



Boothbay Region YMCA Harbor Montessori School

Family Handbook

Table of Contents

- Mission, Vision, Philosophy, Program Goals 3
- Curriculum (Infant/Toddler, Montessori) 3
- Admission Information & Child–Staff Ratio 4
- Hours of Operation 4
- Staff Training & Snow Policy 4-5
- Enrollment, Registration Requirements, Tuition Policies 5–6
- Developmental Screening 6
- Behavior Management, Conflict Resolution, Supervision, 6-7
- Concerning Behavior, Biting Policy..... 8
- Dismissal, Termination of Care 9
- Reporting Abuse, Resolving Family Concerns, Holidays & Closures 9
- Child Abuse Reports for Parents10
- Conferences & Meetings, Weather/Daily Attire 10-11
- Naptime, Meals & Nutrition, & Exercise 11
- Arrival & Pick-up & Illness Policy..... 12
- Toileting/Potty Training, Medication, Absences, Fire Drills 13
- Video Surveillance Policy.....13-14
- Illness Readmission Guidelines 14

- Parental Resources 15

Boothbay Region YMCA Mission

To strengthen families and community guided by Christian principles, including the universal values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility—through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

Our Vision

To nurture youth potential, promote healthy living for all, and foster social responsibility.

Our Philosophy

The Boothbay Region YMCA Child Enrichment Programs provide opportunities for children to explore, grow, and learn in an inclusive, child-centered environment. We focus on cognitive, social-emotional, language, and physical development. Children are supported at their own pace, building on their knowledge.

Families are essential partners in our program. Teachers introduce children to cultural, physical, and economic differences while working alongside families to build trust, self-esteem, and positive learning experiences.

Program Goals

Our Harbor Montessori School provides a safe, caring space where children:

- Learn new skills and explore freely.
 - Build independence, self-esteem, and problem-solving abilities.
 - Develop social, cognitive, physical, and language skills through structured and free play.
 - Grow in body, mind, and spirit in keeping with YMCA values.
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Infant/Toddler Curriculum

We believe children learn best through play. Our Montessori-inspired, developmentally appropriate curriculum fosters exploration, independence, and creativity. Teachers observe each child and design activities to support their next developmental stage.

Harbor Montessori School Curriculum

For children ages 3–6, we provide a traditional Montessori setting that encourages creativity, curiosity, and independence. Teachers guide and observe while children explore a carefully prepared environment that emphasizes Practical Life, Sensory Language, Math, and cultural studies.

Children also practice grace, courtesy, and social responsibility within their classroom community.

Admission Information

Enrollment is open to all families regardless of sex, race, national origin, religion, political beliefs, marital status, or disability. Spaces are limited and filled to ensure the best experience for children. All programs are licensed by the State of Maine Child Care Licensing Department.

Child–Staff Ratios

We follow Maine state licensing requirements: - 6 weeks–1 year: 1 staff for 4 children.

- 1–2½ years: 1 staff for 5 children
 - 2½–3 years: 1 staff for 7 children
 - 3–5 years: 1 staff for 8 children
 - Age 5: 1 staff for 10 children (if in group)
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Hours of Operation

- **Child Enrichment Center:** 7:00 am–5:00 pm, Monday–Friday
 - **Montessori (ages 3–5):**
 - Half Day: 8:30 am–11:30 am
 - Full Day: 8:30 am–2:30 pm
 - Before/after-care included in tuition
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Staff Training

We believe quality child care happens when staff have education and training. However, we reserve the right to close child care for training and will provide at least two weeks' notice for parents to find alternate care.

Snow Policy

The program will follow this Y Policy for late or no opening: Please tune in to Storm Center on Channel 6 or check their website at www.wcsh6.com to see if the Boothbay Schools are closed. If they are, then scroll down the website to Maine Private, and this is where the Boothbay Region YMCA Child Enrichment Center will be listed if we are delayed or closed. Please note: Although we try to follow the school closing, there are some cases in which we do not close even though the school has.

