

# Early Childhood Education Center

## PARENT HANDBOOK



July 1, 2015

# THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

*The Mission of the Early Childhood Education Center is to provide access to high quality, affordable child care for families at the University of Utah.*

**Program services include:**

- Both full-day and part-day care options
- 4 hour per week minimum for part-day option
- Quality care for children 6 weeks through 5 years of age
- Hours – 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday
- Conveniently located in the University Student Apartments East Community Center
- Preschool curriculum – Creative Curriculum

**\*ECEC is currently working towards national accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children.**

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Early Childhood Education Center**

Office: 1601 University Village Salt Lake City, UT 84108

Phone: 801-581-8058

Fax: 801-585-6916

E-mail: [ecec@sa.utah.edu](mailto:ecec@sa.utah.edu)

### **Center for Child Care & Family Resources**

Director: Shauna Lower

Office: 200 Central Campus Drive Room 408, SLC UT 84112

Phone: 801-585-5897

E-mail: [shauna.lower@sa.utah.edu](mailto:shauna.lower@sa.utah.edu)

Administrative Assistant: Sandy Bennett

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## GOALS & PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of the Early Childhood Education Center is to provide an environment where children feel safe and are encouraged to explore materials, as well as their relationships with peers and adults. We believe that children learn by doing and thrive emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively when they are actively engaged with their environment.

### Goals for each child include helping them to:

- Move along the development sequence at his/her optimum rate using learning objectives from Teaching Strategies
- Learn through identifying children's interests and incorporating them into a natural play setting
- Develop positive attitudes toward school and learning
- Develop positive work habits and skills, such as: attention span, organizing work, and following a daily routine
- Develop foundations for reading, writing, visual skills, auditory skills, left-to-right orientation, interest in printing, letter awareness, association of letter to sound, and rhyming, at his/her own development
- Develop a love for literature and to become familiar with literacy and language
- Develop cognitive skills such as: problem solving, synthesizing, analysis, and classification
- Develop the foundations of mathematics, one-to-one correspondence, counting association of set to symbol, part/whole relationships, and measurement and graphs
- Develop language skills, including speech and listening skills at his/her level of development
- Learn the social skills of compromise, cooperation, negotiation, and verbal assertiveness along with other developmentally appropriate social-emotional skills
- Develop large and small motor abilities
- Develop and understand the importance of creativity

### Diversity

We welcome every opportunity to expand the child's view of the world as a place rich in many cultures, races, religions and customs. The Early Childhood Education Center is open to all families, regardless of ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. We will work with families to provide an inclusive preschool environment for all children. Diversity extends to the family structure as well, and we are committed to the philosophy of treating all family situations equally and without bias. ECEC is a non-denominational program; therefore we respect all family's religious traditions. We encourage you to share your family's traditions with our children and staff.

### Societal Values

The theme of gender/racial equality and respect for the earth are an integral part of our philosophy and demonstrated in the following ways:

- We use non-gender specific titles such as; 'fire fighters' and 'police officers.'
- We expose children to non-biased professional role models through literature, dramatic play and special classroom guests.
- We incorporate environmental awareness and respect in all areas of the curriculum.

# ENROLLMENT POLICY

The Early Childhood Education Center is operated within the Student Affairs Division of the University of Utah.

**Children of University students have priority placement** and subsidized fee options at the center. Children of University students will continue to be eligible as long as one parent maintains a registered student status. If the parent loses his/her student status at any point during the academic year, he/she may no longer be eligible for priority student placement and rates. While University faculty and staff are not eligible for subsidized care, we welcome their participation in our program if student slots are unfilled. Members of the community with no University affiliation are also welcome, if availability permits.

Limited financial assistance is available for students from the CCAMPIS Grant and the "School-Life" Scholarship fund, both administered through the Center for Child Care & Family Resources. If you are interested in applying for aid, please contact the Center for Child Care & Family Resources at the following emails:

[CCAMPIS@sa.utah.edu](mailto:CCAMPIS@sa.utah.edu)

[childcarescholarship@sa.utah.edu](mailto:childcarescholarship@sa.utah.edu)

New families are encouraged to set up a tour of the program and meet the teachers prior to enrollment. Once enrolled, families are invited to an orientation meeting at the beginning of the semester to become familiar with program policies and procedures.

## First Day Checklist

Please provide the following items on or before your child's first day at our program. **ALL** items **MUST** be labeled with your child's first and last name. Blankets, soft comfort items and sheets need to be taken home and washed at the end of each week or more often if necessary.

### Non-Toilet Trained Children

- Formula or breast milk (if needed)
- Pacifier (if needed)
- Stuffed animal or other comfort item (if needed for separation)
- 2 complete changes of clothes (seasonal wear)
- Sippy cup/bottle
- Child-sized blanket
- Crib sheet
- Sunscreen (if you prefer special brand - center uses SPF 50 UVA/UVB protection) Excludes children under 12 months
- Diapers
- Wipes

### Preschool Rooms (Toilet Trained)

- Complete change of clothes (seasonal wear)
- Child-sized blanket
- Crib sheet
- Soft toy or comfort item for rest time (if needed)
- Water bottles (labeled with child's name)
- Sunscreen (if you prefer special brand - center uses SPF 50 UVA/UVB protection)

# OPERATIONAL POLICIES

## Hours and Closures

The Early Childhood Education Center is open year-round. The hours of operation are from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm, Monday – Friday.

