

# HANDBOOK - STONE SCHOOL COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

Revised June 2016; see also <http://www.stoneschool.org>

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## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Stone School Cooperative Preschool (SSCP). In choosing the cooperative environment, you will enjoy the unique opportunity to partner with the teacher in your child's first school experience. We trust that your time at Stone School will be a rich experience both for your child and for your entire family. Please familiarize yourself with this Handbook and its contents, as it contains important information that you will need throughout the school year.

### **A Brief History of Stone School**

Stone School has a fascinating history which dates back to the middle of the 1800's. The land was leased to the school district in 1853 by Dr. Benajah Ticknor of Cobblestone Farm, and the first school opened in 1854. By 1911 a larger school was needed, and members of the community tore down the small school and used the stones (plus additional local stones) to build the present Stone School building. In 1949 parents built the cement block addition with bathrooms, and renovated the basement with paneling, ceiling tiles, and a kitchen. In 1953 Stone School was closed due to a new school opening across the street.

Stone School Cooperative Preschool began in January of 1955 as "Stone School Cooperative Nursery". Millie Seltzer first conceived the idea of a cooperative nursery, and a group of mothers formed the organization, did fundraising, repaired and repainted equipment, drew up an operating budget, landscaped the grounds, and hired Jane Herrin as the first teacher.

In September of 1955, Stone School Cooperative Preschool opened with morning classes. It was incorporated as a nonprofit in the summer of 1958, and afternoon classes were added in the fall of 1960. The co-op continued to lease the building from the school district until 1994, when the property was put up for sale. At that time, the co-op undertook fundraising, negotiated with the school district, and took out a mortgage to purchase the building in 1995. In 2005 the mortgage was fully paid off, making Stone School one of the few cooperative preschools in North America to own its building.

Stone School Cooperative Preschool is now a thriving organization, filling a need both in the community and in the lives of the children and parents who belong to it. Its stability and longevity are due to sound fiscal policies, committed parents, and excellent teachers. The building is listed on the National Register of Historical Places; a more detailed history can be found on our website ([stoneschool.org](http://stoneschool.org)).

### **Philosophy**

Cooperative preschool can be a rewarding experience for the preschool child. This is a place where each child's enjoyment, needs and feelings are of primary importance to the adults present each day: a place with new and exciting toys, opportunities for creative play and — perhaps for the first time — many playmates. Preschool allows children to enjoy themselves while learning social skills.

From the parents' viewpoint, the advantage of preschool is that it provides play experiences under the direction of a trained and objective teacher, in an environment that is carefully planned to match the developmental needs and abilities of the preschool-age child. A step toward kindergarten, preschool introduces the idea of cooperation and group play, and allows children to become acclimated to leaving home and accepting other adults as authorities. The presence of the assist parents also helps facilitate the transition from home to school.

To your child, the teacher represents continuity — the one person who can be counted on to be present every school day, ready to give comfort and encouragement as your child adjusts to this new experience. The teacher helps the children to channel their emotions and to accept the rules and limits on behavior that promote good social relations.

The teacher has a complex role in a cooperative school. In addition to her responsibilities to the children, she is in the position of supervising your participation as Assist Parents in the classroom. She will help you to become increasingly independent and confident in your relationships with the children, and to understand your own child on the days you assist. She points the way for you to help other children in the group. She welcomes your suggestions and encourages you to initiate activities and try out your own ideas. You can benefit from her knowledge of the children; she needs your knowledge of your own child's reactions. Together, you must strive to keep the channels of two-way communication open and to maintain a friendly relationship of mutual giving. You also share the responsibility of providing a happy play atmosphere for the children.

The unique quality of the cooperative preschool lies in the fact that you, the parent, and your child go to school together. It is true that your child goes two or three times a week, while you go only once or twice a month; but, as each of you interacts with the group — including the teacher, the other children and the other parents — the learning experience is shared.

Because the cooperative preschool is so dependent for its success on parents taking part, **IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT EVERY NEW MEMBER UNDERSTAND THE OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL.** While not all parents will contribute in the same way to the school, the talents of all families are needed. As is true with many things in life, the more you contribute, the more you (and your child) will gain. While certain established requirements are made of parents, families are also asked to assume responsibility for the many small, unscheduled needs that arise in the daily operations of the school.

