

The Garden's Gate

Parent-Child Class Program

Overview



At the Waldorf School of Cape Cod, we know that living with young infants and toddlers can be joyful and filled with delight as we watch them grow and change before our eyes - and it can also be isolating, challenging, and tiring. Our facilitated weekly parent classes meet in a nurturing setting where support and friendship grow out of weekly conversations with other parents and the facilitating teacher while the little ones explore their world. These classes strive to nurture not only the child through movement and the adults through conversation, but also to nourish the warm and loving relationship that lives in the space between parent and child. Discussions about various topics help parents make decisions about how they will raise their children and helps them consciously form their family's culture. *Note: Although we refer to the adult as parent, we also welcome grandparents and other caregivers.*

Parent-Infant Classes are for parents with an infant from two months old to when s/he can walk. The facilitator serves the parents tea and a nutritious organic snack, teaches songs and lullabies to share with their little ones, and demonstrates simple infant massage techniques. She also provides articles about various parenting topics.

Parents take time to observe their infants as they grow and develop, strengthening their bodies, exploring their ever-widening world - from the simple discovery of their fingers and toes, to rolling over, crawling, sitting, climbing and, finally, walking. Together, they celebrate the growth of each child. Parents write a brief observation of their child each week; these are gathered in a memory book at the end of each term. Once children are walking, they move on to the Parent-Toddler Class.

Parent and infant attend class together one morning a week from 9:30 to 11 a.m. In addition, adults enrolled in the Parent-Infant and Parent-Toddler classes meet together on three Saturday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 for an in-depth discussion of topics such as rhythm, discipline, imaginative play and child development. Simple crafts may also be taught. Saturday classes are for adults only (*no children*).

Parent-Toddler Classes are for parents with a child who is just beginning to walk and up to three years old. The facilitator serves the parents and children tea and a nutritious organic snack, teaches songs, lullabies and simple games and may tell a simple story using table puppets. She also provides articles about various parenting topics.

Parents take time to observe their toddlers as they grow and develop, strengthening their bodies as they explore their ever-widening world from the standing position. Together, they celebrate the growth of each child as s/he moves from communicating with gestures and simple sounds to words and sentences. Parents learn to communicate with children in a supportive but non-judgmental manner, avoiding common discipline issues in the future. Parents write a brief observation of their child each week; these are gathered in a memory book at the end of each term.

Parent and child attend class together one morning a week from 9:30 to 11 a.m. In addition, adults enrolled in the Parent-Toddler and Parent-Infant classes meet together on three Saturday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 for an in-depth discussion of topics such as rhythm, discipline, imaginative play and child development. Simple crafts may also be taught. Saturday classes are for adults only (*no children*).

Parent-Child Classes are for parents with a 3 to 5 year old child and are similar in structure to our nursery and kindergarten classes. Through play and work, the children receive a taste of being with others in a group. Class begins with parents and children preparing an organic snack together. The children then engage in independent and interactive play with a variety of handmade toys and natural objects: hand-carved wooden animals and silk cloths, a housekeeping area with simple dolls and dishes, wooden tractors and cars, baskets of pinecones and shells and blocks made of tree slices set the stage for imaginative play. At a table, the parents work on a simple handwork project while discussing topics such as rhythm, discipline, imaginative play and child development. Once the toys and projects are put away, children and parents gather for circle time with seasonal songs and rhymes, finger plays and other games. Children and adults sit around the table to enjoy the snack they prepared earlier, listen to a story (often told using table puppets), and go outdoors to play. Parent and child attend class together one morning a week from 9 to 11 a.m.