulky sleeping bags are difficult to maneuver, and loose pillows, open seam or partially secured pillow inserts or unattached blankets are safety hazards for children. It is better to remove pillow inserts or add press buttons or eyehooks on the open seam of the pillow pocket so that a child can't remove them while resting. The all-in- one nap mat that has corner elastic bands built into secure mats on the cost is preferred. Due to COVID- 19 restrictions, please do not send your child with personal belongings such as stuffed animals, security blankets, naptime books etc. Kindly note that nap mats will go home every day to be washed by the end of the session. Please provide with the travel carrier (link below).

[Tot Cot® Zippered Travel Carrier – Urban Infant](#)

[Amazon.com : Urban Infant Tot Cot All-in-One Modern Preschool/Daycare Nap Mat with Washable Pillow and Elastic Corner Straps | 52 x 22 Inches - Poppies : Baby](#)

As previously mentioned, children are required to rest/nap with shoes on. Please send your child with an extra pair of shoes to stay in school. We require rest shoes with solid soles for emergency evacuation in any type of weather, in order to allow for the children to walk out safely. **Please do not send Crocs, slippers, or shoes that light up or make noise.** For hygiene purposes, rest shoes will not be used for daily outdoor activities.

| Child Abuse Policy

By State Law all employees are required to immediately report any suspicions of child abuse or mal treatment. The staff member who has direct knowledge of suspected abuse or maltreatment will call the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) and in case of imminent danger, 911. Because the School is a licensed small day care center, employees or volunteers of the School may also be subjects of reports to SCR. In this scenario please inform the supervisor/Director as well. If a complaint were to surface from a parent to us directly, we would:

1. Listen, take notes, question, and generate specifics
2. Immediately question staff
3. If abuse is suspected, we would notify appropriate agencies and take immediate actions. Staff involved would be put on leave without pay while inquiry is ongoing. Staff members are not authorized to speak to any members of the media or post or comment on social media.

After an Investigation, we would:

1. Pay any innocent staff for lost time/wage.
2. Continually update staff and parents of further developments.

| Healthy Child

We strive to ensure that all children enrolled at Yellow Acorn Montessori are healthy and participate in a robust learning experience. We ask that you reinforce the following to minimize the chance of children contracting an illness during the school year.

- 1) Teach your child healthy hand washing habits by encouraging them to wash frequently and thoroughly.
- 2) Teach your child to blow their own nose and to wash their hands afterwards.
- 3) Teach your child to cough into their elbow.
- 4) Teach your child to keep their hands out of their mouths and away from their faces.

If your child appears sick, please keep them home as they might become sicker over the course of the day.

Children will always wash their hands with soap and water upon entering the classroom in the morning. While at school, all children will wash their hands when they are dirty, after toileting, before and after any meals, after contact with bodily secretion or fluids, and after coming in from

outdoor play time.

| Sick Policy

If your child will be absent please let us know. Children who are absent three or more days must have a doctor's note before returning to school. If your child falls ill during program hours, the child will be isolated in the classroom and the parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the child within 30 minutes. This policy is subject to change as per governing agencies regulations.

| Exclusion Policy

If your child is not feeling well, please do not bring them to school. If they are exhibiting symptoms beyond what appears normal for your child, please do not bring them to school. When your child's teacher conducts the daily health check, if (s)he determines that your child is exhibiting symptoms and is not well enough to attend school that day, you will be asked to take your child home. Please respect that decision. Children should remain at home until they are symptom free for 48 hours. Clarification: Not 48 hours from when we call you, symptom free for 48 hours. If the child is out of school for 3 days, a doctor's note (stating that the child is not contagious and is able to return) will be required.