Through the full cooperation of the teacher and the parents, the cooperative preschool becomes an important part of the emotional, mental, physical and social development of our children.

## ADMISSION

Stone School Co-Op Preschool admits students of any race, religion, creed, color, sex, disability, familial status, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin to all of the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, sex, disability, familial status, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

SSCP has four classes: a 3's class; a mixed age 3/4's class; a 4's AM class; and a 4's PM class. Each class has up to twenty-two (22) children.

- a. To be eligible for enrollment in the 3's or 3/4's classes, a child must turn three (3) on or before September 1 of the school year of enrollment.
- b. To be eligible for enrollment in the 4's classes, a child must turn four (4) on or before September 1 of the school year of enrollment.

Children are accepted for admission upon filling out an application form and remitting a nonrefundable application fee. Children currently enrolled, and children of former SSCP families are given priority

above all others until the date of the school Open House (usually in February), at which time the remaining positions for each class are filled on a first come, first served basis. A child's position in the class is determined by the date that the application is received. Once a class is filled, children's names are placed on a waiting list in the order in which their applications are received. (Note that if a parent withdraws a child from a class and then decides to re-enroll the child, the original application date is void; the child will be placed according to the date of the subsequent application).

Admission inquiries should be directed to the Membership chairperson(s), who can answer questions about school rules, functions and philosophies, and who distributes application forms.

### **Introduction to Membership Responsibilities**

Parents must attend an Orientation to acquaint them with the functions of the preschool and their responsibilities as members of a cooperative. Orientations are held in late August or early September. At Orientation, each family will sign up for one school job, one Seasonal Work Day, and one Weekend Clean Up. All members are also required to read this Handbook, which contains additional details.

Before the beginning of the school year, each child, accompanied by his or her parent(s), will meet individually with his or her teacher at school to ease the child's adjustment to the new surroundings. There will be a two-week probationary period for all school members.

Parents will assist in their child's classroom approximately once a month for the 3's and 3/4's classes, and approximately twice a month for the 4's classes. If enrollment in a class is low, families may need to assist more frequently. Families with two or more children will be expected to perform only one school job, one Seasonal Work Day and one Weekend Clean Up per year, but must assist for each child enrolled at SSCP. (For example, a family with a child in the 3's class and 4's AM class would assist approximately once a month in the 3's class and twice a month in the 4's AM class, while a family with twins in the 4's AM class would assist approximately four times a month in that class).

## **TUITION AND DEPOSITS**

A \$100 Membership Responsibility Deposit (MRD) per family is due at orientation. MRD refunds will be issued at the end of the school year to all families who have met their responsibilities. Families may choose to make their MRD into a tax-deductible donation to the school.

The current tuition amounts for each class are listed in the summer mailing packet sent to enrolled families, and are incorporated by reference into this Handbook. The first month's tuition (September) is due at Orientation. If a family wishes to pay for the full year or for the first semester, a discount is offered and tuition is due at Orientation (if paying by semester, the second semester payment is due on January 15<sup>th</sup>).

Thereafter, tuition is due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month (e.g., October tuition is due Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>). The last monthly payment is April 15<sup>th</sup>. If tuition is not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, a reminder will be sent. If tuition is not received by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month, a \$5 late fee is added to the amount due. If tuition is not received by the last day of the month, the child will be unable to return to the classroom until full payment is received. The SSCP Board cannot guarantee the child's spot will be held, especially if there is a waiting list for the class. Members with extenuating circumstances for late tuition payments

should discuss them individually with the Financial Processor, who will notify a Co-President, if necessary.

If a child joins a class in the first half of a month, the full tuition for that month is due. If a child joins after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, tuition for that month is half of the monthly rate.

Families with two or more children enrolled will receive a ten (10) percent discount off the lesser tuition fee, (i.e., if a family has a child enrolled in the 3's class and a child enrolled in a 4's class, the family will receive a ten (10) percent discount off the tuition fee for the 3's class).

Partial tuition assistance is available. Any family interested in applying for this assistance should contact the Co-Presidents, who will consider each application, taking into account family size, family income, and extenuating circumstances. Confidentiality is respected when families apply for assistance. Only the Co-Presidents will be aware of the details; the Financial Processor and the Treasurer will be aware of the identity of those receiving assistance, and the amount of assistance, but no other details.

