



**JOWONIO
PARENT
HANDBOOK**

2013-2014

**Jowonio School
3049 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, New York 13224
(315) 445-4010**

www.jowonio.org



Welcome to Jowonio School! We see parents, students and staff as part of a learning community. We want to share information and communicate together about what is best for our children. While we serve preschoolers, we see ourselves as an educational setting and we do a lot of planning and problem solving about our classroom program. For an overview of the school, take a look at our website, www.jowonio.org.

It is a gift to spend our days with your child and we look forward to working with you. We ask that you as parents:

- make your needs and those of your child known to us, through notes, phone calls, e-mails and conferences with staff;
- notify us in writing about any changes in your life or routine that affect the ways we contact you (e.g., change in address, phone numbers, emergency numbers, baby-sitter, daily transportation plans, illnesses);
- participate in the Jowonio parent and family events (e.g., Curriculum Night, potluck suppers, parent groups, "Family Fun Nights", celebrations) and in formal and informal activities that provide support to our school such as the Jowonio Board and its committees, Friends of Jowonio events, the newsletter, or be a classroom volunteer, room parent and member of our Parent Teacher Group;
- give us feedback about how things are going for your child.

For our part, we as a staff will try to communicate what is going on in school through class schedules, notes, e-mails, phone calls, and conferences. We are open to your suggestions. Don't hesitate to call us at 445-4010 with comments or questions. We welcome you into our classrooms and hope you and your children enjoy your time here.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: Jowonio School
3049 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, New York 13224

Phone: (315) 445-4010

Fax: (315) 445-4060

Website: www.jowonio.org

Tax ID: 16-0981162

Table of Contents

Our Mission	4
Statement of Non-Discrimination	4
Program Oversight	4
History and Philosophy	5
Curriculum	6
Field Trips	7
Inclusion	7
Anti-Bias Curriculum	7
Holidays	8
Birthdays	8
Guiding Children's Behavior	9
School Staffing	9
University Affiliations	11
Parent Involvement	11
Communication	12
Classroom Placement	13
Arrival and Dismissal	13
Settling into School	14
School Calendar	14
Summer School	14
Emergencies/School Closings	15
Health and Safety	15
Health	15
Attendance and Exclusion	15
Medication	16
First Aid and Emergencies	16
Absences	17
Fire Drills	17
Meals	17
Clothing	18
Toilet Learning	18
Car Seats	18
Safety as You Enter and Exit	19
Building Access and Security	19
Transportation	19
Family Tuition	20
Questions and Concerns	20

Our Mission

The mission of Jowonio School is to provide model inclusive programs for young children, where diversity is celebrated and all are free to learn and grow.

Jowonio is dedicated to:

- Creating innovative educational settings where children of all abilities are full participants, encouraged to reach their potential;
- Offering a wide range of therapeutic and family support services;
- Providing training and development for teachers, therapists, and parents in collaboration with educational institutions and community agencies; and
- Advocating for the inclusion of all children in schools and in society.

Approved by the Jowonio Board of Directors, 4/19/2006

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Jowonio accepts students irrespective of sex, race, creed, color, religion, national origin, or handicapping condition. Jowonio is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE).

Program Oversight

Jowonio is governed by the Jowonio School Board, composed of parents and community volunteers; this board sets the direction of the school, provides programmatic and fiscal oversight, and plans fundraising. The Friends of Jowonio owns and manages our building. The boards seek parents as members when there are openings. Jowonio is authorized to provide services by four New York State agencies: the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities, and the Office of Children and Family Services. Each of these agencies provides programmatic and fiscal guidelines and compliance with their regulations is mandatory.

History and Philosophy of Jowonio

The name Jowonio comes from the word in the Onondaga Indian language which means "to set free." Our goal is to free the minds and emotions of children and adults from stereotypes and prejudices and to support them to learn and grow.

Jowonio began in 1969 as an alternative school for children whose families wanted a more open and individualized approach than they felt they could find in the public schools. From the beginning, Jowonio accepted a wide range of children. Since 1975, when we received special support from the N.Y.S. Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, we have operated as a planful inclusive educational program where typical children and children with special needs can learn in the same classrooms. Many of our staff members have training, certification, and experience in both special education and early childhood or elementary education.

