Tinker Toddler Time
Family Handbook
2019/20
The Elmhurst Park District offers a series of early childhood programs designed specifically for infants, toddlers, two, and young three-year-olds in addition to the popular Sunbeams & Rainbows preschool program. These classes allow children to progress from taking a class with a parent or caregiver to taking classes independently. Welcome to Tinker Toddler Time—a child/adult class designed for children 12-27 months old.

The following information will be used throughout the year and should be saved as a reference. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Program Supervisor Early Childhood & Youth.

Program Supervisor Early Childhood & Youth
(630) 993-8922

Class Location
Tinker Toddler Time meets at Wagner Community Center (615 N. West Avenue) in Classroom 1.

All vehicles must be parked in a legal parking space. It is not permissible to stop, park, or drop off in the fire lane. Parking regulations will be monitored and strictly enforced; your cooperation is appreciated as it helps maintain a safer environment for all patrons.

Tinker Toddler Time Staff
Our Tinker Toddler Time instructor is looking forward to providing your child with a positive and rewarding class experience. We hope to establish mutual relationships with each child and family.

If you have any questions/concerns, leave a message for your class instructor at (630) 993-8901 or the Program Supervisor Early Childhood & Youth at (630) 993-8922.

Tinker Toddler Time Philosophy/Curriculum
Tinker Toddler Time is a child-guided playtime program that provides the perfect semi-structured environment for your little one to explore arts & crafts, sensory experiences, games, stories, and motor activities. Class activities are designed to promote cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development with attention paid towards developing fine & gross motor skills, enhancing daily/life problem solving skills, and building communication skills through dynamic play experiences.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in activities with their children. During circle time and whole class activities, we ask all adults to fully participate in the activity and refrain from side conversations. Silence cell phones while in class.

Arrival Procedure
Upon arriving at the Wagner Community Center, families should remain in the lobby. An instructor will escort families to the classroom at the class start time. Arrival activities are an important component of the daily schedule. Arriving promptly to class ensures that your child can fully participate in the arrival sequence and also reduces disruptions. Classroom doors will be locked after the start of class.

Inclement Weather
In the event of inclement weather, the Elmhurst Park District will announce building/program closings on the park district website at www.epd.org. Monitor the park district website for weather-related closings.

Sibling Policy
Families are to make childcare arrangements for non-registered siblings; however, infants in carriers are permitted.
Illinois Early Learning Guidelines for Birth to Age Three

Children’s experiences in the first three years of life influence how they develop, learn, and interact with the world. This period is marked by tremendous growth and sets the foundation for children’s future learning and ongoing development. The Illinois Early Learning Guidelines are designed to provide early childhood professionals a framework for understanding development. Our Tinker Toddler Time instructor uses the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines when arranging the classroom, selecting classroom toys & materials, and when preparing lessons and classroom activities.

The following core principles outlined in the Guidelines hold true for the Tinker Toddler Time program:

- **Early relationships are most important and central to young children’s development.**
  Our caring instructors and parents/guardians actively participate alongside the children as they play and learn.

- **Development occurs across multiple and interdependent domains, in a simultaneous manner.**
  Tinker Toddler Time activities encourage emotional, social, physical, and cognitive development.

- **Children develop and learn at their own unique pace and in the context of their family, culture, and community.**
  Children are encouraged to explore the Tinker Toddler Time classroom at their own pace with their caring adult. The instructor provides a variety of new and exciting activities that allow children to make choices based on their interests.

- **Play is the most meaningful way children learn and master new skills.**
  Tinker Toddler Time provides the perfect semi-structured environment for your little one to explore and play. Our classroom toys and materials are age-appropriate and carefully selected for the children to enjoy while also fostering development and learning.

**Daily Schedule**

The Tinker Toddler Time daily schedule is as follows:

**Arrival Sequence**
An instructor will meet the class in the lobby and escort the group to Classroom 1. Children and adults should remove their shoes (socks required) and affix a nametag to their shirts (children should wear their nametags on the back of their shirts). Beverages (adults) should be left on the cubby shelf and cell phones silenced (or on vibrate).

**Choice Time (Interest Centers) & Small Group Project**
Children engage in play within the interest centers of their choice. The instructor and adults are actively involved in facilitating small group projects (art, sensory, etc.) and play within the interest centers. Each child/adult pair is encouraged to move throughout the classroom at their own pace. The following centers and activities will be offered on a rotating basis: arts & crafts, sensory bins, playdough, library, dramatic play, manipulative table, puzzles, toys & games.

**Clean-Up Time/ Snack**
Children and their adult helpers clean up the toys as a group, wash hands, and enjoy a snack. A snack sign-up sheet is provided at the beginning of each session.

**Circle Time**
Children and their adults engage in music & movement activities, finger plays, and/or stories. The Tinker Toddler Time circle time is designed to maintain the children’s attention, thus it is kept short and encourages interaction and movement. Adult participation is imperative to a successful circle time. Children may sit in their adult’s lap until they are ready to sit alone.

**Dismissal**
Class concludes with the popular Tinker Mouse Goodbye Song and puppet.
Daily Supplies
Children and their caregivers should dress in comfortable, washable clothing as many class activities are messy. Classroom 1 is a shoe-less environment. Adults and children must wear socks in class.

Staff/Volunteers are not responsible for lost/stolen money, valuables, or personal items. With the exception of show-and-tell, all personal toys, games, and electronics should remain at home. Each child will have a cubby/hook for personal belongings.

Families may donate to our classroom wish list throughout the year. At the beginning of each session, a sign-up sheet is posted for wish list items.