- If weather worsens during the day, parents may be called to pick up early.
 - No credits for early dismissals due to weather.
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Enrollment

- We require incoming families to arrange an appointment with our Child Care Director to learn about our programs and to tour the Center. It is important to have questions answered, view the design of the classroom, and observe interactions between children and teachers. It is also important to discuss the transitions available to your child. As with all changes, an adjustment period is expected when a new child joins our group.
 - Enrollment is offered year-round for the Infant and Toddler programs. Enrolling in the Harbor Montessori School is a school-year commitment. If needed, a wait list will be developed, and as openings occur, they will be filled. Summer Camp is offered during the summer months.
 - To hold a space, payment must be made once a spot becomes available for any child between 8 weeks and 4 years of age.
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Registration Requirements

- Before starting, families must provide:
 - Emergency Information form
 - Child Care Contract & Fee Agreement
 - Immunization Records
 - Release & Waiver of Liability
 - Child & Family Questionnaire
 - Signed Parent Handbook Acknowledgment
 - YMCA Family Membership (required throughout enrollment)

Tuition Policies

- Tuition is due **in advance** each Friday for the following week.
- A **two-week written notice** is required to terminate care.
- Payment is required via automatic withdrawal (card, checking, or savings).
- The Center closes promptly at 5:00 pm. Late pickups incur \$15 for every 10 minutes (or portion thereof).
- We reserve the right to terminate services when tuition is unpaid or a parent is late for pick-up.

Developmental Screening

We collaborate with **Child Development Services (CDS)**, which provides free developmental screenings and early intervention for eligible children. Teachers may make referrals (with parental consent), or families may request screenings directly (CDS: 207-563-1411).

Behavior Management

- In our classroom, we use various techniques to guide each child in appropriate behavior, yet encourage them to manage his/her behavior. In our **classroom design**, we create areas where children can access materials independently and provide more than one of the most interesting materials to alleviate conflicts.

- Another technique we use is **language**. We use conversation, songs, and books to broaden our language skills. As skills increase, we assist each child in directly communicating his/her needs to peers and encouraging problem-solving.
- Teachers use **modeling** as an effective teaching tool in behavior management. Teachers model the appropriate use of language, positive affect, and problem-solving skills. Using this technique, children can observe appropriate strategies when they enter a difficult situation. In addition, teachers facilitate suitable responses when a child cannot respond appropriately.
- We offer many **choices** for children during the day, including the materials they use and self-care routines (toileting, meals), and how to solve the problems that arise in group care. In using choices, we are enabling the child to learn skills to resolve problems independently. For example, "Would you like to leave the book on the shelf or take it to the playground with you?" If a child cannot make a choice, we may prompt them by counting to three and sometimes make the choice for him/her.
- When these usual techniques become ineffective, a teacher may require that a child take some **time away** from the group, child, or activity contributing to the disturbance. Allowing the child time to think about the consequences of his/her behavior and the effects of his/her behavior on another child or the group as a whole enables the child to return to play when he/she is more productive. Teachers support the child as he/she refocuses and rejoins the classroom by setting limits and encouraging the child to recognize and talk about his/her feelings.
- **Holding** will be utilized in rare cases where a dangerous threat to a child exists. Supportive holding is characterized by holding for less than five minutes, picking up a child and moving him/her to a safe location, and intervening calmly and predictably. This will be considered only in the following situations:
 1. A child's safety is at risk;
 2. The safety of other children or adults is at risk;
 3. The child must be moved to be safely supervised; or
 4. The child demonstrates a sustained behavior that is highly disruptive and/or upsetting to other children, necessitating moving the child.
- At no time do we use shaming, withholding of food, verbal abuse, or corporal punishment to manage behavior

Conflict Resolution

- Our primary concern is to provide a safe environment for all children at all times. The teachers in each program have been trained in conflict resolution. They will work to model this approach to the children in their care by helping them calm down, identifying the problem, generating solutions, reviewing solutions, choosing one, and checking back.

Supervision

- Infants and toddlers remain in sight and hearing (in the case of sleeping infants) of a staff member at all times. Older Montessori children may be allowed to independently go to their cubbies and the bathroom.

Concerning Behavior

- When a concerning behavior is observed, we have a plan to support those involved as follows:
- Observations Recorded by Teachers in the Program or Center Director

The teachers in the program or the director will record observations regarding the child's behavior and interactions in the classroom. These observations will be shared with the parent(s) to:

1. Discuss concerns (both from parent and classroom teachers)
 2. Create a plan (suggest possible strategies to support the child and reduce behavior)
 3. Schedule a date to meet again (for a period of time or only one more time, dependent on behavior)
- Continued Observations
The program teachers will follow the plan for a period of time (approximately two weeks) and document any changes. If the behavior increases or becomes harmful to other children, the child himself, or other teachers, a meeting will be called to discuss the next steps.

