

...from the Director's Desk

Hello, my name is Teri Porter, and I am the Director for the Tiny Tots Preschool Program offered by the City of Petaluma Parks and Recreation Department, located at the Petaluma Community Center.

I have lived in Petaluma for over 17 years where I have raised my two boys. As a graduate from Sonoma State with a BA in Fine Arts I have owned and operated a photography business for over 15 years. In addition I have worked as an active volunteer in the City Schools, as well as with the Boy Scouts. I was the Child Care Manager for 9 years at the Redwood Health Club and in the last 4 years have worked for the Committee on the Shelterless (COTS), working in 'The Haven', an on-site licensed preschool and facilitated Kids First, an award winning program supported by the United Way serving at-risk kids by teaching life skills. The most important thing we can do for our children is give them a good sense of self. If a child can come away from their childhood feeling good about who they are, then the world is theirs to conquer. A parent's role is so crucial in shaping a child's life, especially in the first 5 years when they develop so rapidly.

I have always had a passion for working with children and creating fun learning environments and I am very excited to be a part of such a well established program, such as Tiny Tots, that has served so many families in the community by providing a positive, safe and fun atmosphere to grow and learn.

We are fortunate to have such a caring and knowledgeable team of Tiny Tots teachers. I look forward to meeting the new parents and working with the all the parents in the coming year. It is so important for a child to have a good first learning experience, setting the tone for attitudes toward future learning. It is something we strive to incorporate into every aspect of the Tiny Tots program. Working together, families, teachers and children, can learn, grow and enjoy being a part of the Tiny Tots program.

I look forward to meeting all of the children and parents at the open house.

Sincerely,

Teri Porter

Teri Porter
Tiny Tots Director
778-4407

*...Thanks again for
making Brenna's
first learning years
great ones!
-Kristen*

Introduction to Programs

Introduction

In January 1989, the City of Petaluma Parks and Recreation Department Tiny Tots program began. The program is open to three to five year-old children. The classrooms are located in the beautifully designed, furnished, and equipped preschool rooms at the Petaluma Community Center.

Philosophy

We believe that young children learn best through play. They are able to develop socially, intellectually, emotionally, and physically in a safe environment under the supervision of caring and trained adults. We strive to give each child a positive first learning experience. They learn social skills, expressive language, cognitive development and fine and gross motor skills through play and age appropriate activities. Your child will gain confidence, self esteem, form friendships and gain the necessary skills to prepare them for kindergarten.

Staff

Tiny Tots staff is selected because of their concern for the children in their care. Their backgrounds and experience include training in early childhood education. Every teacher is fingerprinted and receives a background check. We are also privileged to have a volunteer "Grandparent Program" in cooperation with the Lucchesi Senior Center. Our "grandparents" give extra love and care to our small children. Often we are a site for teenage volunteers serving an internship as part of their high school curriculum.

Our staff meets regularly for planning sessions and is encouraged to avail themselves of ongoing Early Childhood Education classes and workshops offered through our local college and university.



Licensing

Although we are exempt from licensing by the State of California as a preschool program, we are City-sponsored recreation program. Our goal is to meet or exceed the health and safety standards the State recommends. Any questions you may have concerning the quality of our program may be discussed with the Director. We value the trust you place in us when you enroll you child in Tiny Tots. We encourage you to visit our classroom when the children are present.

E.C.E.R.S Evaluation

In March of 2001, our program underwent an evaluation by the inspectors for Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale. We passed this inspection for a quality preschool program. We are constantly updating our program based on the latest findings in Early Childhood Education.

Program Descriptions

TINY TOTS

We offer children the fun of learning through their own active discovery in art, music, stories, and dramatic play. An outdoor curriculum for active learning and physical fitness is also included. Interacting with other children their own age allows the preschool child to gain skills, have fun, and develop emotionally under careful adult supervision. By keeping our monthly fees as low as possible, we strive to provide an affordable preschool experience for children. The City of Petaluma does not discriminate in employment or provision of services.

Our maximum teacher-to-child ratio is 1:12 with a maximum class enrollment of 48. Our adult and grandparent volunteers provide extra supervision for our classes and we also have a classroom recreation aide.