If there is anyone in your home (Mom, Dad, sibling, grandparent) who is not feeling well, please keep your child home for 24 hours. If your child remains symptom free for 24 hours they may return to school.

| Immunizations

By New York State Law, there is no religious exemption to the requirement that children be vaccinated in order to attend a public, private, parochial school, or child day care. Please see the Medical Packet for more information regarding required immunizations.

| Medications

Yellow Alcott Montessori will not administer any prescribed medications to children except in the event of an emergency. If your child has an allergy, asthma, seizure history, or any other serious medical condition that might require the emergency administration of medication, a health care plan will be written. A Request for Administration of Medication for each medication must be completed by your child's health care provider, and signed by the parent. This form must be renewed by your child's health care provider every six months.

You can obtain a copy of the Request for Administration of Medication form on our website or by requesting it from the head teacher.

| Emergency School Closure

Weather conditions resulting in hazards from flood, snow, ice or extremely cold temperatures severe enough to interrupt transporting pupils and staff travel to school may result in a delay in starting time or closing of the school. We may wait for Scarsdale and Edgemont district superintendents to notify the announcement before making the decision to close the program. Parents will be informed via phone call and group text message. Please provide us with your updated daytime contact number. We highly recommend each family to create a strong support system for timely pick up of their child and list all the authorized pick up persons on your student's enrollment form.

| Parent-Teacher Conferences

Held twice a year for one day each in the fall and spring, Parent-Teacher Conferences are important opportunities to hear about your child's life at school and to share information from home. Our teachers are well prepared to discuss each child on these days. By the month of November, students are well into their school routines. They have learned the classroom rules and guidelines, refreshed their memories after a summer off from school, likely made some new friends, and are deep into their new learning. We fully expect every parent to make an appointment during Parent-Teacher Conferences and use this dedicated, pre-planned time to meet with the teacher. School will remain closed for those days.

This year we will aim for in person conferences but due to COVID-19, Parent/Teacher Conferences might be held virtually. More information will be coming regarding sign ups and meeting structure. Please make childcare arrangements while you attend the conference. Feel free to approach with any question you have at any time during the year.

| Student Behavior Management Policy

We at Yellow Acorn Montessori recognize the importance of promoting acceptable behavior and methods of self-control within a small day care setting. We seek to minimize teacher-imposed discipline or control by facilitating the growth of self-discipline in the child. We believe that the true discipline is "active" or "inner" discipline, which is developed by the child himself or herself as s/he works at interesting tasks at home or at school. We believe that children always have freedom to do what is right, but they never have the freedom to do what is wrong. This freedom within limitations prepares preschoolers for successful adult life. For us, encouraging self-control is the ultimate goal of discipline. We believe that all children are entitled to experience kind and positive approaches to appropriate choice making processes which foster self-esteem, respect, tolerance and self-control. We are committed to create a learning zone where independence flourishes, where students are safe in all respects (i.e., free from inappropriate and abusive language and actions, where distractions to learning and developments are minimized for all students and learning is a happy, rewarding experience for all the students). At the beginning of each school year, we invest in establishing clear ground rules and expectations.

The purpose of ground rules is the development of self-respect, respect for others and respect for the environment. Behaviors which injure people either emotionally or physically or damage property are real problems for adults/staff members and the other children must be dealt with in an appropriate manner. With our behavior management plan we will work to ensure the group is safe,

fair and considerate to all.

Our goals are:

- To nurture kindness and promote self-discipline.
- To develop within each child an appreciation of others and their feelings.
- To increase children's understanding of the consequences of their behavior on others and themselves.
- To promote positive and discourage negative behavior

We will do this by:

PRAISE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

The adult/s in the classroom will model kind, calming, positive behaviors for the students. We will praise and encourage positive behaviors so that qualities such as kindness, thoughtfulness, tolerance, perseverance and concentration are appreciated and acknowledged. For example, a teacher might say, "I see that you helped your friend; that was very kind of you". We will have nonmaterial rewards such as a kindness jar for positive reinforcement and a peace basket for resolving social conflicts by talking.

REASONING

We will reason and discuss with the child why they should and should not do something. This should help them to relate the behavior to the consequence. While doing this we will go down to the child's level, look kindly into their eyes and talk in a very soft polite voice so that child is assured that s/he is in no trouble and no other children can hear the conversation. We will avoid instructing a child across the room.

