



Program Supports, Policies & Procedures

Welcome to Discovery of Learning, we are thrilled to have you return or join our community for the first time.

Discovery of Learning is a TK-High School enrichment center born out of a love of children and a passion for providing education with a family and community feel. DOL has designed an enrichment program that considers the needs of the whole child. Our programs vary a bit by campus based on the needs and overall enrollment of the program and community.

Whether entering the school years or embarking into young adulthood, we offer meaningful learning opportunities, spanning from alternative education supports to hand-crafted curriculum. At DOL, we believe education is a personal journey for each family and have built in a variety of program options, flexible schedules, opportunities for involvement, and supports along this road. We proudly serve families who have chosen an alternative education or homeschooling path, as well as support families enrolled with a charter school.

At Discovery of Learning we strive to

- Help you identify homeschool, and alternative education options.
- Help you find the right fit for your child's learning style.
- Offer a variety of enrichment programs to help you along your path.
- Provide an enriched learning environment and engaging lessons and activities
- Ensure that each child feels emotionally safe to explore, discover, and learn at his or her pace and in his or her own way.
- Offer the support of nurturing teachers who utilize Non-Violent Communication methods when guiding children through problem solving opportunities.

Please find our Program Policies and Procedures listed below to help support our day to day program operations as well as support the integrity of our educational community.

When Does Discovery of Learning Begin and End?

Discovery of Learning Program Year – Discovery of Learning is proud to serve a variety of homeschool families, those filing a PSA to those enrolled with a charter. We also have families that travel to our location from multiple cities. Therefore, Discovery of Learning maintains it's own annual calendar and does not follow the calendar of one particular district or charter school. We have also chosen to only close on major holidays, for the full week. Your family is of course welcome to take the time you need to celebrate other holidays that are of importance to you. Our Program year:

- Begins the week after Labor Day
- CLOSES the week of Thanksgiving
- CLOSES for a 3 week Winter Break (typically the week prior to Christmas to the week after New Year's)
- CLOSES for a 1 week Spring Break the week after Easter
- Ends the week prior to Memorial Day
- Our summer program, if offered at your location, closes the 1 week of Independence Day



How Do I Contact or Communicate with Discovery of Learning?

- **Contact Phone/Email** – Discovery of Learning can be reached at (888)625-2012 or at info@discoveryoflearning.net. If you are unable to reach us right away, please feel free to call right back, we may simply be on another line. Please do not text this number. During program hours each campus can be reached at the following extension, after program hours please know we will respond to you as soon as possible:

#3-Yorba Linda/Costa Mesa #4-Tustin #5-Riverside/Ontario #6-Beaumont #7-Palm Desert #8-Indio #9 Visalia

- **Teacher Communication** – Your child’s teacher will create a weekly newsletter to update you on the types of learning activities your child has been participating in, as well as sharing important updates, resources and ways you can participate in DOL adventures. Please make sure that you have your most up to date email address. DOL will also make hard copies available on campus as requested. It can also be challenging for teachers to have long conversations while providing direct service to the children. If you would like to schedule a meeting with your child’s teacher please let us know so that we can arrange for an appropriate meeting time and place.
- **Campus Notifications** – Campus teams will send out monthly newsletters to update campus wide updates and events. Fliers will be emailed home and distributed on campus regularly. Directors make every effort to be available at drop off and pick up times especially to help you with transitions as well as be present to answer questions, share updates and connect with your family.
- **Community Connections** - Discovery of Learning coordinates and oversees several homeschooling/alternative education social media sites to provide a larger community to connect with. We oversee Meetup sites which offer families weekly fieldtrips, park days and other events. DOL also shares a variety of educational resources and curriculum ideas on the Discovery of Learning website Resource page and on Pinterest. Visit our website home page and hover over the top right corner to find your local groups. Each campus also hosts a closed facebook group, you can find this link on our calendar page of the website, come back often to keep up to date at discoveryoflearning.net.

What Time should my Child Arrive and Depart?