Our goal is to provide a developmentally appropriate individualized program where each child is nurtured and supported as a learner. Jowonio's approach is based on the following beliefs:

- all children grow and learn, with their own unique capabilities and learning styles;
- all children have a right to a quality education in the same setting;
- children grow through their relationships with adults and peers;
- Parent involvement is welcomed and needed; teachers and parents should be partners in achieving their hopes for their children;
 - "school" means more than academics; social and emotional growth must be nurtured as carefully as cognitive development, with the purpose of helping children become caring human beings who feel good about themselves and others;
 - a quality classroom grows out of a balance of adult-provided structure with opportunities for children to explore, initiate, make choices, and problem-solve about their world;
 - a planful environment, clear expectations and positive models can help young children learn diverse and appropriate ways to interact with materials and people.

Curriculum

We seek to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that will facilitate curiosity, creativity and excitement in learning, as well as build a foundation for success in school in later years. We want children to learn to respond to peers in helpful ways, to make choices and become independent in their work, and to maintain a strong and positive sense of themselves while adapting to the routines and demands a group setting like school requires. We hope to model non-sexist behaviors and encourage nurturing and active play in both boys and girls. We value the great diversity in our community in terms of cultures and needs and the learning opportunities this brings to us all.

In order to share a common approach throughout our classrooms, we follow the guidance of the Creative Curriculum, and we utilize themes that emerge from children's interests and day-to-day life. We teach readiness skills including classification, visual and auditory discrimination, basic concepts such as shapes and colors, language and listening skills, fine and gross motor development, and self-help skills. We emphasize math and language literacy. Children learn by doing and we create opportunities for them to construct their own knowledge and represent it, through art and words. The focus is on process rather than product. By approaching content through a variety of modalities, we can address children with different learning styles. For the students participating in the Universal Pre-K program (age 4 and residing in the Syracuse School District), we implement a particular assessment process and reading/literacy curriculum.

At Jowonio we believe strongly that play is an important means of learning for young children: learning of language, concepts, social roles, and mastery of the environment. In addition, because some of our students use alternative modes of communication, our teachers incorporate these in the daily routines. We may use signing, electronic devices and have available letter and other communication boards and keyboards.

The weekly schedules, which will be sent home to you in your child's backpacks and in some cases posted on our website (www.jowonio.org), can serve as information for you about the content of your child's day, as a way to prepare your child for what's happening and to talk about it afterwards. The day is planned to vary active times with some focused sitting activities. Each classroom has a class meeting or circle time, to aid children in attending to each other, developing an identity as a group, talking about what will be happening during the day, as well as highlighting individual children and discussing content and feelings. Much of the rest of the day is spent in

independent exploration, skill times, or creative art activities. We have a commitment to fitness and a healthy lifestyle; each day includes free and adult-structured movement inside (in classrooms, the Gym, Secret Garden, Enchanted Forest) and outside. We have a wonderful outdoor space that includes our playground, Trike Town, and a nature trail, Sarah's Path. Outdoor play is encouraged year-round except when rain, bitter cold or excessive heat prevents it.

Assessment of skills and progress is generally carried out informally through observations, checklists and portfolios of student work. More formal assessments may be administered if a child has been referred for an evaluation or to facilitate a child's placement in their next school environment.

Field Trips

An enriching aspect of Jowonio's program has been flexibility to leave the classroom for trips and special events. We have two school vans, although, at times, transportation is provided by teacher and parent drivers. We ask parents to sign a field trip permission form for the year. You are notified through the schedules or teacher memos about each trip, and we welcome parents joining us. Van drivers must have an appropriate NYS Driver's licenses and all children are placed in approved carseats/booster seats.