## **THE SCHOOL DAY**

### **Adjusting to Preschool**

The first few days of preschool may bring mixed emotions, even to a seemingly independent child. For many children, this will be their first experience being separated from a parent on whom they have primarily depended until now for love and care.

Here are some suggestions for dealing with separation:

- Visit the school beforehand to help make the surroundings and the teacher familiar to your child.
- By all means prepare your child for starting preschool, but don't overdo it. Too many glowing terms may lead to disappointment later.
- Do not make your child feel that preschool is something to "get him out of the way," especially if there is a younger sibling to be cared for at home.
- On school days, be sure to say goodbye to your child when you leave, as slipping away may only add to feelings of desertion.
- Be sure to return for your child at the promised time.

### **Arriving & Departing**

Please be prompt - late arrivals must be brought in by the driver. Pull into the curb cut to allow the Curb Assist Parent to escort your child to or from the school. If you wish to escort your child to or from the school yourself, park on Ember Way in the neighborhood across Packard. Please do not leave your vehicle in the curb cut out during drop off or pickup. Assist parents may park in the school parking lot adjacent to the school.

At pickup time, please put a sign in your car window with your child's name (and the names of any children in your carpool). If you are running late when picking up your child, please call the school to inform the teacher. Pickups must be no later than ten (10) minutes after the scheduled pickup time, or an incident

report will be filled out and a **fine will be assessed**: \$5 for the first late pickup, \$10 for the second late pickup, and \$20 each time thereafter. Three late pickups will result in a probationary period - further action may be taken by the Board if necessary. After fifteen (15) minutes past pickup time, the teacher will attempt to reach the parent by phone. If the parent cannot be contacted, the teacher will try to reach the emergency contact.

Class	Assist Arrival	Class Arrival	Pickup
3's	8:55 am	9:10 am	11:30 am
3/4's	12:35 pm	12:50 pm	3:20 pm
4's AM	8:55 am	9:10 am	12:00 pm
4's PM	12:45 pm	1:00 pm	3:30 pm

### **What to Expect**

Flexibility in the daily schedule is desired, and no two school days will be exactly alike. There is time every day for the children to follow their own interests. They may choose among fine motor activities, math and literacy activities, a sensory-play table (filled with sand, dried beans, etc.), dolls and a home play area, other dress-up and pretend-play items, wood and Lego blocks and accessories, various vehicles (cars, trucks and a wood train set), puzzles, and many other things. In addition, all of the children will have the opportunity for gross-motor play downstairs.

Each day also includes an art project and other activities directed by the teacher and the assist parents. These vary by age group and include reading, singing, playing games, making music, pretending and dramatics, and sharing conversation.

This daily schedule includes time for a snack, and for outdoor play when weather permits. A basic daily schedule for all 4 classes:

Students arrive, free choice time.

Rug time - calendar, other daily routines, story.

Activity time - students make their own choices from the classroom centers and special daily activities.

Students will all have the opportunity to play downstairs during this time.

Second rug time - special class activities (Mystery Bags or Story Bags), song or fingerplay or flannelboard.

Handwashing and snack time.

Students put on outside clothes, put all papers in school bags.

Recess and parent pick up.

### **Sending Your Child Prepared**

- Dress your child in play clothes that are okay to get dirty. Pants or tights are best for girls.
- Send your child to school with sneakers or rubber-soled slippers, which are safest on slippery floors.
- Label your child's clothing, especially boots, gloves and hats.
- Keep a change of clothes, sealed in a plastic bag, in your child's school bag.
- The school will provide extra clothing in case of emergency. If your child wears the clothing home, you should wash and return it by the next school day.

- Whenever possible, the children will play outside. Please dress your child according to the weather. Provide snowsuits, boots, etc. that are easy to put on.

### **Field Trips**

Your child's class may make Field Trips to various places of interest during the year. These trips are planned by the Teacher, who welcomes suggestions for field-trip locations. Due to state seat-belt laws, PARENTS are responsible for dropping off and picking up their child/children at the Field Trip location. Information on times, locations, and maps will be provided prior to the trip. Every attempt is made to hold Field Trips as close to the usual class times as possible, but it may sometimes be necessary to alter times to take full advantage of the field trip content.