- **Children may arrive 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time daily** - Please try to stagger your drop-off times; if everyone tries to arrive exactly at start time, we will cause traffic to back up. Please be aware that our staff will be on campus prior to this time to set up their classrooms and activities for the day. Please respect this time for the teachers to prepare for serving your children.
- **Children must be picked up from the program within 15 minutes of the scheduled end time**- Anyone still at Discovery of Learning after the 15 minute grace period will be subject to a late fee of \$15 for every 15 minutes your child is not remains on campus.
- **Sign Your Child In/Out Every Day** - All children are **required** to be signed in and out by a parent/guardian with the time and signature every day. Each classroom will have its own sign-in/out sheet for this purpose. Please take the time to help us keep track of who is in the classroom each day. Please put the best phone number to reach you each day. At campuses with curb side service, teachers will accept your child and initial sign in sheet upon your child’s arrival and/or departure. Please make sure that the center has your most up to date contact number by calling 888.625.2012 and follow prompts to your campus. Parents wishing to volunteer in the classroom will also be asked to sign in for the day and wear a volunteer name badge.



What to Bring to Campus?

- **Pack Lunch/Snack and Bring a Water Bottle** - Children will be eating lunch from 12-1pm. Please make sure to have them bring a lunch and any snacks they might need throughout the day. You may also bring a water bottle that we can refill as needed.
- **Many of our students have mild to severe allergies** to various foods, so please encourage your child not to share any food or drinks they bring to school. Additionally, campuses with severe nut allergies amongst students may enforce a NUT FREE campus.
- **Backpacks and Purses** – Please note that the nature of our program does not necessitate children bringing a backpack and/or purse to the campus. We understand that depending on the age and or personal needs of the child, there may be exceptions to this rule. However, please note that Discovery of Learning reserves the right to store these bags inside or outside the classroom, requiring children to ask permission to access bag, as well as the right to search these bags if ever a suspicion or concern for safety arises. Parents will be notified if this occurs.
- **No Electronic Devices** - Please **DO NOT** send your children to DOL with any electronic devices (this includes cell phones, iPads/tablets, Kindles, or other gaming devices). Our goal is to encourage face-to-face time, not screen time! We also ask that children leave all toys at home, our classrooms are enriched with materials and we cannot be responsible for losing any personal belongings. We know you want to know your child is just a phone call away. Please know that someone is always available to answer the program phone number during school hours. If your child does bring their cell phone for this purpose, it may be stored in a teacher designated area to only be used for emergencies.

Does DOL Allow Birthday Celebrations?

- **Teacher Birthday Cards** – Discovery of Learning teachers enjoy acknowledging your child’s birthday by mailing a card home during their birthday month! If you’re family does not celebrate birthdays, please notify the office to ensure we respect your family’s wishes.
- **Classroom Celebrations** – Discovery of Learning allows parents to bring birthday treats to share with your child’s classroom and/or campus. We do ask that you let us know what you will be bringing so that we may allow parent’s of children with allergies an opportunity to bring an alternative treat.

Does DOL Celebrate Holidays?

- **Holiday Celebrations** – Discovery of Learning understands and appreciates that every family celebrates holidays differently depending on culture, religion, family traditions. At DOL we have chosen to celebrate Halloween, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, and Easter in a child-friendly, secular fashion. We will always have alternative activities available for children to participate in.

What to Wear to Discovery of Learning?

- **Dress/Attire Policy**– Please send your child to the center in clothes that are comfortable to move around in. Our program encourages free movement and your child may spend a portion of their day working at a table, on the floor, in a bean bag, etc. Younger students are encouraged to keep a change of clothes with them in a backpack. If needed a staff member will guide them in caring for their needs. Please refrain from dressing in clothes that show undergarments or may become a distraction to others. We encourage the child to express him or herself through their ideas, actions and personality, not their clothing while on campus. Parents will be communicated with openly if there is a concern about your child’s attire, but please note, the Program Director will make the final decision regarding appropriate attire on campus with the support of the administrative team.



What If My Child is Ill?

- **Sick Child Policy** - For the health and safety of the children, parents, and facilitators, children need to remain at home while they are ill. It is our policy to notify you when your child expresses feeling under the weather, while at the program. We will call you to discuss their symptoms and make arrangements to have your child picked up if needed. Your child must be picked up immediately after contacting you if deemed necessary. Please note that the Program Director holds the final decision on whether a child is too ill to remain at the program.