KINDER READY

The purpose of Kinder Ready, is to provide an opportunity for 4-year-old children who will be entering Kindergarten in the Fall, to work in small groups with their teacher and develop necessary skills that will prepare them for Kindergarten. The children will work closely with a teacher who will be able to track their progress and develop curriculum that will enhance their preschool experience. We will cover cognitive, social, language arts, fine and gross motor skills.

The class will have 6 teachers and a maximum class enrollment of 48 children with a 1/8 ratio. We are very proud of our loving and knowledgeable staff that have had many years of working with young children and are well qualified by their educational backgrounds.

LUNCH BUNCH

This program is an opportunity for your child to share lunch with friends and teachers in the preschool classroom. Lunch Bunch is offered Mon-Thurs 12:00-1:00 they can bring a lunch, and enjoy free play with their friends. You sign up on a daily basis as needed or a month at a time.

PARENTS NIGHT OUT

Offered once a month, this is an opportunity for your child to come to preschool in the evening, play and eat dinner. Siblings are invited and parents get to have a night out without the children. There will be sign-up sheets announcing these events. Additional fees are required to attend these events.

Important Information

Separation Tears

- Saying good-bye can be difficult for children and parents. We make every attempt to help you with this transition.
- If you have concerns of this nature, please see us. We are here for you and your child.

Daily Schedule

- Each day is spent encouraging our children to learn and have fun with friends their own age. The curriculum is based on selected themes and is implemented through various techniques, including art, music, stories, creative play, and cooking. Activities are geared with the developmental and skill levels of the children considered.
- Periods of active play and quiet times are varied. Weather permitting, we provide daily outdoor curriculum and free play or indoor play in one of rooms at the Community Center.



Discipline

- If a child needs to be disciplined for a behavior that is inappropriate or has the potential for being self-destructive, our staff will provide a safe environment to help the child control his or her behavior.
- If the time should come that we need to consult with parents, we will ask for a conference. We feel that in the best interest of the child, there should be consistency from school and home. We value the trust you have given us in the care of your child.

Telephone

- You may reach us by calling our classroom at **778-4407** or the front office at **778-4380**.
- We do have voice mail and messages may be left for us. Non-priority phone calls will be returned after the children have left for the day.

Communications

- We keep parents informed through newsletters and notices.
- Formal parent conferences are not held. However, our staff is available if you wish to discuss your child's progress or problems. If a formal conference is desired, speak with your child's teacher and an appointment will be made.
- Most brief communications can be done at arrival or dismissal time, provided it does not interfere with the teacher's relationship with the other children in the class. We want your experience at Tiny Tots to be meaningful and fun for you and your child.
- We welcome your suggestions for improving our program.

Clothing

- Comfortable, washable play clothes and strong shoes (no thongs or flip-flop) suitable for outdoor playground use are encouraged.
- We realize that at times children like to wear dress up shoes or cowboy boots to school; however, many tears have resulted because of slippery soles on the sidewalk and playground equipment.

- Don't forget jackets or sweatshirts for the outdoors as we try to allow for outdoor play whenever weather permits. **Please mark your child's name on all jackets, sweaters, and sweatshirts.** To a child, jackets look the same and can mistakenly be taken home.

Toileting and the Classroom

- Our classroom does not meet the sanitary code requirements of the Health Dept. regarding diapering; therefore our staff is unable to change disposable diapers or pull-ups.
- **We require that Diapers and/or Pull-Ups not be worn while attending Tiny Tots.**
- We understand that "potty related accidents" do happen and we are able to change your child if that should occur. If, however, this condition persists we may need to speak with you.
- Please help your child in this area by dressing him/her in clothing that can be removed quickly when they hurry to the bathroom. City policy does not allow staff to accompany a child into the bathroom. Clothing that your child can easily manage by himself is recommended. Elastic waist bands, no belts or snaps work best. Dress them for Success.



Arrival and Dismissal

- Classes are from 9am-12:00pm.
- We do not offer extended child care either before or after the regular class time. In the event that you are delayed in picking up your child, please call us at 778-4407 to let us know that you are delayed so we can tell your child that you are on the way. If this policy is abused, a late charge payable to the teacher will be enforced. A charge of \$10.00 for every fifteen minutes after 12:00 pm will be assessed.
- For the children's safety, when picking up your child we ask that parents wait until their child is dismissed from closing circle by the teacher and stays with the parent.
- Please have children walk quietly in the halls to and from class as meetings are occurring in other rooms.