Parents are welcome to stay for the duration of the field trip. Field trips may or may not be suitable for younger siblings, and this will be indicated when the trip is announced. Parents are responsible for properly supervising any siblings who attend the Field Trip. Some trips are free, but for those that do have a fee, parents need to pay their own child's admission and that of any siblings attending the trip.

### **Lunch Option**

The two 4's classes each have the option of eating lunch at school once a week. The 4's AM students can stay for lunch from 12:00 pm, until 12:45 pm on Mondays, and the 4's PM students can come early for lunch from 12:15 pm until 1:00 pm on Wednesdays. The cost for the lunch program is \$5 per week, and students will register and pay for a month in advance. The parents of children who participate in the lunch program will take turns assisting with lunch. Students should bring their own shelf-stable, nut-free lunch from home, as older students would do for elementary school. There will not be access to a microwave to heat up any items.

### **Severe Weather and Emergency Procedures**

Stone School's policy is to close whenever Ann Arbor Public Schools are closed due to weather (e.g. snow). School closings are announced on radio station WAAM 1600 AM, as well as the Ann Arbor Public School's website. Stone School may also close when the public schools are open (e.g. if all surrounding districts are closed), in which case parents will be notified by email, by a post on the SSCP Facebook page, and possibly by a phone call or text.

Emergency procedures to be followed in the event of a fire, tornado, severe storm, or other emergencies are posted in the school office and are incorporated by reference into this Handbook. Please familiarize yourself with the posted procedures and note the locations of fire extinguishers, fire alarms, and fire exits, in case an emergency occurs on a day you are assisting. To ensure the safety of our children, fire and tornado drills are conducted during school sessions.

## **THE ROLE OF THE ASSIST PARENT**

Assist days offer enjoyable and rewarding experiences for parents in a cooperative preschool. They give parents a chance to observe their own child interacting with other children and adults, to become

acquainted with many different children, and to become associated in their child's mind as part of the school. Both parents are encouraged to alternate in assisting whenever possible, and other family members are also welcome.

Assist parents are not expected to be trained teachers. As an assistant to the teacher, you will use your own experience and judgment in dealing with children. Give the children considerate, friendly attention. Encourage safe, creative and cooperative play; however, avoid forcing suggestions on any child. As children need consistent treatment in school, the teacher should be looked to as a guide for activities and always consulted about disciplinary measures. The teacher is the final authority while school is in session. You are encouraged to present questions or concerns to the teacher outside of class.

### **Scheduling**

Assist days are scheduled approximately once a month for the 3's and 3/4's classes and approximately twice a month for the 4's AM and PM classes, although the frequency depends on individual class sizes. Families with two or more children must assist for each child enrolled at SSCP. For example, a family with a child in the 3's class and 4's AM class would assist approximately once a month in the 3's class and twice a month in the 4's AM class, while a family with twins in the 4's AM class would assist approximately 4 times a month in that class.

If you cannot assist on your scheduled day, **you are responsible for finding a substitute**. You and the substitute must each contact the teacher in the event of a change (if time permits). You will then assume an assist day previously assigned to your substitute. Should a last-minute emergency arise (sick child, flat tire, etc.), you should contact someone from the emergency assist parent list for your class (an emergency assist parent is someone who may be able to assist on short notice). You would then assume one of the emergency assist parent's scheduled assist days.

Please help the classes run smoothly and show respect for the teachers by arriving on time. If a parent is more than (ten) 10 minutes late for his or her assist day, an incident report will be filled out and a fine will be assessed: \$5 fine for the first late assist arrival; \$10 for the second; and \$20 for any further late arrivals. Three late assists will result in a probationary period - further action may be taken by the Board if necessary. Failure to show up on your assist day or secure a substitute will result in a \$25 fine and a probationary period for the family. Further action may be taken by the Board if necessary. **After 2 missed assists, the family will be asked to leave the Cooperative.**

Please do not bring other children with you when assisting.

### **Assist Parent Duties**

Three assist parents are scheduled for each class period:

- The **ART** parent, who helps with the art project for the day
- The **CURB** parent, who escorts children to and from vehicles in the curb cutout
- The **SNACK** parent, who provides the snack and supervises basement play

Note: There may be four assist parents for the three-year-old group for the first semester, if needed. If enrollment in any class is particularly low, only two assist parents may be needed for that class and assist duties will be divided accordingly.