If the plan does not seem to improve the behavior or when concerns about developmental issues are present, a referral will be made to an early childhood support agency if there is parental consent. This will allow experts in the early childhood field to observe the child and offer suggestions or support for the child. This may include developmental therapy, support staff working with the child, other types of therapy, or additional services.

Biting Policy

Biting is a normal developmental stage, but must be managed for safety.

- 3 bites in one day (without broken skin): child sent home for the day.
- Bite with broken skin: immediate dismissal for the day.
- Chronic biting may result in termination of care.

Prevention strategies: close supervision, positive language, teething aids, and parent support.

Dismissal & Termination of Care

- A child may be dismissed temporarily for behaviors that threaten health/safety.
 - Care may be terminated for repeated unsafe behavior, unpaid tuition, or ongoing late pickups.
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Reporting Abuse

We are mandated reporters. Any suspicion of abuse will be reported to the State immediately. Staff accused of abuse are suspended with pay pending investigation. The YMCA will fully cooperate with authorities.

Resolving Family Concerns

We encourage open communication. Parents may request meetings with teachers or the Director. Please respect teachers' personal time—discussions should occur during school hours or scheduled conferences.

Holidays & Closures

- Closed on the following holidays (tuition still due):
- New Year's Eve (close at 12:00 pm, noon)
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving (Thursday & Friday)
- Christmas Eve (close at 12:00 pm)
- Christmas Day & the following day

*Additional closures may occur if attendance is too low.

Child Abuse Report for Parents

- Child Protective Intake (24 hours a day/7 days a week)
800-452-1999
711 (Maine Relay)
- If you suspect that a child under age 18 is being abused or neglected by a parent or caregiver, call us to file a report!
- Are you concerned that a parent/caregiver is:
 1. Chronically calling a child names
 2. Threatening to harm a child
 3. Physically harming a child
 4. Sexually abusing a child
 5. Exposing a child to substance abuse
 6. Exposing a child to domestic violence
 7. Failing to provide a child with adequate food, shelter, or clothing
 8. Exposing a child to unsafe or unsanitary living conditions

Conferences & Meetings

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice yearly (fall and spring) for Montessori families. Additional meetings are available upon request.

Weather & Daily Attire

Children play outdoors daily (minimum 2 hours, weather permitting). Please send season-appropriate clothing: boots, mittens, hats, and snow pants in winter; hats, sunscreen (SPF 30+), and water shoes in summer. Also, send a labeled change of clothes to keep at school.

Naptime

All children rest daily. Each child is provided a mat and blankets (cleaned weekly). Each child is asked to rest quietly for the first half of nap time, then an alternative quiet activity is provided for children who no longer nap.

Meals, Nutrition & Exercise

We follow the **5210 Let's Go** strategies for healthy eating and activity:

- Fruits, vegetables, and water are available daily.
- We encourage the consumption of sugary drinks to be limited.
- Food is not used as a reward.
- Daily physical activity:
 - Montessori: 90 minutes/day (full day), 45 minutes (half day).
 - Toddlers: 45 minutes/day; 30 minutes (half day).
 - Infants: multiple tummy-time sessions daily.

Minimal screen time is provided, if any.

Arrival & Pick-up

- An adult must accompany his/her child into and out of the classroom daily.
 - If someone other than the primary caregiver is picking up, the center director or teacher must receive written authorization, and picture identification will be requested at pick-up.
 - For the Harbor Montessori School, pick-up/drop-off of Harbor Montessori students is outside of the classroom. This allows the children the opportunity to be independent and gain the ability to be responsible for settling in.
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Illness Policy

Children must stay home if:

- Sick for any reason
- Fever (temperature over 100.4 degrees F)
- Diarrhea or Vomiting
- Unexplained Rash or a Contagious Rash.
- Discharge from the Eyes or Ears
- Severe sore throat that lasts more than 48 hours.
- Uncontrolled Cough

Healthy Children may attend with the following symptoms:

- Allergy Symptoms (with no fever), runny nose, cough, that have been medically diagnosed.
- Well-controlled, mild asthma.

