



**City of Costa Mesa**  
Parks and Community  
Services Department

# **L.E.A.P**

*Learn Explore and Play*

## **Early Childhood Program Information Packet**

L.E.A.P Office (714) 754-5175

### **Program Forms**

- ✓ **Registration Form:** (required) Completed and signed by Parent/Legal Guardian
- ✓ **Proof of Age:**(required) Birth Certificate, Hospital Certificate & Passports are acceptable. Documentation required at time of registration.
- ✓ **Medicine to Minors Form:** (if required)  
This form must be completed by parent/guardian and the child's physician.
- ✓ **Auto-Draft Form:** (optional)  
For your convenience you may also sign up for an automatic monthly credit card payment. For more information please contact Recreation Specialist, Laurie Pulaski at (714) 754-5175.

### **Monthly Payments**

**Monthly fees MUST BE paid in advance by the 15th of the month prior.** If your monthly fees have not been paid, your child's spot will be subject to cancellation. Please communicate with Recreation Specialist, Laurie Pulaski, if you have any problems, concerns or questions about payments.

Acceptable forms of payment include credit card, check, and cash. Cash MUST be exact amount. Checks are made payable to the **CITY OF COSTA MESA** and should include your **CHILD'S NAME** and either **MWF** or **T/TH** in the lower left corner.

## **General Program Information**

The City of Costa Mesa's L.E.A.P Early Childhood Program operates from September through the first week of June. During the Summer, a 6-week Camp is offered called Camp Mini Explorers.



### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

3-4 year olds T/TH 4-5 year olds MWF 9:00 am-1:00 pm

**L.E.A.P observes the NMUSD Holidays & Breaks.**

### **LATE FEES**

A **\$20 LATE FEE** will be charge for every 15 minute increment or part thereof for late pick ups. If someone else is picking up your child, the **parent/guardian** will be responsible for the amount of fees charged. Time is determined by room clock.

### **RETURNED CHECKS**

A service charge of **\$25** will be assessed for any returned checks and must be reconciled with the Finance Department at City Hall.

### **WITHDRAW POLICY**

Enrollment in the L.E.A.P Program is for 9 months (Sept.-June). Request for withdrawal before June requires a **written notice, two (2) weeks** prior to withdrawing from the program. Parent/Guardian may be charged for the following month if notice is not received.

### **REFUND POLICY**

Request for refund must be made within the first **two (2) weeks** of each month, in writing. A service charge of \$20 will apply.

### **SIGN IN/SIGN OUT PROCEDURES**

Child(ren) must be signed in and out each day. The sign in/out form will be located by at the entrance of the room. Please read the room white board daily for updates on class activities/important information.

The program gate will promptly be closed at **9:10 am** and re-open around **1:00 pm**. If late or need to pick up early from the program, please enter through the front office. If the office is not open please ring the bell by the gate and/or contact the L.E.A.P office by calling (714) 754-5175.

### **PARTICIPANT SIGN IN/OUT AUTHORIZATION FORM**

To add to the authorized pick-up list, originally completed upon registration, please submitted written consent with authorized adult's name, the date, and parent/guardian's signature. Note, authorized adult may be ID upon the signing out of the child. If adult does not have prior consent on the authorized form, child will NOT be dismissed.

### **Cubbies and Labeling**

Each child is assigned a small cubicle called a "cubby" in which their personal and program items are stored. Check child's cubby daily for crafts and program related information. Also, please clearly label all belonging (i.e., jackets, share items and etc.).

### **Monthly Newsletter/Calendar**

The newsletter/calendar will be distributed via **email**, at the beginning of each month. Please read it closely as it contains important information about the program and a calendar of events for that month.



### **Snack**

Parents provide a snack for their child's room at least one time every two months. Parent/guardian are welcome to stay and help with snack. This is an opportunity for the parent/guardian to get to know the other children, staff, and the program.

A snack calendar will be posted in the room for the parents/guardian to select a date. If parent/guardian misses signing up for snack or forgets their snack day, they will be requested to still bring a snack and drink to replenish the food pantry.

### **Lunch**

Each child must bring their own lunch daily. Please label the lunch box or bag with their name.

### **Birthday Parties**

To celebrate a birthday, parent/guardian will need to sign up on the snack calendar sheet and indicate it's a birthday. Parent/guardian will then need to communicate the plan with staff, so staff can arrange an appropriate time for the celebration. Some days may not be available due to previously planned events.

### **Class Portraits and Photographs**

Class portraits are taken by Lifetouch, Inc. and various packages will be available for purchase by parents. All purchases are optional.

Throughout the year, staff will photograph class activities. At the end of the year, a slideshow of MWF participants will be presented.

### **Social Media**

The City of Costa Mesa's Recreation Division is on social media! Please following us on **Facebook** (Costa Mesa Recreation) and **Instagram** (CM\_Recreation) to see current pictures and videos of the L.E.A.P Program.



## **A Typical Day in L.E.A.P**

These times are flexible and programing subject to change.