Specific duties for each assist parent are posted in the school and in the pockets of the assist parent aprons for ease of reference throughout the school day, and are incorporated by reference into this Handbook. The following are general guidelines:

- Wear casual clothing, including comfortable shoes. Bring warm outerwear in cold weather.
- Upon arrival, consult the teacher about special events or materials needed. Put out daily supplies.
- Cleanup is a time for parents and children to work together on the principle that everyone helps to make our school a nice place for all to enjoy.
- Join the group and participate in the story or show-and-tell time. Do not use this time to clean.
- Please avoid too much adult conversation while you are assisting in the classroom. Be alert to the children's needs.
- If your child desires it, give him or her extra attention.
- Sit down and enjoy the snack with the children, one parent at each table. This is a wonderful opportunity to become better acquainted with the class.
- Parents should help the children with their outdoor clothing if needed, but should allow the children to demonstrate independence by doing as much as possible by themselves.
- Two adults must accompany the children outside, keeping an eye on the gate and the fence. Children must not climb on these.
- Assist parents should plan to stay until all of the cleaning is completed and all of the children have left.

### **Discipline Guidelines for Assist Parents**

As an assist parent, you may be required to set boundaries and to redirect behavior of the children on occasion. Please remember "to discipline" means "to teach", not "to punish". A positive approach must be used at all times. No physical or psychological punishment is to be used. Point out the limits of behavior clearly. Be firm, yet kind. Occasionally, a child's interests may need to be redirected. If necessary, remove the child from the activity until he or she regains control. Remember that a smile and a hug can work wonders.

Children should not be allowed to engage in play that:

- Endangers their own safety;
- Endangers the safety of, or annoys, others; or
- Damages property or equipment.

If such play is occurring, you should take the following steps:

- Stop the activity immediately;
- Tell the child or children involved: "This activity is not okay because..."
- Tell the child or children involved to find another activity - you may need to suggest one.

**FEEL FREE TO ASK THE TEACHER FOR ASSISTANCE AT ANY TIME.** If you are in the basement and the above steps do not resolve the problem, send the child or children involved upstairs or send another child to get the teacher. **DO NOT LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED DOWNSTAIRS.**

- No child may be on the playground or in the basement without adult supervision.
- No child may go through the front gate unless accompanied by an adult.
- Bikes are not to be crashed into anything - a child gets one warning, then must get off the bike.
- Sand is not to be thrown - a child gets one warning, then must leave the sandbox.
- By law, no smoking is allowed in the building or on the grounds.

## What to Do When Accidents Occur

A well-equipped first-aid box, with instructions, is kept in the school. In case of emergencies, a box containing the white Child Information Cards, showing the name of each child's doctor and hospital preference, is kept on the shelf opposite the telephone in the Office.

- Make sure the teacher is aware of any injuries.
- Record the incident in the logbook on the kitchen counter downstairs.
- Inform the parent of the incident when he or she picks up the injured child or children.
- If a child is bleeding, any adult who assists the child should wear disposable rubber gloves (located in bathrooms and downstairs in the kitchen area).
- If a child engages in dangerous conduct (including biting and hitting with hands or objects), the parents will be notified and all parties will work together to improve the child's conduct. If such conduct occurs more than three times, the child will be required to withdraw from school until satisfactory steps have been taken to enable the child to interact safely with other children.

## **ADDITIONAL PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Meetings

Meetings are an important aspect of a cooperative preschool: for planning, for exchanging information and ideas, and for making decisions.

- **Orientation**, prior to the beginning of the school year, is to acquaint parents with the functions of the preschool, and with their responsibilities as members of the cooperative.
- **Teacher conferences**, the week before school begins, are for each child, accompanied by parent(s), to meet individually at school to ease the child's adjustment to the new surroundings. Parents will sign up for conferences at Orientation.
- **General meetings** of the entire membership are held twice a year to discuss and vote on matters pertaining to the school as a whole. At the fall general meeting, an invited speaker often addresses the membership on a topic of interest to parents of young children. At the spring general meeting, members approve the budget and a slate of officers for the following school year. At least one adult from each family is **required** to attend all General Meetings (a \$25 fine is assessed for any unexcused absence).
- **Board meetings**, open to any interested member of the preschool, are held once a month. In general, administrative, financial and organizational decisions are made by the board.
- **Parent/teacher conferences** are held for each child once a year, usually in January. Any parent may request an additional teacher conference at any time that is convenient to both parties

Room Group Parents also organize optional gatherings of an informal nature, allowing parents to get to know one another. In addition, these meetings allow parents to plan activities, such as holiday parties, or to discuss problems or concerns. Each Room Group Parent serves as a liaison with the board..