Return guidelines: Child must be symptom-free for 24 hours without medication. A doctor's note may be required. Notify us of any contagious illness or lice exposure.

Backup care should be arranged in advance, as we cannot make exceptions to illness policy.

Toileting / Potty Training

- Montessori children must be toilet trained (underwear required; pull-ups allowed at nap).
 - Consistent accidents after the first 3–4 weeks may result in temporary withdrawal until the child is completely toilet-trained.
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Medication

- Requires a signed **Medication Authorization Form**.
- Prescription meds must be in original bottles with the child's name/dosage.
- Over-the-counter meds require written parent instructions.

Absences

Please notify us if your child will be absent. Tuition remains due; no credits for missed days.

Fire Drills

Monthly fire drills are conducted and recorded. Evacuation routes are posted in classrooms. Children and staff gather at the flagpole for roll call.

Video Surveillance Policy

Purpose of Surveillance

The Harbor Montessori utilizes video surveillance to support a safe and secure environment for the children, families, and staff in our care. Cameras are used for the following purposes:

- Ensuring the safety and security of children, staff, and visitors
- Protecting center property and assets from theft, vandalism, or damage
- Documenting workplace incidents or accidents
- Supporting the investigation of suspected illegal or harmful activity

Video surveillance is **not used** to evaluate staff performance or for any purpose unrelated to the center's safety and security.

Location and Visibility

- Cameras are placed only in **common areas** such as hallways, entrances, classrooms, playgrounds, and shared spaces.
- Cameras are **not placed** in restrooms or any location with a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Access and Use of Recordings

- Access to surveillance footage is strictly limited to the Center Director and designated administrators.
- Footage may be reviewed in the event of an incident, safety concern, or suspected violation of law or policy.

Confidentiality and Privacy

- Recorded footage is considered **confidential** and will not be released to third parties except as required by law or in cooperation with law enforcement.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with best practices, licensing regulations, and privacy standards.

Illness Readmission Guidelines

- **Chicken Pox (Varicella)**
 - Child may return 5 days after the rash first appears and after all lesions have crusted over and no new lesions appear for 24 hours.
- **Conjunctivitis**
 - Child may return when there is no longer **any** discharge from the eyes and no sooner than 24 hours after medical treatment has begun. **REQUIRES A NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.**
- **COVID-19**
 - Child may not return until fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of medication and nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea-free for 24 hours without the aid of any medications.
 - We recommend being masked if the child still exhibits symptoms for 5 days.
- **Diarrhea**
 - Child must have a 24-hour absence and may not return until there has been **no** incident of diarrhea for 24 hours. Severe cases may require a note from your physician.
- **Fever over 100.3°F**
 - Child may not return until fever-free for **24 hours without medication.**
- **Hand, Foot, and Mouth**
 - Child may return after all sores are closed, fever has passed, and all discomfort has ceased.
- **Head Lice**
 - Child may return after documented treatment, and all nits are removed from the head. Upon return, a parent may not leave the child until a staff member has done a thorough check.
- **Impetigo**
 - Child may return after 24 hours of oral and topical medical treatment has begun. **REQUIRES A NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.**
- **Pertussis (Whooping Cough)**
 - Child may return after 5 days of antibiotic treatment or for 21 days after cough starts if no antibiotics.

- **Ringworm**
 - Child may return after medical treatment has begun and all lesions are securely covered. **REQUIRES A NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.**
- **Scabies**
 - Child may return 24 hours after medical treatment. **REQUIRES NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.**
- **Shingles**
 - Child may not return until the rash can be covered or when all lesions have crusted over.

- **Strep Throat**
 - Child may return 24 hours after medical treatment has begun, but must also be fever-free for 24 hours **without medication.** **REQUIRES NOTE FROM PHYSICIAN AS TO TREATMENT.**

In the case of any illness, a child requiring near-constant one-on-one comfort and/or continuous medication to tolerate symptoms should not be in attendance.

Parental Resources

- [Maine Developmental Disabilities Council](#)
 - [CDC Developmental Milestones](#)
 - [Maine Early Learning Guidelines \(Infants & Toddlers\)](#)
 - [MELDS 2021 Standards](#)
 - [Maine DOE CDS Services](#)
 - [Maine Parent Federation](#)
 - [UMaine Autism Institute](#)
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