What If My Child is Absent?

- **Absence Policy** – Discovery of Learning does not allow make up days for absences due to illness, holidays or vacations.

How Does DOL Prepare for Emergencies?

- **Campus Safety** – Discovery of Learning Staff and Administrative Team work to plan for handling campus safety by ensuring, but not limited to, use of sign-in and out sheets, use of name to face checks when transitioning from one place to another, and ensuring the children in our care understand the importance of following classroom agreements as being part of our DOL community. Non-DOL adults are asked to check in with the Director and/or office when visiting the campus, signing in and wearing a visitor badge if volunteering in the classroom beyond drop off and pick up times. Only DOL staff are able to supervise children and escort children to the restroom.
- **Emergency Drills** – We respect each family’s choice about when and how to teach their child(ren) about emergencies. For this reason, we work as a team to plan for emergency procedures, such as evacuating due to fire, earthquake or responding to a safety concern. We discuss in general with students about safety in the classroom, outdoors and if needing to leave the building, and the importance of listening to their teacher in these situations. However, we do not practice drills on campus.

How Does DOL Handle Discipline?

- **Discipline In the Classroom** - Discovery of Learning believes in approaching discipline through respectful relationships with children through personal connection. We utilize **Non-Violent Communication** methods in all interactions with children, peers and families. Nonviolent Communication (NVC) includes a simple method for clear, empathic communication, consisting of four steps:
 1. Observations – Observing what is happening free of evaluation, to identify behaviors and conditions that are affecting the individuals involved.
 2. Feelings – Being able to identify and express internal feelings in a way that does not imply judgment, criticism, or blame/punishment.
 3. Needs – Connecting with our human needs/values that are or are not being met through the displayed behavior or condition.
 4. Requests – Requesting what we would like, rather than what we don’t want, in a way that motivates out of a willingness and compassionate giving.

NVC skills emphasize personal responsibility for our actions and the choices we make when we respond to others, as well as how to contribute to relationships based in cooperation and collaboration. Founded on consciousness, language, communication skills, and use of power that enable us to remain human, even under trying conditions. Nonviolent Communication contains nothing new. All that has been integrated into NVC has been known for centuries.

- **Teacher's Role** - Discovery of Learning believes that it is the teacher's role to provide a consistent method for handling unwanted behaviors or disagreements. We believe discipline should teach a child to problem solve with loving teachers to guide the way. "Real-life" problem solving skills are to be modeled for the children while working through the NVC method, outlined above, with an individual child or group of children. We want to uphold a safe classroom environment for our children.

DOL also sets the stage for a compassionate approach to discipline by sharing Classroom Agreements with the children, rather than Class Rules. Classroom agreements are simply stated and lend themselves to regular review by discussing what each agreement looks like in implementation within the classroom. Discuss what each agreement may look like at group time, while talking to a teacher, when playing with peers, etc.

Classroom Agreements

- Be Kind
- Be Your Best
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

- **Re-Directing Challenging Behavior**

1. **Re-Directing Goal:**

- The goal is to allow the child to learn through their choices and return to the group when the child is able to make safe and appropriate choices
- DOL staff will express it is the child's choice of how to work in our program, not a punishment.

2. **Steps:**

- When a child does not respond to simple verbal redirection, after several attempts, give the child the choice to participate in their current activity safely and appropriately or do their activity next to you. (Please note that the number of verbal redirection attempts is based on the severity of the behavior, is it jeopardizing safety in the classroom? If so, use your best judgment and/or call an administrator for support)
- If the child continues to display unwanted behavior approach the child with compassion, yet firmness. Letting the child know that you see they are still struggling with making a safe and respectful choice, give the child the choice to participate in their current activity next to you, with another teacher (if appropriate) or with an administrator. If you have not already, an administrator should be called for support
- If the child's unwanted behavior continues to be displayed, the choice may be to work with administrator or work at home, depending on what the prior choices have been. If the child is able to return to the classroom after working with an administrator, the teacher and administrator will discuss who will verbally notify the family and how, in-person or by phone
- The admin team and staff will partner with the child and family to find a positive resolution to the issue, set a follow up timeline with the family to discuss progress at home and in the classroom.
- Should the student continue to struggle and positive progress not be made DOL will then partner with the family to create an Behavioral Action Plan.

