

# **Policies and Procedures for The Autism Project**

## **Schedule**

Social skills groups meet year round. We do this to encourage consistency and continuity of groups. Summer programs are highly encouraged but are not mandatory.

## **Group Meeting Place**

The following groups will meet in the Clubhouse: Black, Blue A, Blue B & Orange A. They will use the main house in the winter months (Dec. thru March). All other groups will meet in the main house.

## **Drop Off/Pick Up**

Students should not be dropped off any earlier than 5 minutes before the start of their group. Students that meet in the main house should enter thru the front door. It is OK to drop students off at the front door without a parent escort as long as the child is able to safely enter the building. We encourage parents to do this.

Students that meet in the clubhouse should walk on the paths to the door of the clubhouse. This will keep the dirt and mud outside. It is not permitted for students to play in the yard before group unless they are supervised by an instructor from The Autism Project. It is imperative that parents pick up on time. If you are going to be late please call your instructor's cell phone to let them know.

## **Planning Sessions**

The Autism Project will have 3 planning sessions per school year. One will take place at the end of summer and one will take place at the end of the school year. The other session may be used at the teacher's discretion. The purpose of the planning sessions is to prepare new material, research activities and program plan for the group. The sessions are billed as regular group sessions.

## **Missed Sessions**

If your child is going to miss a group therapy session it is your responsibility to alert their teacher. You can do this by email unless the cancellation is 24 hours before their session time. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the parent to call the teacher's cell phone. If you are canceling by email you should use your teacher's email address. Use The Autism Project email address for Ms. Angel's students only.

**If you do not properly inform your child's teacher you will be charged a \$25 fee in addition to the regular group fee. The \$25 fee must be paid before the child can resume attendance with their regular group. If your child receives 3 Missed Session Fees they will be immediately removed from The Autism Project.**

## **Payments**

Bills will be given the last day of the month for the services rendered in that month. It is strongly encouraged that parents bring their checkbooks on the last day of the month and pay for services upon receipt of the bill. If your child is absent the last day of the month it will be the families' responsibility to ensure payment is made by mail. All bills will be on letterhead with a tax ID number for tax purposes. Please make sure you write your child's name and what you are paying for in the memo section of the check. Students are billed for sessions regardless of attendance or advance notice. We take great pride in being able to offer quality staffing for our groups and there is simply no way we can provide this level of support for our students without this in place. This policy also ensures solid attendance.

## **Medical Release Forms**

All students participating in groups are required to have an updated Medical Release Form on file. These forms will be given out the first week of groups. If the forms are not completed and returned by the end of the September, the student will not be allowed to attend group activities.

## **IEP's**

If your child has an IEP we will need a copy of the goals/objectives section. One of our main objectives is to generalize skills across environments so it will be imperative that we know what your child is working on at school (both academically and socially).

## **New Group Assignments**

The Autism Project remains committed to arranging our social skills groups by age and ability. Students can be re-assigned to new groups if they are in need of more support or if they are in need of a more challenging curriculum. We will prepare the students about any changes to their particular groups.

## **Removal from The Autism Project**

If you plan to discontinue services with The Autism Project please give us one month notice so that we may allow other students in the group to say good-bye to your child and prepare for a new member. This can be really hard for some of our students so we try to take extra time to prepare them for the changes that are about to take place.

## **E-mails**

All group contact and organization for group sessions will occur thru email. As a standard practice please check email before coming to group each week just to make sure there are not any last minute changes. Older students in the following groups should have their own personal email accounts: Black, Blue A & Blue B.

## **Monthly Outings**

Each social skills group will take a trip once per month. The purpose of these trips are to generalize behavioral and language skills to the community, broaden recreation and leisure opportunities and develop friendships with peers. Students in the following groups will be responsible for carrying their own wallets and should therefore wear shorts or pants with pockets to all trips: Black, Silver, all Blue Teams, all Orange Teams and Pink.

## **Sickness**

Students should not attend group if they were unable to attend school due to illness. If a student has vomited or has had diarrhea they must be symptom free for 24 hours before they can attend group and 48 hours symptom free before they can swim in the pool.

## **Toileting**

If your child is working on toileting skills we will be more than happy to incorporate the techniques you are using at home into our program. Please let your teacher know if your child is on a toileting schedule and feel free to leave additional diapers, pull ups or a change of clothes at the center. Please label all items with your child's name.

## **Snack**

If you would like to leave special dietary foods for your child at the center please make sure they are labeled with their name.

## **Monthly Socials**

Each month The Autism Project will provide monthly socials for our students. We plan these socials on days when the local public school systems are not in school. They are intended for all students regardless of ability. If we feel that your child needs additional support we may set them up with a special assistant to allow the child to participate in the activity to the best of their ability. We break our socials up by age groups to offer age appropriate activities.

The age groups are:

Group #1 – Yellow & Green Teams

Group #2 – Red Teams, Orange Teams, Pink Team, RLD Group #1

Group #3 – Blue Teams, Black Team & RLD Groups #2 & 3

Socials will take place on:

Saturday, September 10

Friday, October 21

Wednesday, November 23

Saturday, December 10 & 17

Monday, January 16

Monday, February 20

Saturday, March 24

**Spring Break Camp April 2-6**