Inclusion

Jowonio has had a long-term commitment to welcoming and including children of all abilities and needs in our program. Everyone should have access to all parts of the school and playspace, the environment is arranged to address children's sensory and motor needs, and resources are provided to help all participate as independently as possible. Teaching strategies address unique learning styles. Predictable routines, adaptive equipment, visual and auditory cues, and a variety of response options facilitate success for each learner. An essential goal of our classrooms is to create a sense of community, where adults teach positive social skills and model acceptance and appreciation of each child and highlight his/her gifts and interests.

Anti-Bias Curriculum

One of the benefits of Jowonio is our diverse population of students, including those from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds, family structures, economic situations; we also have a number of children for whom English is a second language. We want each child to feel good about themselves, be curious and comfortable with

people who are different from themselves, be aware of bias, and stand up for themselves and their peers. We encourage children to express their feelings and ideas, listen to others, and gain empathy for their friends. We teach ways for children to negotiate and solve problems.

Holidays

As we consider a respectful approach to our diversity, with regard to holidays in particular, our curriculum is informed by the following ideas:

- Whatever is presented to preschool children should be appropriate to their developmental stage and understanding.
- Many holidays are based on religious doctrine and historical events. The family home is the appropriate place to celebrate such holidays.
- Family traditions should be respected; at any time of the year we may invite parents to share with the class aspects of their culture (music, clothing, stories, food, etc.).
- In our curriculum at Jowonio, rather than focus on family-based, religious or commercially supported holidays, we hope to develop celebrations and special events that make memories and foster a sense of community. Some of these occur as we acknowledge the flow of daily life and the seasons across the school year (e.g. fall harvest, the first snow of winter, spring changes) and milestones that are important to young children (e.g. a new tooth, a baby sibling born, transitioning to kindergarten).

Birthdays

Many families are committed to the importance of birthdays and the opportunity they offer to celebrate children. We want to acknowledge each individual and their growth and let every child feel included. There are many ways that this can happen. We know that some families have used the support of teachers to help them create a celebration that is comfortable and meaningful for their child. For others, it is a financial stretch to bring in food for the class, and also create a party at home. Some families from other cultures may have traditions about a child's birthday with which we are unfamiliar. And other families do not celebrate birthdays at all because of their religion.

Our obligation is to be responsive to each child and family, be open to including their needs and perspectives in what we do, and to make conscious the values that underlie our own decisions and actions. Please talk with us about any ways you'd like to acknowledge your child's birthday.

Guiding Children's Behaviors

At Jowonio, we respect each child and respond to his/her needs and abilities; we view behavior as communication and realize that young children are learning to negotiate and play with others. We find there are two important variables in helping children develop control and learn social skills: consistent and warm responses by the adults in their environment and attention to preventive classroom structure (e.g. routines, organization of space, choice of materials, visual cues and presentation of tasks). If an issue arises between children or between adults and children, we first seek to use a problem-solving approach, encouraging children to express their own wishes, consider the perspectives of others, and generate alternatives for dealing with a particular situation. We may do this by discussion or role-playing.

The most effective intervention with behavior is prevention. We interpret behavior as communication and a reaction to what is going on around a child. We assess the reason for behavior. And we teach children positive ways to express their needs and wants. So many of the behaviors that are frustrating to adults are the result of children expressing their independence, the need for attention or a response to sensory overload; youngsters may not have control of their bodies or have sophisticated strategies for getting what they want. We assume that "all children would be good if they could" and we know that accidents happen in the world of preschoolers. Rather than only saying "No" and focusing on what a child should *not* be doing, we use positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviors and natural consequences (e.g. if you throw your cup of juice, you have no more juice and you need to clean up the mess). When children are not able to respond to a verbally directed problem solving approach because of their ability to communicate or their emotional state, adults intervene to keep all individuals safe. We do not believe in aversive approaches such as seclusion, physical punishment or physical restraint. If your child is involved in an accident, alone or with another child, the teacher will complete an Incident Report and share it with you, asking for you to read and sign it.

School Staffing

We have 4 or more teachers in each classroom. There is one lead teacher and one assistant teacher who work together to coordinate the rest of the classroom team; their backgrounds reflect training in early childhood and inclusive education. There is at least one certified teacher in each classroom. Teacher aides and undergraduate and graduate intern teachers also participate in the school program. Our office staff includes the Director, Assistant Director, Support Teachers, School Psychologist,

Social Workers, Program Administrator, Financial Manager, Office Manager, Office and Accounting Assistants.