PHRASING

We will endeavor to phrase directions, as far as possible, in a clear, simple, positive manner. For example, instead of saying 'don't' we will endeavor to explain what we can do instead or why they should not do something.

MINDFULNESS

We will highlight our kindness curriculum with grounding of mind with simple, sensorimotor activities, movement, world music, art and learning from stories all around the world.

LAYOUTS

We will carefully curate the environment and design the lesson plans to ensure safety, promote positive child behavior and reduce the possibility of problems occurring by:

- Allowing enough space around each activity
- Having each area clearly defined
- Allowing access to range and choice of materials
- Providing appropriate materials at each activity
- Providing activities that require cooperation rather than competition. This should promote qualities such as turn-taking, sharing, trust, understanding others point of view and

- willingness to compromise mid-way.
- Providing a range of stimulating activities, which will require order, concentration, coordination, perseverance and independence.

SETTING RULES

We will set rules in Yellow Acorn Montessori for the children, which are basic, simple and give an explanation as to why we have these rules. For example, 'Hands are only for helping' because hitting hurts and we would not like someone to hit us.

APPLYING THE RULES

We will apply these rules consistently and fairly. This will be done by:

- Appropriate modelling by adult/s in the classroom
- Informing the children of the rules
- Informing the children why we have the rules
- Informing the staff of the rules and how to apply them
- Informing the parents of the rules
- Posting the ground rules in the classroom
- The classroom is the children's place, children have agency. We involve the children in the development of the classroom rules.

THE STAFF

We expect the staff to set a positive example to the children by:

- Regularly examining their own conduct
- Listening carefully to children and value what they have to say
- Give the children clear and consistent explanations of the limits required in the setting
- Ensure that children do not receive attention for inappropriate behavior
- Understanding that children always have freedom within limits. Allow them to express choices.
- Acknowledge children's feelings and encourage them to express them verbally or creatively.
- Adhering to the rules of the group
- Respecting the children and adults in the group
- Being mannerly
- Remembering that children learn by example
- Avoid power struggle AND instead focus on GEMS: Genuine Encounter Moments which are designed to make child feel important and valued
- Teach self-quieting techniques to children as a coping mechanism when they are having meltdowns. For example, when a child is upset about something, do not force them to stay where they are; they have a choice to take a break. During that break, the child can count to ten, or stretch or go to a peaceful place, do breathing exercises etc. Help them problem solve why they are upset and what they can do to improve the situation without disturbing other children

VALUING AND PROMOTING THE PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We value the partnership with parents in Yellow Acorn Montessori and will endeavor to inform and discuss and involve them on every needed matter.

DONT'S

- Physical/corporal punishment will NEVER be used or threatened.
- Adults should not shout or raise their voices
- We do not use methods of interaction that punish, demean or humiliate children. Nor do we physically restrain children, other than to keep them safe.
- Any abuse or maltreatment of a child, either as an incident of discipline or otherwise, is prohibited.
- We do not tolerate or in any manner condone an act of abuse or neglect of a child by an employee, volunteer, or any person under the program's control.

DO'S

- Redirect, in a conflict provide choices and alternatives. For example, "You can either work from a language or a math shelf."
- Staff are to stop aggressive or bullying behavior immediately and make clear that this type of behavior is unacceptable. This is to be done by explanation rather than personal blame.
- Any behavioral problems are dealt with in a developmentally appropriate way. Staff are to help the children understand and they are loved, respected, valued even if their behavior/actions are not.
- When necessary, staff should outline the problems for children and encourage them to think of solutions.
- Staff should help children to take responsibility for their actions. For example, cleaning up after work or taking care of their environment.
- Adults use observations and recordkeeping as a way of finding out any possible reasons for unwanted behavior.