Note: Orientations, General Meetings, and Board meetings are for **adults only**, with the exception of young babies.

## **Fundraising**

Fundraising can contribute to our school's budget and can help keep tuition low. The one required fundraiser is our spring raffle; each family must purchase \$100 worth of raffle tickets and may either keep them or sell them to others. There will be several other optional fundraisers throughout the school year that families may choose to participate in - a swim session at Goldfish Swim School, restaurant nights, candle sales, etc.

## **Cleaning**

As Stone School is a cooperative, all cleaning of the building is done by parents rather than by a janitor — and requires the constant cooperation of all of the members.

- Assist parents are responsible for cleaning the school at the end of each class period. Instructions for daily cleaning are posted on the wall by the bathrooms.
- Parents involved in any special activity held at the school should also leave it in an orderly fashion.
- Each family is responsible for one weekend cleanup per year.
- Each family is also responsible for one Seasonal Work Day per year.

Detailed instructions for weekend cleanups will be sent home to you with the code to the key box by the back door prior to your assigned weekend. There will be a Coordinator at the Seasonal Work Days to give direction. A \$25 fine will be assessed for missing a weekend cleanup, and a \$50 fine will be assessed for missing a Seasonal Work Day.

## **School Job**

Each family will be assigned a school job. Families may preference their choice of school job from a list provided in the summer mailing packets. The teachers will assign the school jobs, taking into account the job preference forms as well as the priority of the jobs needing to be filled. A \$50 fine will be assessed for not completing a school job, at the discretion of the Executive Board.

# **HEALTH & SAFETY**

## **What You Need To Start School**

Before a child may attend school, the parent shall provide the school with:

- Two completed white Child Information Cards, with emergency contact numbers;
- A green Health Appraisal Form signed by a licensed physician within the preceding 12 months; and
- A certificate of immunization or an immunization waiver signed by the parent.

If the date on the green Health Appraisal Form expires during the school year, a new form must be submitted before the child can continue attending school.

## **Medication**

Should a child require any type of medication during the school day, his or her parent should provide prior written permission for the teacher to administer the medication. Parents should send any such medication in its original container, stored according to instructions, and clearly labeled with the child's name. Prescription Medication should contain the pharmacy label.

## **If Your Child Is Not Toilet Trained**

While Stone School strongly encourages all children attending school to be toilet trained, or to be starting the process, a child is not required to be toilet trained in order to attend school. The teacher or assist parents will attempt to provide help as needed for those children who are in the process of toilet training and may require some assistance. (Parents who assist with toileting should wear disposable gloves which are located in each bathroom.) Additionally, it is permissible to send a child to school in a pull-up, with the understanding that the child will not be changed during the school day by either an assist parent or the teacher. **Stone School is not licensed to change diapers and has no diaper changing facilities.**

In general, a child who urinates in a pull-up will be cared for by his or her parent when he or she is picked up at the end of the school day. If a child has a bowel movement in a pull-up during school hours, his or her parent will be notified immediately to come to school and change the child. While there will be no penalty the first time a parent is unavailable to come change his or her child, a \$25 fine will be assessed on the second and subsequent times that a parent is called to come change his or her child and is unavailable.

All parents (regardless of the child's toilet training) are asked to keep a clean change of clothing in a plastic bag in their child's school bag. This should include a pair of underwear or pull-up, shirt, pants, and socks.

## **When to Keep Your Child Home**

- While children with mild cold symptoms may attend school, a child with a cold should be kept home if he is or she is coughing significantly, has a fever (and for twenty-four (24) hours after body temperature has returned to normal), or has nasal discharge that is not clear.
- A child should be kept at home for at least twenty-four (24) hours after diarrhea or vomiting has subsided.
- If you feel your child is not feeling well enough to play outside, please do not send him or her to school.
- If signs of illness develop during school time, the child will be isolated from the group and the parent will be called to take the child home.