Jowonio offers a wide range of special services. Our resource staff includes Speech/Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists, and Creative Arts Teachers. Speech/language pathologists focus on communication, including receptive and expressive language, use of language, articulation, and fluency. Occupational and physical therapy are professions that promote and facilitate independent functional abilities of children who have limitations due to pain, trauma, and/or delayed development. They seek to improve children's strength, endurance, balance, coordination, problem-solving, motor learning, object manipulation, and sensory integration skills through a child-friendly play-based approach. Therapy occurs in classrooms, in the gym, on the playground, on fieldtrips, and in Pooh Corner (speech-language) and the Secret Garden (sensory-motor), spaces especially designed to meet children's goals. Our therapists work in concert with teachers and parents to meet each child's individual needs.

Some Jowonio students are also being served by professionals who are not employed by Jowonio. Usually these services will not take place at our site unless the discipline is one that we do not provide (e.g. Music Therapy, Teacher of the Visually Impaired). If we do not have the staff available to provide a service and parents and staff agree that it is beneficial for the child, we arrange for an external provider to see the student during the school day. The services should occur at a regularly scheduled time approved by our staff and the parent and documented through a Service Agreement. Efforts will be made to establish on-going communication between the teaching and therapy team, the parent and the external provider.

Jowonio has an Evaluation Team, approved by the county Health Department, to assess preschool children at the request of parents and school districts, and at the suggestion of Early Intervention providers and physicians. If you have concerns about your child and would like to discuss an evaluation, talk with his/her teacher, the classroom support teacher, or a member of our Evaluation Team.

Jowonio hires only qualified and appropriately licensed or certified staff in all positions. Our teachers and therapists reflect experience and a commitment to inclusive education and their own growth as professionals. We are lucky to have limited turnover in our lead staff, a tribute to their belief in their work. All staff members must participate in annual training to meet the requirements of the NYS Office of Children and Families. All staff are cleared through the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and are fingerprinted for a criminal

background check. We interview each person hired and check their references. In addition every employee participates annually in a staff review process.

In accordance with the NYS Social Service Law, employees of Jowonio are mandated reporters, and as such must report to the State Central Registry any suspected incident of child abuse, maltreatment or neglect. If you ever have a concern about the welfare or safety of your child, contact Ellen Barnes, the Director. If the matter is not addressed to your satisfaction, you may contact the Jowonio School Board or the Statewide Central Registry of Child Abuse and Maltreatment.

University Affiliations

Jowonio is a training site for education and therapy students in both their undergraduate and graduate programs. Many of these interns come to us with teaching experience and wonderful energy. They are provided supervision during their Jowonio placement by our paid staff and University faculty. They may be full or part-time and usually stay for at least a semester. We have had interns from Syracuse University, Lemoyne College, Cazenovia College, SUNY Cortland, Daeman College and Onondaga Community College. In addition, Jowonio staff periodically teach courses in the graduate inclusive education program at Syracuse University.

Parent Involvement

We have a variety of ways for parents to be involved at Jowonio. We have an "open door" policy and welcome parents to volunteer in classrooms, go on field trips and visit their child's classroom, join the Parent Teacher Group (PTG), participate in social events, and contribute to the quality of our classroom programming. We offer a variety of activities for parents throughout the year, including daytime and evening speakers and discussions. There is a fall Open House to acquaint parents with the school, the staff and teaching approaches. Social activities include a November family potluck supper, a winter Art Show, the Spring Follies, end of the year graduation celebrations, and a summer "Ice Cream Social" and concert. We welcome parent help in planning and implementing these activities as well as fundraising events where monies raised enrich the school offerings for children and families. Individual classrooms may set up social experiences as well. Five times a year Jowonio issues a Parent Newsletter, and we are always looking for contributions to it. We encourage you to pledge some time to the school, by reviewing the list of ways that you can be involved with us; please complete it and turn it in to the office.