Sign-in and Sign-out

- All children must be signed in and out of Tiny Tots each day by a parent or legal guardian.
- Only the child's parents and those adults approved on your registration sheet will be allowed to sign your child in and out. This policy is for your child's protection and for legal purposes.
- For dismissal to someone not approved by you on the registration form, we ask that you fill out a gold colored TEMPORARY PERMISSION FOR DISMISSAL form kept by the sign-in clipboard. This release is for the day only and the teachers pay special attention to these because the dismissal routine is unusual and the routine is interrupted.
- Names of carpooling parents should be placed on the child's original registration form. Those approved parents will be taking your child home regularly in their carpools.
- We realize that there may be a large number of parents coming to sign their child in and out each day. We ask you to be patient and courteous at these times. We encourage friendly "parent to parent" socializing at this time. We ask that you move into the classroom proper so that strollers, etc., do not cause a bottleneck at the clipboard area.

Cubbies

- Each cubby will be labeled with a child's name, children may place their personal belongings in the cubby for the day.
- Check cubbies often for papers and information that needs to go home.

Lost and Found

- Please label all loose items that are brought to Tiny Tots (ie: jackets, lunch boxes, etc.)
- **When doing laundry at home or checking little pockets, you may find small puzzle pieces, Legos, etc. Please return them to Tiny Tots. Sometimes they wander home but need to be returned to complete the puzzle or game.**

Snacks

- We provide a simple, nutritious mid-morning snack for the children.
- We obtain our information about a child's food allergies or restriction due to religious beliefs from the registration forms you completed at the time of enrollment. We are concerned about allergies that may cause serious illness from certain foods (e.g., dairy products, wheat, chocolate, juices, etc.)--not food preferences. If appropriate, we make exceptions to our nutritious snacks when we are celebrating a birthday or a special holiday.
- We ask parents who offer to bring snacks, to be considerate of our nutritious snack policy. If you have questions, please ask a teacher.
- **Fresh Fruit** days are Tuesday and Wednesday. Please have your child bring a piece of fresh fruit to share with the class on these days.

Special Day Celebrations

- Celebrating your child's birthday with his classmate can be fun. The teachers will gladly work with you regarding our parents' part in this celebration.
- You may bring a favorite, simple and **nutritious** snack to share at mid-morning snack time with his classmates.
- You may also like your child to pick out a special storybook, music tape, or plant to give to the class to remember his birthday. Special recognition of the gift will be made.
- **We discourage individual "goodie bags" being given to classmates.**
- You will be notified of your child's "special day". These days are generally around his/her real birthday or if the birthday falls when school is not in session, it will be around the "half-birthday".

Sharing

- One day a week is SHARE DAY, an opportunity for your child to verbally express himself in a group and learn to share with his friends.
- A list indicating his/her Share Day will be sent home at the beginning of each month. We will let you know what the theme related "shares" are.
- Do not send breakable objects so there are no tears if they should inadvertently be damaged or lost.
- One share per child, please. Please place the "shares" in a paper bag marked with your child's name. This helps keep his "share" a surprise until it is his turn.
- We strongly discourage any toys of violence be brought to school at any time.

Class Observation

- Parents are welcome to visit the program at any



time.

- Advance notice is appreciated so that we can make sure we are in the classroom when you come.

Field Trips and Guest Speakers

- Our outdoor curriculum will also include walks around our neighborhood and in our park.
- If we choose to go “off campus,” the City bus will be our usual means of transportation for field trips. Parents may be asked to help us at these times.
- On occasion, we invite guests into the classroom to talk with children. Parents who would like to share their talents or vocation are always welcomed.

Community

- It is important for your child to feel a part of the Tiny Tots Community. Events will be planned throughout the year to include families: Back to School Night Potluck, Pumpkin Patch Picnic, Grandparents Day, Cookie Exchange with Santa, Easter Egg Hunt and End of Year Fiesta.
- This is a fun and exciting time in your child’s life. We look forward to getting to know you and are here to help your child grow and learn.

