TURNING 2s
Turning 2s: Summer takes place in our pre-nursery classrooms. The classrooms are designed with the children in mind and are equipped with developmentally appropriate furniture and materials.

Group sizes range from 10 to 13 children; each group is led by a team of three teachers. In addition, we have a curriculum coordinator and a floating teacher who will fill in as needed.

Each day begins with a welcome routine and review of the day’s schedule. Children then have the opportunity for explorations within the classroom, typically followed by circle time and snack. We also take full advantage of the JCC facilities each day: climbing on the rooftop playground, running through sprinklers or splashing at water tables, or going to the third floor gym for structured activities with our coaches. There is flexibility and choice within the classroom and schedule structure so that the children can explore and grow based on their interests.

The different components of the daily schedule allow for and encourage independence, social connections, and physical and emotional development.

The overall goals of Turning 2s: Summer are to give children the opportunity to:

- Become part of a community
- Form new connections through social interactions with their peers and teachers and develop independent relationships
- Gently separate and acclimate to a classroom setting
- Gain confidence in themselves and their abilities

Photos by Angelica Ciccone and Nicole Dancel
We view separation as an opportunity to form new connections. It is treated as an individualized process, and there is no universal formula or time frame. Communication between teachers and families is of utmost importance, as the goal is to establish comfortable and safe routines that aid in the process.

We have extensive experience with separation and will work with each family to ensure that everyone is comfortable with the separation plan. Flexibility and trust are key, and priority is placed on readiness, rather than a swift separation.

A healthy partnership between our program and your family cultivates each child’s curiosity, joy, compassion, and independence, laying the foundation for a lifelong love of learning. With the goal of fostering this partnership, teachers share weekly reflections with families as a window into the program day. This communication includes photos, song lyrics, titles of books read, and details about materials used in explorations. Families are encouraged to reinforce the Turning 2s: Summer experience at home by using this resource to speak with children about their time with teachers and classmates. We value close communication and are always available to speak with families about their children.
SHABBAT TOGETHER

Our Shabbat Together class is an optional third day when children in our program celebrate Shabbat on Friday mornings. They light candles together, recite the blessings, enjoy a snack of challah and grape juice and a Shabbat sing-along led by a music teacher. Explorations focus on ritual objects connected to Shabbat, Jewish holidays, and values that include charity (tzedakah), good deeds (mitzvot), and community (kehillah). Class time can include making challah, water play with kiddush cups, or excavating Israeli artifacts at the sand table. The children sing Shabbat songs, dance, absorb Hebrew, and, of course, welcome Shabbat together.

TOILET TRAINING

We are aware that most 2-year-olds are not toilet trained, and our teachers will change diapers as needed. Families are expected to provide and replenish necessary supplies. Teachers will extend any toilet training efforts happening at home in partnership with families.

CLOTHING

We encourage children to explore in a way that can often result in mess, so “mess-ready” clothing is preferred in order to provide your children the opportunity to engage in exploration without worry. We also ask that children pack bathing suits for water play on our roof.
PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Turning 2s: Summer is a play-based, values-driven program that encourages exploration, growth, and discovery. We believe that children are competent and capable individuals, each with their own learning styles and interests. Through our child-centered curriculum, we aim to foster the creativity of each child.

We believe that children thrive in nurturing, warm environments designed with them in mind. We see our teachers as facilitators of positive, engaging experiences that support the needs of the children in their care.

*Photos were taken pre Covid-19*
REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Turning 2s: Summer is a registration-based program; no application is required. The program is held two mornings a week, and families can choose a Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday section. Our summer program is designed for children who have turned 2 between September 2021 and July 2022.

For more information, please contact Yael Kahn Pinto at ykahnpinto@mmjccm.org or visit mmjccm.org/turning-2s.