The Jowonio School Board of Directors is made up of parents and community professionals, and when terms end, we seek individuals to join this group. Friends of Jowonio is a not-for-profit organization and the owner of our building. Please let us know if you'd like information about the School Board, the Friends of Jowonio Board, as well as the Parent Teacher Group activities.

Communication

We hope for clear and open communication between families and staff. Our teachers are always available to talk with parents and in addition they are happy to use e-mail, notebooks, or a phone call to share information. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to read all written communication from Jowonio, including weekly schedules, newsletters, memos and personal notes. Check our first floor bulletin boards for information about current events. We create a parent listserv for school-wide communication; in addition we publish on our website (www.jowonio.org) and in our Parent Newsletter information about school events and approaches. We also have a Jowonio Facebook page. If you do not have e-mail or check it regularly, let us know so that we can ensure that you receive a paper copy. Arrange a communication system that works well for you and your child's teacher and therapists. Each classroom has a parent bulletin board for notices; messages will also be left in your child's locker or backpack. Please notify us in writing of any important changes in your child's family situation, health, daily schedule, or attendance.

We plan formal parent conferences at least two times a year. Parents of children with special needs will meet with staff to discuss their child's Individual Education Plan and its updates; it is our expectation that teachers and/or therapists have face-to-face contact with these parents at a mutually convenient time. We hope that you will feel free to initiate a meeting around any issues of concern during the course of the year. We are available to meet with parents on an informal basis; please call to arrange this with teachers and/or administrators. A report is written on each student at least annually and given to parents.

In a family situation where parents are living separately, we expect to communicate with and give access to both parents, unless otherwise noted in legal custody arrangements. It is the custodial parent's responsibility to give Jowonio a copy of any official custody or restraining order on file that might curtail or deny such access. It is expected that necessary releases, emergency contacts and authorizations will be directed to the custodial parent. We encourage the custodial parent to share information with the non-custodial parent, if appropriate, with regard to conferences and school events.

Classroom Placement

Classroom placements for the following school year are made in the summer. We take into consideration parents' requests for a particular class although we are not always able to fulfill all requests. Class compositions change each year in terms of how children are grouped by age or learning needs. We try as best we can to be sure that all students have an appropriate peer group and that each class is balanced in terms of age, gender, and needs. Usually new children are admitted on a "first-come, first-serve" basis unless they are siblings of a current student or have particular special needs to be considered. Since family plans often change over the summer, class-lists will be sent to families in August.

Arrival and Dismissal

Jowonio currently offers three lengths of day in our classroom: 8:45-11:15 a.m.; 8:45-1:00; and 8:45-2:30. On Wednesdays we dismiss at 12:30 for a regular staff inservice, rather than taking any of the school district Conference Days. In order to support working families, we have an Early Morning Program (7:30-8:45) and two Afterschool programs, until 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Students must be pre-registered for these supplemental hours and additional tuition is charged. Often there is a waiting list for these sessions.

Regular and punctual attendance is a benefit to students. We plan activities for the whole length of the child's day, and the more time a child is in school the more quickly he/she is comfortable with the routine, builds relationships with adults and classmates, and learns. If a child is consistently late, he/she misses the child-initiated time at the beginning of the day that allows for warming up and settling in to the classroom.

For your child's safety be sure that teachers know who is allowed to pick up your child each day and keep this list current. We need to know in writing if someone other than the usual adult will be getting your child at the close of their day.

It is also important that children are picked up on time, at their regular dismissal time. Jowonio teams meet after school to talk with therapists, to review the day and plan for the next, and to participate in inservice training. A number of teachers have additional work or family obligations. We realize that there are occasional crises; in that case, call us at 445-4010 so we can relieve your child's anxiety and make arrangements for coverage. But our expectation is that children will be picked up at the agreed-upon time. Fees will be charged if late pick-up occurs

more than once. If your schedule is not working for you or your child, our staff may be able to help you make different arrangements. While our teachers can take a few minutes to talk at pick-up time, they are always open to scheduling a longer time to meet (just ask). Many will communicate through e-mail.