Lending Library

- We have a lending library of children’s books. We cannot recommend enough the merits of spending time each day with your child, reading to them--with the TV off. This is one of the best ways to develop a love for reading at this early age.
- We have expanded our library to include a selection of bilingual literature reflecting the cultures of our children.
- The library rules are simple and standard. Your help in keeping it running smoothly is appreciated.
 1. The teachers will sign your child’s book out during class time.
 2. The book may be returned any time during the week prior to his/her next library day. He/She will not be able to check out a new book until the first book has been returned.
 3. There are no overdue fees. However, parents are responsible for lost/damaged books.



Health & Safety

Dear My TinyTots Friends,
I love coming to school to see all of my friends.
I love going to the park and playing in the sand.
I like having centers on Fridays. I also like to look
at books in the reading corner and playing
pretend during lunch bunch.

Your Friend,
Lauren, 4 years old



Your Registration Form/Permission Slip lists pertinent health information that the staff needs. For that reason, we ask that you complete this form when you enroll and return it immediately so that our staff can better know your child.

Throughout the year, we ask that you keep us informed in writing of any matters that concern your child's health or safety, especially changes of telephone number and for your child's safety, names of other adults to whom you permit your child to be released.

These changes will be made on the permanent Registration Form/Permission Slip.

There are a few general rules we wish you to follow:

1. For your child's sake and those in his/her class, we ask that you keep your ill child home during any infectious condition. He/She should be fever free and have no diarrhea or vomiting for 24 hours before returning to class.
2. We are aware that a child's condition can change quickly, so we will call you if we believe he/she needs to be home. For this reason, please keep current the telephone numbers of those you wish us to call in these situations.
3. When your little one is not feeling well, the best place for him/her that day is at home with you.
4. It is necessary that your child be protected from the usual childhood illnesses by up-to-date vaccine immunizations. If your child does need immunizations, or necessary boosters, contact your doctor or the Public Health Department. We only ask that they be current.
5. Please let the Tiny Tots staff know if your child contracts an infectious condition to which he/she has exposed his classmates (chicken pox, strep throat, pink eye, impetigo, head lice, etc.). In that event, we will alert the other parents in writing.
6. We reserve the right to ask you to keep your child at home if it is for the protection of your child or other children in the class.
7. The Petaluma Community Center has policies for emergency safety measures in case of fire, flood, or earthquake. To be prepared in case of a real emergency, the staff and children practice drills throughout the year.
8. The Tiny Tots staff meets the qualifications for CPR and first aid requirements offered through the American Heart Association and/or the American Red Cross.

Registration & Payment Policies

PROGRAM DAYS, HOURS, FEES

Program	Day	Time	Enrollment	Fees
Tiny Tots	M-Th	9am-12noon	2 classes of 24 1:12 ratio	2 times/week: \$120/month*
				3 times/week: \$175 month*
				4 times/week: \$225/month*
KinderReady	Friday	9am-12noon	2 classes of 24 1:8 ratio	\$60/month*
Lunch Bunch	M-Th	12noon-1pm		\$5/day

* Fees are reduced twice a year (Winter & Spring Break) to average out the tuition.

Payments

- Payments are **due by the 15th of each month**. (If the 15th falls on a day our offices are closed, payments are due the following business day).
- Payments can be made at the Petaluma Community Center, in the classroom, and online at activenet.active.com/petaluamrec.

Holidays

- We will observe all City holidays (see calendar).
- We will take an extended vacation during winter and spring break. During these months, the fees will be adjusted accordingly.

Refunds

- Refund requests are subject to approval by Director.
- Someone suffering from serious illness or injury that may result in continuous absenteeism will be eligible for prorating the next month fees. We do not prorate continuous enrolled families, for example, family vacation time cannot be considered for refunding.
- There is a ten dollar (\$10) processing fee for all refunds.

Late Fee

- Please be prompt for arrival/pickup. There is a \$10 late fee for every 15 minutes parents are late.

CALENDAR: 2009 - 2010

Aug 31	1 st Day Tiny Tots	Jan 18	Martin Luther King
Sept 7	Labor Day Holiday	Feb 15	President's Day
Nov 11	Veteran's Holiday	Apr 5-9	Spring Break
Nov 25-27	Thanksgiving Holiday	May 28	Last Day of Classes
Dec 21- Jan 1	Winter Holiday		

*Holiday schedule is based on City Council Approved Holidays, dates are subject to change.