



Enrollment Information for New Families 2009-2010 School Year

Dear Prospective Preschool and Toddler Families,

Thank you for your interest in our programs. We would like every family to know as much as possible about our Parent-Cooperative Montessori Preschool before making the decision to register. This packet is designed to answer the most common questions that parents have. If you have any further questions, or if you would like to schedule a visit, you may call the school at 646-3801.

For over **50 years** OVCNS has been the only Parent Cooperative Preschool in the Ojai Valley. We are a registered non-profit, cooperative school. The teachers are trained and credentialed professionals, but the administrators, maintenance crew, assistant teachers, publicists, and everything else are all parent volunteers. Not only does this type of system keep our tuition low, but this is a wonderful way for families to grow close by spending time working and playing together, and being a central part of their child's early educational experience.

Another unique aspect of OVCNS' programs is a high level of **parental involvement**. Our Toddler Program is a non-separation program, where a parent or caregiver attends class with the child. In preschool, parents are welcome to stay with their children everyday, and are required to work in the classroom assisting the teacher and helping with general clean-up 1 to 4 times per month depending on the number of families enrolled. We recognize that all children are comfortable with separation from caregivers at different times, hence a separation is never "forced" at OVCNS, but "*gently supported*". Children are given the opportunity to feel safe and learn to trust other adults in their own time.

Besides workdays, parents are asked to serve on one committee per year, which generally averages out to 2-3 hours per month of volunteer time. The committees include: field trip planning, organizing the library, purchasing cleaning supplies, publicity, fundraising, and school photographer. In the application process, you will be contacted by the head of Committees and be assigned your committee. Parents are asked to attend monthly parent meetings where we discuss business, have a discussion led by our teachers or parent education specialists, and have fun together as a community! Free childcare is always provided at these meetings. Also, for parents interested in being further involved in the school, yearly elections are held for our Board of Directors positions. These positions include: President, VP/Treasurer, Registrar, Fundraising, Committees, and Secretary.

We also provide **free, monthly parent education** sessions, during your child's class time, with a parent education specialist. Here parents are given the opportunity to learn and explore ways of parenting and communicating that promote respect for children's ideas and abilities. This includes: observing children unobtrusively, education on developmental milestones and helping children learn to resolve conflicts peacefully. A few times a year OVCNS offers **extended parent education workshops** for a reasonable cost, giving us all more time to learn and practice these important relationship skills. We believe that we are always learning new ways of living with our children and others as our families grow. At OVCNS parents receive much support from other parents, as well as helpful information from many experts in the field of Early Childhood Development and Education.

Programs Offered:

OVCNS is currently offering a 2-hour long **non-separation Toddler Program** for children aged 18 months to 3 years with their caregivers. The Toddler Class is held on Thursday and Friday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. You may apply to attend either one or both days.

The **Preschool program** is offered Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. An extended day program may also be offered three days a week from 12p.m.-2p.m with enough interest. The extended day will continue in-

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depth **Montessori** exploration. Families who are interested in the extended day program should have children who are no longer napping and be developmentally ready for a longer day. A limited number of spaces will be available and if you are interested in the extended day program, please consult with the teacher. You may apply to attend **2, 3, or 5** consecutive days for the preschool program. In order to create continuity in each child's play group, we are offering enrollment on *fixed days* for children who do not attend all 5 days. The fixed days are as follows:

- children enrolling **2** days per week will attend *Thursday and Friday*
- children enrolling **3** days per week will attend *Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday*

About our Director

Jennifer Wing is our **Director** and **Toddler Teacher**. Jennifer is an experienced, certified Montessori teacher, as well as a strong believer in parent cooperative education. She received her BA in English from UC Santa Barbara, and obtained her training in Early Childhood Education from Santa Barbara City College. She has been involved with OVCNS for several years now, first as a parent and then as an assistant teacher, before taking over as Director and head teacher in 2004. Jennifer brings many wonderful and enriching opportunities to the classroom.

To apply to our Toddler or Preschool Programs:

Please call the school, and leave a message in the "enrollment voicemail" about scheduling a time to tour the school and to meet the teacher. (We require that you visit the school, and meet with the teacher before you fill out any enrollment forms). Then, please: 1) complete the application form, 2) complete the enrollment form, 3) sign the Parent Agreement, and 4) send these in with a \$150 deposit, (of which \$50 is a non-refundable registration fee and the remaining \$100 is a deposit held against fulfillment of parent workdays and committee responsibilities, which upon successful completion will be refunded at the end of the school year). Mail these forms and checks to our PO Box listed below. Once we have received all of these forms along with your deposit, I will call you to let you know you that there is an opening, and proceed with enrolling your child in a program. Preschool families will then be sent a packet of state-required **health forms and a committee assignment sheet**, all of which must be completed prior to starting school. Both Toddler and Preschool families will be sent a "Committees Assignment Sheet" by the Committee Board member, to complete prior to starting school.

For more information, please visit us online at www.ovcns.org.

Thank you for your interest and feel free to call the school with any questions you may have.

Jennifer Arellanes / Registrar