Settling into School

We know that the beginning of the year can be a difficult time for parents and children, as both may be struggling with anxiety about separation and adjusting to new routines. Sometimes leaving a picture of family members and/or a small personal belonging of yours at school can be comforting. Teachers can help you create a "social story" that may help, and you can also read books at home about starting school. When you are ready to leave for the day, be sure to let your child know you are leaving---don't just disappear! It will help to make a plan about how the goodbye time will look; for example, "we will read a book together and give each other two hugs, before I head out to work". Our teachers will reassure and comfort your son or daughter if needed, and we will have lots of engaging activities for diversion! We are happy to let you know how your child is settling in during the day.

School Calendar

We follow the Syracuse City School District calendar for holidays and vacations. However we do not use their in-service days. Instead, we dismiss school early on Wednesday to allow for ongoing in-service training and team meetings for the Jowonio staff. A calendar is given to the parents at the beginning of the school year. Following is a list of the holidays we observe: Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas/ New Years, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Famous Americans Day, Good Friday, and Memorial Day. In addition, we have a break the end of December, a mid-winter recess in February and a spring recess in April.

Summer School

Jowonio operates a six week program during the months of July and August. We offer our regular classroom curriculum and opportunities to explore the community and our terrific outdoor space in the good weather. Many of our school year staff teach in the summer. In the spring, we send out an interest questionnaire about your summer plans.

Emergencies/School Closings

Jowonio does not have school when the Syracuse City School District is closed because of inclement weather. Announcements will be made on local radio and television stations between 6:30 and 7:30 in the morning if we close. If the City Schools close after the school day has begun, Jowonio will also close. We will call parents to come pick up their children if busing is not available. Therefore, we need to know how to reach you during the day or, in an emergency, whom we can call in your absence. If you are not at a number that we have, and the weather is bad, please call us (445-4010) and check on school closing plans. If we need to close because of a building emergency (i.e. no heat), a decision will be made as early as possible. In all cases, check the web and listen to your local radio and television stations.

Health and Safety

- **Health.** We are required by law to have a completed physical form for all children who attend our school which includes a list of immunizations, and a written statement signed by a health care provider stating that "the child is able to participate in child day care, is free from contagious and communicable diseases, and is receiving health care." The Office of Child and Family Services has stated that children cannot be in attendance without a current physical form on file. There are four exemptions for any or all of the state required immunizations: medical reasons, religious reasons, serological evidence of immunity, or a physician's diagnosis of the child having had measles, mumps, or varicella. Any exemption must be requested in writing and be appropriately documented. If your child has special health care needs (e.g. allergies, diabetes), notify us so that together we can develop a plan while your son or daughter is at school.
- **Attendance and Exclusion.** Jowonio serves well children only. The potential for contagion is great with young children and our staff do all they can to minimize it through proper handwashing, use of gloves, proper diapering and toileting, and sanitation of toys and furnishings. When a child develops symptoms of an illness, parents/guardians are called to pick them up, if a child is unable to participate in normal class activities, requires more intense care than we can provide, or has an illness that is potential risk to the child or to others. Parents and staff share responsibility for protecting children against contagion and infection. As part of the school's preventative health program, a child who shows any of the following signs or symptoms of illness should be kept home:
 - An elevated temperature (*The child may not return until 24 hours after the temperature is normal*).
 - "Pink Eye" ...conjunctivitis or eye that is draining (Consult your doctor)

- Rash on face or body (Consult your doctor).
- Vomiting, upset stomach, diarrhea.
- Sore throat, earache, swollen glands (Consult your doctor).
- Cold with substantial nasal and/or chest congestion.
- Any contagious disease: flu, impetigo, chickenpox, head lice, strep throat, etc.