## **If Your Child Contracts a Communicable Disease**

Stone School follows these recommendations from the state of Michigan: when a child has been diagnosed as having a communicable disease (i.e. mumps, chicken pox, measles, head-lice, mono, pertussis, etc.), the parent should immediately notify the Teacher, who will set in motion an effort to contact the parents of

other children who may have been exposed to the disease. In so doing, the privacy of the sick child will be respected and his or her identity will not be disclosed.

## SNACKS

Children attend Stone School for little more than two hours per day. Our nutrition policy is to complement, but not replace, the nutrition they receive at home. While three and four year olds benefit from small, nutritious snacks, they do not need large amounts of calorie-laden foods. Snack parents are asked to provide pure fruit juices or milk and a small snack of good nutritional value e.g., apple slices, raw vegetables, cheese, etc.

We do celebrate children's birthdays with a special snack. The Assist Scheduler will provide each family with an assist day on or near their child's birthday (or half-birthday, if a child's birthday is during summer break). While birthdays allow us to honor each child, they should not be occasions for large amounts of food or overly sugary desserts. Bear in mind that most classes celebrate several birthdays each month! We encourage a snack that is special but still holds some nutritional value. Birthday party invitations (or other solicitation) are **not** to be sent out in school bags via school mail.

### **Food Allergies and Nut-Free Policy**

Some food allergies are life-threatening. The eight most common allergens are milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds, etc.), soy, fish, shellfish, and wheat. All members must be aware of the dangers of food allergies, even if their children do not have any.

Because peanut and tree-nut allergies are among the most dangerous, **SSCN maintains a peanut and tree nut-free facility**. When serving as the snack parent or when bringing food to other school events, you are responsible for ensuring that it is nut-free! Detailed instructions will be handed out at Orientation - be sure to understand what ingredients to avoid, and please read food labels carefully. If you are preparing food at home, please follow good cleaning practices and don't share mixing and/or serving utensils or storage containers between nut-free items and items with nut/peanut ingredients. If you serve nut products to your child before school, please make sure they thoroughly wash their hands and face afterwards.

Because ingredients can change, **families of children with nut allergies must provide their own snack every day**. That child's snack should be clearly labeled with their name. If a child has allergies to the items on our "Safe Snack List" (for example, a dairy or egg allergy) his or her family should also consider sending in that child's daily snack. Birthdays will be listed on the assist schedule so that parents will know when to send in a birthday type treat for their child with allergies. If assist schedules are changed, affecting when birthday snacks will be served, parents should let the other families in the class know.

Below are a few guidelines for snack parents (full details are in the "Safe Snack List" provided at Orientation). To learn more about allergies and food labeling visit [www.faan.org](http://www.faan.org)

- Read labels carefully every time you shop. Ingredients often change without warning – a product that was safe last week may not be safe this week.
- Avoid any products that do not carry a complete list of ingredients (for example, bulk foods and goods from bakeries).

- Avoid foods with the disclaimer “may contain trace amounts of peanuts or nuts”. These foods are not safe for nut/peanut allergic individuals.
- The following are nut ingredients which must be avoided: peanut protein, peanut oil, mandelona nuts, and arachis oil. Vegetable protein and vegetable oil may also be made from peanuts, and should be avoided unless a specific source is identified such as corn, soy, cottonseed, etc. Canola oil is safe.

## **STONE CHIPS NEWSLETTER**

*Stone Chips* is an informative newsletter sent home 3 times a year to keep parents up to date on news and activities of the preschool. It contains notices of events and meetings, reports from the teachers and the Board and other useful information. In order to maintain a well-coordinated and efficient preschool, all parents should read the newsletter and keep their copies for reference throughout the year.

## **ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY**

In compliance with state licensing rules, Stone School screens all people who have contact with the children, including teachers and assist parents. The screening includes a Department of Human Services check for a history of child abuse or neglect, and a state police check for criminal records (some criminal records such as traffic offenses will not disqualify an assist parent).

Furthermore, all members, volunteers, visitors, teachers, etc., are mandated by law to report any suspected or known child abuse and/or neglect. Please talk to a teacher or Co-President and review the school's written policy (available at the school) before reporting any type of abuse/neglect, so that the report is handled correctly and confidentially.