

The Top 10 List of what we would like you to know about the Dew Drop Inn

1. The nursery has been called the Dew Drop Inn since 1988 and, to use one of the toddlers' favorite words, no one knows "Why?"
2. As you enter the nursery you see our huge teddy bear. He likes to be hugged. He has been there since 1990 so you can imagine the number of children who have climbed on his lap! He was named Andy after these words from a popular hymn: "and He walks with me and He talks with me!"
3. During the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services, the nursery provides care for infants and toddlers only. Childcare is provided for children of all ages during the 12:45 p.m. service. There is no charge for childcare during services, including the Wednesday evening service. We also provide childcare for other evening events, such as classes and special speakers. At those times, there is a charge of \$2.00 per hour for one child and \$3.00 per hour for more than one child. If you are volunteering at an event or attending choir rehearsal, there is no charge.
4. For most of you, the nursery is the first place you will leave your child. So, to support you in feeling comfortable, we have a "silent" paging system. When you sign your child in, you will take the pager whose number corresponds with the number of the line on which you signed. The pager should be clipped to your clothing or put in a pocket (not in a purse) so you can feel it vibrate if we should need you to return to the nursery.
5. Every Sunday, during the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services, the children play for the first half of the hour and then we all gather around the table for our Truth for Tots lesson. Unity teachings about God and the Bible are taught through the use of wind-up animals, bubbles, songs, puppetry and prayer and meditation. Infants and toddlers thrive on consistency, so the lesson format is always the same. We stay the same so they can grow!
6. The lesson ends with a snack—usually pretzels, animal crackers or goldfish crackers. You may also want to provide a snack of your choice for your child. Just leave it in her diaper bag and let us know. We prefer snacks that do not leave fingers sticky, (sticky fingers play with toys that then become sticky) or that are soft (such as doughnuts whose crumbs are harder to sweep up off the floor). We teach the children to eat all snacks at the table.
7. Staff and volunteers are given a great deal of information and training regarding our childcare philosophy (based on Montessori and Resources for Infant Educators' principles, mostly), but the main idea we focus on is treating the children with respect. For example, we tell a child what we are going to do before we do it. If a child has a dirty diaper, he is not "swooped up and off" to the changing table. We tell him "you need a clean diaper and I am going to change it." We give him several moments of "wait time"—time which is needed by infants and toddlers to absorb information—and then we go together to the changing table and change the diaper.
8. The nursery environment is Montessori-based with emphasis placed on keeping it the same so that the children feel comfortable and more able to trust their environment. The children's work (toys) can be found in the same place on the shelves and is returned to that place, usually by an adult, when the child is finished working with it. We even have a photo of each toy on its shelf so adults know where that toy belongs. Adults model for the children by returning toys to the shelves. Older toddlers sometimes return their work, but this is not "expected" of them.
9. Toys that have been mouthed are taken to the dip tub (containing a mixture of water and bleach) where they are dipped and left to air dry. All toys are treated with a natural purifying mist at the end of the day and cleaned with soap and water on a regular basis.
10. We encourage children who can talk to use their words, to say "my work" if another child tries to take their work away from them. Whenever possible, we allow the children to work out the occasional conflict, only stepping in if it looks like someone's safety is being threatened. Toddlers have a drive for independence ("Me do it"); they are beginning to see themselves as individuals with possessions ("Me! Mine!"); they push for separateness and independence ("No!"). We do not ask infants and toddlers to share. Sharing is not truly sharing if a child must be encouraged to share. When a child feels ownership of something, she will naturally share it. Most toddlers have not yet reached that stage of development.