Medication. In the New York State Education law any medicine, including over the counter medications, such as Tylenol or cough medicine, can be dispensed only by trained medical personnel or a parent. In order for us to give a child medication, we must have written permission from a parent *and* the child's physician stating:

- A. What the medication is
- B. What strength it is
- C. What the dosage is
- D. Why it is being given
- E. The time(s) of day it should be dispensed

Additionally, all medications must come in labeled containers. If you anticipate that the medication must be dispensed during school hours, please ask your pharmacist for 2 containers: one for home and one for school. The convenience of this practice eliminates the necessity of transporting medicine between home and school on a daily basis. All medications will be kept in a locked cabinet. We encourage you to alert us about potential side effects of any medication your child is taking, so that our teachers and therapists are able to observe for them. We hope to work closely with parents at all times, but especially when a child is under the care of a physician and taking any medication. If your child requires medication for a chronic condition (such as asthma), our staff will work with you to arrange for its administration, which might include parents doing so. We have a number of staff who are trained to administer medication.

First Aid and Emergencies. In the case of the normal bumps and scrapes that occur with young children, an incident report is completed by staff and parents will be notified by note or phone call. Our goal to have at least one staff member in each classroom certified in CPR and First Aid. Each classroom, therapy space, and our vans are supplied with first aid kits. If our staff are concerned that your child needs to see a doctor, we will call you (and if we can't reach you, your emergency contact). Upon enrollment we ask you to sign a Medical Authorization for any situation requiring immediate medical attention when a parent cannot be reached. In an emergency, we will call 911 and a staff member will accompany the child to the Emergency Room if it is deemed necessary.

Absences. If your child will be absent from school, please call the school office (445-4010) in the morning to let the office and teaching staff know. If a child is out due to illness, please let us know the nature of the illness. If it is contagious, staff need to be aware, in order to watch for symptoms in other children and to alert the families of your child's classmates. If a child is absent for an extended period of time (in circumstances other than recovery from an accident or surgery), we will talk with parents about the appropriateness of a school setting at this time.

Alternate child care arrangements can best be made in advance to be prepared for the time when a child is too ill to attend school. If a child becomes ill at school, it is our policy to try to reach their parent(s). If this fails, we will notify the person you have listed as an emergency contact. Please be sure that your contact has agreed to fulfill this role, and that the information Jowonio has is up to date and available; let us know of any changes (i.e. telephone numbers, contact person) as they occur.

Be sure to share with us information about any allergies your child has. When a student has a severe food allergy (e.g. peanuts), we will adapt the food allowed in a room and/or the school to be sure that every child is safe.

Fire Drills

Fire drills will occur at least monthly, in accordance with state regulations, so that all children will become aware of the appropriate procedures. Our building has a new fire alarm system that rings directly into the fire department. In addition, as a school, Jowonio has an Emergency Evacuation Plan, in the case the building needs to be shut down. We have alternative sites in the neighborhood where we can be accommodated while the situation is being addressed.

Meals

Children bring their own snack and drink, and if attending an extended or full-day class, their lunch as well; it is fine that each child bring food reflective of his/her own family and culture. Each classroom has a microwave oven and a refrigerator if lunches need to be heated or stored. While we know that many young children have unique eating habits, think as much as possible about healthy foods that contain little or no sugar, additives, artificial colors, etc. Jowonio has a small "food bank" in the event that you child might need food for the day; this can be accessed through your child's teacher or our Social Work staff. If your child is celebrating a birthday and you want to bring in a cake or cupcakes, please consult with the teachers regarding any dietary issues of class members. Again, be sure to notify us if your child has

particular food allergies or other dietary restrictions. Many of our classrooms have cooking activities as part of their curriculum.

Clothing

We hope you will dress your child in practical clothes that will withstand floor and outdoor play; we like for children to be comfortable and unafraid of getting their outfits dirty. We also encourage you to send your child in sneakers or shoes with rubber soles for outdoor or gym play, so they are safe for climbing and running. Also, leave one complete change of clothing at school in case they are needed. Each classroom has a supply of spare clothing, so if your child wears home "Jowonio spares" one day, we ask that you wash them and return them to school. During the winter, the children often go outside and play in the snow so your child should be dressed appropriately for the weather; we will try to note on the weekly schedule when more extensive outdoor trips are planned. Jowonio maintains a clothing closet; contact a member of our family support staff, if your family is ever in need of extras or if you would like to donate outgrown clothes to the closet. We occasionally have a "Clothing Swap" where families can donate and take clothes that might fit their family members.