Snacks
Children will enjoy a small, nutritious snack and beverage on a daily basis. Each child will contribute to the snack program throughout the year. Contributions include providing a commercially prepared nut-free snack with napkins for 12 children. We appreciate your support. Examples of nutritious daily snacks may include but are not limited to the following:

- Applesauce
- Gelatin
- Fruit
- Bananas
- Gold Fish Crackers
- Fruit Bars
- Cereal (Low-Sugar)
- Graham Crackers
- Yogurt

Children are to bring their own filled, reusable water bottle to class each day.

Food Allergies
For everyone’s safety, our classroom has been designated as “nut-restricted” although we cannot guarantee that nuts/nut products will not be brought into the classroom. This means we attempt to avoid peanut butter, nuts, foods containing peanut oils, or foods processed on machines that also process foods made with nuts from entering the classroom during class hours. If you have questions, ask your child’s instructor. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Medication
Under the guidance of a physician, parents/guardians should make every effort to adjust medication schedules so that medication may be administered under parent/guardian supervision. If your child needs medication dispensed to him/her during class hours, staff may be authorized to do so as long as the proper forms have been fully completed. In some instances, the administration of medication cannot be performed by park district staff due to specific and/or complex physician and/or manufacturer instructions or invasive procedures. If medication needs to be dispensed please see the Program Supervisor Early Childhood & Youth to obtain the proper forms.

All medications sent to class, including over-the-counter medications, must be brought to the instructor in the original container properly labeled by the pharmacist and/or with a physician order. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring all medications are within their expiration date and for collecting medications once discontinued and/or on the last day of class.

Birthdays
Children who would like to celebrate their birthdays may send non-edible birthday treats such as bubbles, party favors, or coloring books to be distributed to classmates. Instructors will recognize each birthday child in a special way. Children may distribute personal party invitations only when all classmates will be included in the celebration. Families are asked to make alternate arrangements for invitation distribution when possible.

Restrooms
Children enrolled in Tinker Toddler Time may wear diapers or pull-ups to class. If your child needs to be changed during class, please use the restroom facilities down the hallway. Diaper/pull-up changes may not be done in the Tinker Toddler Time classroom or hallway. Thank you for your cooperation.
Behavior Management Techniques

Tinker Toddler Time instructors implement a variety of positive guidance strategies including modeling skills, offering choices, employing redirection, altering the environment, and reflection. All behavior management strategies are suggested to the children in a gentle, positive, and discreet manner. Caregivers are instrumental in assisting their own child in adjusting to a classroom setting. Please notify the instructor of any behavior concerns regarding a classmate.

Instructors will maintain open communication with families to work through behavior concerns. The Program Supervisor Early Childhood & Youth is available to assist in these meetings. The park district reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any participant whose behavior disrupts the program or endangers him/herself or other participants.

Health Policy

Children play closely together. To maintain a healthier class environment, keep your child home if they have experienced any of these symptoms within the past 24 hours: sore throat, cough, runny nose, rash, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, fever, earache, or any communicable disease. All children must be symptom-free within 24 hours of attending class.

Parents/guardians whose children develop communicable diseases; i.e. chicken pox, head lice, pertussis, etc. are asked to notify the Program Supervisor Early Childhood & Youth as soon as the child is diagnosed. The name of the affected child is not released; however, parents are notified of the occurrence of a contagious illness. A doctor’s note may be required for your child to return to class.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of serious injury or illness, it is the policy of the Elmhurst Park District to seek immediate medical attention by calling 9-1-1. All costs associated with medical attention are the responsibility of the parent/guardian as stated in the Registration Waiver and Release. The Elmhurst Park District does not assume any costs associated with medical attention.

Discrimination

The Elmhurst Park District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion or disability in employment, treatment of visitors and users, use of parks and facilities, or admission to and participation in programs and activities of the District in compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the State of Illinois and U.S. Constitution.

For information concerning rights and provisions under ADA or to inform us of program, facility or service inaccessibility, please call the compliance officer at (630) 993-8910. We invite any resident with a special need to contact us upon registration so a smooth inclusion may occur.

Inclusion Services

The Elmhurst Park District is committed to promoting and encouraging positive interactions among participants with and without disabilities. Staff members are available to assist participants with accommodations needed for success in and enjoyment of our programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Once registered, contact the Inclusion Services Supervisor at (630) 993-8676 at least five days prior to the start of the session to discuss your/your child’s special needs and how the district can accommodate those needs. Should a request for inclusion services arise throughout the year, please contact the Inclusion Services Supervisor as soon as possible.

Early Childhood Screenings

Tinker Toddler Time staff is committed to working with your family to prepare your child for preschool. On occasion, staff will refer families to an outside agency for an early intervention screening. Staff will be part of your support team as long as a signed Consent & Authorization to Release Information Form is on file with the park district.
Tinker Toddler Time Song List

**Snack Song**
We thank you so much. We thank you so much.
We thank you dear (insert name) for sharing your snack.

*(Sung to the child who provides snack.)*

**Zoom**
Zoom, Zoom, Zoom, we’re going to the moon.
If you want to take a trip, climb aboard my rocket ship.
Zoom, Zoom, Zoom, we’re going to the moon.
10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1… Blast Off!

**Ring Around The Rosie**
Ring around the Rosie,
Pocket full of poises.
Ashes, ashes, we all fall down.
Cow in the meadow, eating buttercups.
Thunder, lightning, we all stand up!

**ABC Instrument March**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
Now I know my ABCs, next time won’t you sing with me?

**Tinker Mouse Goodbye Song**
Tinker Mouse, Tinker Mouse, turn around,
Tinker Mouse, Tinker Mouse, touch your toes.
Tinker Mouse, Tinker Mouse, reach for the sky,
Tinker Mouse, Tinker Mouse, wave goodbye!

*(Children may take turns saying goodbye to Tinker Mouse the puppet.)*