For example, little Crystal has a tendency to yell in the classroom. This behavior can keep her from getting her work done, distracting others from doing their work, and the teacher may feel they are constantly addressing the issue and taking away from her teaching the whole group.

Using the steps listed above, the teacher has verbally re-directed Crystal to use her inside voice and be respectful of others trying to complete their work in a quieter work environment at least 3 times throughout the morning. The teacher pulls Crystal aside and talks one-on-one with her and says "Crystal, I have asked you to use your inside voice and I can see you are having a hard time reminding yourself to do that. If you choose to continue yelling during our class work time, then you are choosing to sit with me to do your work." Crystal says she will stop, but within a short time is yelling again. The teacher, gets down at Crystal's level and says, "Crystal, I asked you to be responsible and use an inside voice. Unfortunately, you chose to yell again. I have friends who like to work quietly and your yelling is not being respectful toward them. Let's get your work and you can sit next to me

while you finish what you are working on.” Teacher walks Crystal over to gather her work and/or materials and they return to a table together. Teacher calmly says, “I hope sitting next to me helps you remember to use your inside voice. If you continue to yell you will be choosing to work next to Ms. Tanya (program director outside of our classroom.” Crystal is able to keep working next to her teacher without yelling again. The teacher thanks Crystal for choosing to use her inside voice while finishing her work and allowing other friends to work in a quiet classroom. Crystal is able to join the group for the next activity and participate without yelling. The teacher lets the program director know as soon as possible. Director gives the ok for teacher to speak with Crystal’s mom about the challenging behavior in class and how the issue was resolved. Teacher and parent discussed how she often screams at her little sister at home and mom is going to try the same approach at home. Over the next few days, Crystal needs verbal re-direction at times, but is able to make better choices independently most days.

- **Partnering with Families when Behavioral Action Plans are Needed**

- 1. **Goal:**

- The goal is to help children learn new coping and communication strategies to replace unwanted behaviors with more prosocial ones through our re-direction methods.
 - We realize that individual children may respond to our methods differently. Even with re-direction attempts, the unwanted behavior may intensify in frequency or severity. During these times, we will partner with the family to create an action plan for the challenging behavior.

- **When is an Action Plan needed:**

- When unwanted behaviors continue through all re-directing attempts over a reasonable period of time, when behaviors seem to escalate in intensity or at any time become unsafe an action plan may be required to remain enrolled in the program.
 - When behavior is displayed that may jeopardize the physical safety of peers, staff, or the child themselves an action plan may be immediately required to remain enrolled in the program. In these instances, the child is able to return to the program, if deemed appropriate, after the DOL team and family have devised an action plan. We believe in the safety of our children.
 - An action plan is not intended to remove the child from the program, but rather to purposefully provide the child with positive discipline efforts to teach new coping and communication strategies, that will allow them to be successful in getting their needs met in a more pro-social manner moving forward in life.
 - An Action Plan may include one or more of the following: teacher, director, and/or a parent shadow or a modified schedule.

How Does DOL Handle Harmful Substances/Items On Campus?

- **Harmful Substances/Items** – Parents, educators and students get emotional over youth and the use of drugs. It is an aspect of our culture we wish we did not have to address. We understand that youth may be curious, may experiment, and may have had different exposure and/or experiences with drug, alcohol, or substance use. However, DOL cannot condone the bringing, sharing, or using of these substances on campus. This also pertains to the bringing of weapons or items used as weapons on campus. Like with our Discipline Policy, DOL works as a team to address these situations, making decisions and taking action for immediate safety for all children, discussion and consideration for ongoing enrollment with DOL, but, please note that Discovery of Learning reserves the right to decide if enrollment should be ended immediately. Discovery of Learning will openly discuss these situations with the families of involved students. Please know that the safety and well-being of all children is at the forefront of all decision making.