Toilet Learning

We do not require children at Jowonio to be toilet trained. We believe that each child needs to be ready for this and will approach the toileting process on his/her own schedule. When a child is hurried, it may impede their movement toward self-control. All our classrooms have a bathroom with child-sized facilities, and we often find that modeling other children is an effective step in gaining independence in toileting. If your child is not yet using the toilet regularly, please provide a supply of diapers/pull-ups to the classroom, as well as extra clothes, labeled with your child's name, in case of accidents. Talk with teachers about your family's approach to toileting.

Car Seats

Car seats are required for all preschool children when transported during field trips. We have purchased a number of federally approved car safety seats to allow all children in a class to go on a field trip, and these are routinely checked for wear, expiration dates, and manufacturer's recalls.

Safety as You Enter and Exit

There is a great deal of traffic when families are coming and going in the parking lot. Every child must be escorted to their classroom by an adult. Hold your child's hand, be particularly watchful about cars in the parking lot, and help students carefully navigate the stairs. If you need assistance with drop-off and pick-up, please talk with your child's teacher.

Building Access and Security

The doors of the building are locked at all times, except the front door when someone is seated at the reception desk. When the weather is good, we ask all families to enter by a "single point of entry", which is the front door. The front and west doors of the school are handicapped-accessible and accessible parking spaces are identified in the west parking lot; the west door will require a code for the key pad or buzzing into the front desk to be let in. During winter weather we will create a code for parents to enter the side doors with their children.

No child will be released to an adult other than his/her parents without written permission from the parents or guardian. In the event of a custody situation, we ask the parties involved to share with us the legal requirements. Our goal is to protect the safety and mental health of the child.

Visitors are asked to sign in at the front desk and indicate the purpose of their visit and their destination within the building. Therapists from other agencies providing services to Jowonio students at our site may only do so with prior permission from the school and in accordance with an agreed-upon plan between Jowonio staff, the parents, and the therapist. The therapist must follow the expectations for all visitors and no other child may join the therapy without express permission of the parent of that child.

Transportation

There is no transportation for typical preschoolers. If you have a child of kindergarten age by December 1st, you may work with your school district regarding bussing.

Children with special needs are eligible for bussing, although parents are encouraged to transport their child and may be reimbursed for doing so. Bussing is arranged on a county-wide contract basis. Parents are usually notified by the bus

company about time of pick-up and drop-off. If there are any problems with the bus, deal directly with the vendor and let Jowonio know. The county also has a contact person for transportation issues. Parents must notify the bus company if your child will not be riding due to illness or changed plans. If parents are late meeting the bus, the county has a right to cancel bussing.

Many students at Jowonio are transported by their parents or guardians. We try to connect families who are seeking cooperative carpooling through our office. If you are interested in doing this, please let us know.

Family Tuition

Jowonio has a sliding scale for tuition for typical students. Early morning and afterschool programs incur additional costs. Parents who contract with Jowonio to pay tuition are urged to keep their payments up to date. If the annual tuition is paid at the beginning of the year, we offer a 2% discount; tuition paid in two lump sums (September and January) receives a 1% discount. To arrange when payments will be made, talk with our Office Manager, at the front desk. We do not bill you. We typically operate on a very tight budget and timely receipt of parent tuition is required for us to meet our expenses. If your payment must be delayed for any reason, what we ask is a willingness on your part to talk with us, even though we know this may be difficult to do. We will try to help you develop a plan for the payment of your tuition. We pass on to families the cost of any bank charges incurred if a check is returned for insufficient funds.

Questions or Concerns

We want to stress our hope that you will feel comfortable communicating with classroom, resource and administrative staff at Jowonio. Feel free to call 445-4010 and to arrange with teachers to visit and talk, expressing your questions, concerns, or suggestions. Our social workers are also available to listen to daily concerns and help you access community resources. Jowonio is a community that includes parents, staff, and children. We want you to feel welcome, to see us as helpful for you as a parent, and to find ways to participate and contribute to the quality of our program. We are seeking a partnership between staff and parents for the good of our children. We all look forward to a great year!