### **9:00 am-10:00 am Art and Crafts/Station Play Time**

Children will have a opportunity to complete the art and craft project or choose from a variety of stations in the room, that may include blocks, games, dramatic play, science, and puzzles.

*(self-direction, choice imagination, problem-solving)*

### **10:00 am-10:45 am Educational Circle Time**

“Learning through play” is the L.E.A.P motto.

Circle time is group interactive experience that includes educational topics and weekly themes. Activities may include songs, dance, finger plays, books and musical instruments.

*(unity, movement, expression, listening, language, literacy)*

### **10:45 am-11:00 am Snack Time**

As children enjoy snacks and lunch provided by parents, they practice table manners, as well as develop social skills while communicating with peers.

*(socialization, responsibility, manners)*

### **11:00 am-12:00 pm Outside Play Time**

Each day children enjoy the fenced outdoor playground area. Play time includes sand toys, bicycles, kites, group games, and more.

*(gross motor skills, movement, socialization)*

### **12:00 pm-12:30 pm Lunch Time**

### **12:30 pm-1:00 pm Story Time**

Children experience a variety of stories or dramatic play that represents the weekly alphabet or themed topic.

*(language, imagination, discovery)*



## YOUR CHILD'S TRANSITION INTO L.E.A.P

For some of you this is your first experience leaving your child in a group environment. It can be difficult to see your child in distress or see them anxious with a new situation.

We are very experienced at helping your child adjust. They need to know that they will be ok without you at our program. The longer you stay, the longer it takes for them to adjust to this new experience. Our staff enjoy having parents interact in our program, but request to wait until your child is settled into their new environment. The following are some suggestions that will help **you** and **your child**.

### SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ **DO** familiarize your child with the new class surroundings (i.e. Staff, bathrooms, cubbies)
- ✓ **DO** reassure them that they will have a fun time and you will pick them up after lunch
- ✓ **DO** give them a big hug and kiss!
- ✓ **DO** let us know if you need assistance in your departure
- ✓ **DO** talk to them each day about the program (i.e. what art they created; what they learned in story/song time or what playtime was like)
- ✓ **DON'T** stay too long or come in too early to observe in this adjustment/ transition time

### POTTY TRAINED?

As you know, children must be completely potty trained before they enter this program. Children who are sent to school in pull-ups or pampers, are not considered potty trained. A child should also be able to take care of cleaning themselves while in the bathroom.

We know that some accidents will occur. Snaps, buttons and buckles can be hard for little fingers to negotiate in time. We will dutifully assist a child in this situation. But if a child has many recurring accidents, staff/parents will evaluate if the child is ready for our program.



## WELLNESS POLICY

Illnesses are common with children, and sometimes it is difficult to know when your child is sick and should stay home.

Our Wellness Policy is created as a guide to determine if your child is sick and should not be at our program. Staff is here to work with you and to provide what is best for your child and for all the children.

### HERE ARE SOME GUIDELINES TO HELP DECIDE IF YOUR CHILD SHOULD STAY HOME:

- ✓ If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher the night before
- ✓ If your child is unable to participate in normal recreational activities
- ✓ Excessive cough, congestion, earaches, any discharge from the throat and/or nose
- ✓ If exposed to contagious disease within the past three weeks, and is not feeling well
- ✓ Vomiting or diarrhea within the previous 24 hours
- ✓ Head lice– Children may not return to our program until after the 1st treatment and all nits are gone!
- ✓ Not feeling well, is lethargic, irritable, or experiencing unexplained crying the night before

**Children with any of the above conditions must be cleared by staff prior to returning or entering our program.**

Please keep your child at home for a full day after they have started an antibiotic. Inform staff immediately if your child comes down with a contagious disease.

In the interests of all the children and staff, children will be sent home if they don't feel well in our judgment, having symptoms of any illness or sickness.



**OUR GOAL IS TO KEEP THE L.E.A.P EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR EVERYONE!**

## L.E.A.P Participant Discipline Process

In most cases, the following “graduated” procedure and steps will be followed when applying discipline and/or correction to a child in the L.E.A.P Early Childhood Program.

**Resolve-** Staff will talk with the child about the incident/behavior, and will attempt to get information, causes, and facts.

**Remind-** Program rules will be explained. Staff will talk about how they apply to the child and to others in the program.

**Re-Establish & Redirect –** Child could be placed on a time-out (approx. 30 seconds for each year of age) and/or receive a talk about different options that could help the current situation and possible solutions on redirecting the problem in the future.

**Reinstate-** Child is return back to the program activity.



Parents/Guardians will be notified daily by program staff about excessive time-outs, corrections and incidents through by placing a note in the cubby, verbally communication, or a phone call.

Parents/Guardians will be contacted for an immediate pick-up if a child continually exhibits behavioral troubles and/or physically hits, bites, kicks pinches, spits or causes any malicious harm to other children or to staff.

An disciplinary action form will be then completed by staff, about child's behavior, documenting the incident. If three (3) disciplinary action forms are completed on a child, their continue participation will be subject to suspension or expulsion from the L.E.A.P Early Childhood Program.