IN CASE OF PERSISTENT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

- A child may be briefly separated from the group, but only long enough to gain self-control and will be in view of, supervised and supported by the teacher or substitute teacher.
- The child's parents/guardians/caretaker should be involved.
- The Director and/or Teacher will discuss the situation with the parents/caretaker in an attempt to find the possible cause of the behavior.
- The Director and/or Teacher will, together, develop strategies for dealing with the unwanted behavior, which could be implemented at home in the setting.
- Should it be necessary and with the consent of the parent/caretaker, advice and assistance will be sought from the group. This may be a temporary or permanent measure.

| Birthday Observances

Birthday Observances during non-COVID times are explained below. Adjustments will be made while safety mandates continue to be exercised.

"We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity."

-Maria Montessori.

The Montessori birthday celebration, referred to as the "Celebration of Life," or "Walk around the Sun" is one of the most moving traditions we come together for in our classroom which combine your child's "first history" with scientific information, music, performance and general happiness into a short and lovely narrative of your child's life on earth. Parents are encouraged to attend this special event honoring their child.

During the Planning Stage:

- Please contact and confirm the date and time with your child's classroom teacher well in advance of the celebration.
- Bring pre-prepared, ready to serve, individual servings of kosher, nut free, healthy choice of freshly cut fruit or fresh vegetables. No juice boxes please, no cupcakes or sugary treats.
- Students with food allergies or food preferences/ restrictions may have special treats stored in class. They can eat during these special occasions.
- Select and bring a picture representing each year of your child's life. If your child is now 5 years old, bring 5 pictures (including one for the day (s)he was born.
- We refrain from distributing the goody bags in the school premise. You are welcome to come in with a special art, craft or science project, kindly discuss with the teacher during the planning stage.
- Upon arrival, call the classroom number and wait until someone invites you to come into the room. Sign in the visitor log, sit down in the chair offered you once in the classroom.

During the Celebration:

- The child who is being honored will be tasked with the responsibility of setting up the months of the year around a candle (which represents the sun).
- The child will be encircled by her parent/s, teachers and friends as s/he begins her/his journey (walk) around the sun while holding a globe. Each orbit around the sun represents 365 days, 12 months, or one year of that child's life. As we sing "The earth goes around the sun", this ritual is a reminder that on a deeper level, the child is experiencing time and place, geography and even history.
- The children listen intently as Mom and Dad show photos of their child and discuss major events and milestones that have occurred since the child entered the world.
- The lead teacher will lead you through a series of questions. When prompted, hold up the picture that shows your child when (s)he was first born and provide one short comment about this event. (Example: When Olivia was born, it was a rainy day in Mountain view, CA.)
- Your child will orbit one more time, kids will sing, and at the end of rotation the teacher will ask you another question regarding the first year's milestone, so on and so forth.

Montessori classrooms have mixed ages which allow children to reflect on what they were like at three years old and envision what they will be like when they turn five years old when they see a visual timeline of their friend's birthday celebration pictures. Often, a child who was shy her first year, evolves into a confident second- and third-year student who proudly orbits the sun and even begins to interject her/his parents and tell her/his own story. It is a time for the child to reminisce on her life, to engage in public speaking, and to be celebrated by friends and united by love. The most beautiful aspect surrounding this occasion is the emphasis on being connected to the planet and sharing the miracle of human existence. We end the circle with a special song and sign "We celebrate your birth and your place on the earth, May the sun moon and stars bring peace where you are" in the tune of Happy Birthday to you. Parents are welcome to read one short book of their child's choice.

After the ceremony:

- You, your child and a friend may help serve any food you have brought in.
- Help clean up and take all items that you have brought with you home.

If COVID-19 safety measures continue, the teacher will conduct the celebration in the classroom amongst classmates, in absence of the parents, guardians, family members and caregivers. Food items or other items will not be permitted to be dropped off to the classroom.

| Toilet Training

Children attending Yellow Acorn Montessori in 2022 - 2023 are expected to be toilet trained, or at least actively working on the process. If you are concerned about this, please speak with Your child's head teacher.

| Personal Belongings

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, children may not bring any personal belongings to school such as toys, stuffed animals, and books. All children need a small backpack to transport their work and/or notices home.



Yellow Acorn Montessori
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