The center will be **closed** during all University holidays and the week between Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

### University Holiday Closures:

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
President's Day  
Memorial Day  
Pioneer Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day and the following day  
Christmas Day  
Week between Christmas Day and New Year's Day  
University Closure Days

*\*Please see your enrollment paperwork for specific dates.*

**Due to staffing requirements, we are unable to give tuition credit if a child does not attend during their scheduled hours, ie illness, vacation, appointments, etc.**

## Sign-In & Sign-out

***It is mandatory that you sign your child in/out of the program each day using the EZ-Care Time Clock.*** Our staff assumes responsibility for your child once they are signed into the program and walked to the child's teachers. Parents must bring children all the way into their classrooms and acknowledge a staff member upon arrival and pick-up.

## Late Pick-Up

A late pick-up fee will be assessed for any child who has not left at ECEC after 6:00 pm. Between 6:00 and 6:15 pm, \$1.00 per minute per child will be assessed. At 6:16 PM, it will increase to \$1.50 per minute per child and will continue to accrue at that rate until the child is picked up.

## Authorization to Release Child

***Your child must be picked up by an adult who is at least 18 years old and listed on your emergency card.***

Only those individuals listed as authorized pick-ups are allowed to pick up your child (this person may be asked to show ID.) For reasons of safety and confidentiality, please do not give out the door code or your clock-in/out codes to persons who will not be regularly picking up.

In order for your child to be released to a person other than parent/legal guardian or authorized pick-up, permission must be given to the teacher in writing. Verbal permission is not enough but, we can accept e-mails and texts.

## **Legal Custody**

The center cannot refuse to release a child to the child's parent or legal guardian who has or shares legal custody of the child. In most cases, both parents have equal custody rights unless a court or valid written separation agreement proves otherwise. If you are experiencing custody difficulties we strongly urge you to keep the center director fully advised of circumstances that affect your child and their drop-off and pick-up routines at the center. Divorced or legally separated parents are required to provide copy of custody documentation. Parent records will be kept, confidential, in the child's file.

## **Withdrawal**

A two week written notice is required if you are going to withdraw your child from the child care program. Payment is due for the two week notice period, whether or not the child attends during that time.

## **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition is on a pre-pay basis. All fees are due regardless of attendance. There will be no reimbursement for unused childcare due to illness, vacation or other absenteeism. The expenses of providing a developmentally appropriate program continues daily, whether a particular child is in attendance or not.

Monthly payments are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month. If payment is made by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month, a \$20.00 per month discount will be given.

If a tuition payment for child care services is more than five business days overdue, your child/children will not be allowed to attend until fees are current. If there continues to be an outstanding balance at the end of the month, balances will be turned over to University Collections and will result in a hold being placed on student registration and records and/or balances withheld from University employees' wages. Accounts that remain delinquent and are placed for collections, may be charged a reasonable attorney fee, collection fee up to 50% of overdue charge or court cost.

Tuition must be paid online at <http://ecec.childcare.utah.edu>.

Payments will not be accepted at the Center.

## **Parking**

Parents should park in the ECEC Parent Drop Off or Visitor's parking stalls located on the north side of the East Village. Parking in the loading zone or disabled parking stall (without a placard) is not allowed. ECEC recommends locking your doors and keeping any valuables out of site when dropping off and picking up your child. ECEC is located in a family apartment complex. Please obey the posted speed limit and stop signs.

## **POSITIVE GUIDANCE POLICY**

Young children crave consistency and structure. They thrive in an atmosphere where they are given plenty of choices and a few simple rules to follow. It is my belief that children need space and opportunity for play in order to interact with their friends.

Our goal in guiding children is for them to move towards controlling their own behavior. We avoid using techniques that will damage the child's good feelings about themselves or others.

We begin by arranging the environment to prevent discipline problems. This includes planning interesting activities, not asking children to be still for too long, and meeting their needs for food, rest, and active play.

When children do misbehave, we positively guide them in finding a better way to solve the problem. Because a very young child does not have the cognitive maturity and are very ego-centric, it can be very difficult for them if they do not get their way. Conflicts will arise. When they do we will guide children in a constructive manner. Because discipline is viewed as an opportunity to teach children better ways of handling their frustration and anger. Very young children will be redirected into other activities. When misbehavior includes destroying or abusing materials, the children will be given the chance to use the materials again in an appropriate manner, but if continued the materials may be put away until another day when the child will be given another opportunity to use it appropriately. When children disrupt group activities, they can choose to participate without interrupting or choose another activity which would not interrupt the group time. Small and large group activities are always optional in all classrooms.

If your child has had a difficult time, the staff will give you a verbal or written note which summarizes your child's day. We will then work together with the family to assure consistency at home and at school in working with the child, and all will be discussed in a confidential manner that is respectful to your family.

#### **Our Methods of Positive Guidance Include:**

- Encouraging children to solve problems through the use of words
- Learning to acknowledge feelings and associate feelings with actions
- Redirect children to focus on a different activity in a positive manner
- Tell children what they can do, rather than what they can't do
- Continual focus on building self-help skills in order to strengthen self-esteem and positive self-image
- Positive reinforcement and acknowledging appropriate behavior that should be continued in the future
- Assisting children in planning actions and language for similar situations in the future
- Modeling kind, patient, and gentle actions, words and behavior

## **SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY**

*“Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.”*

**Definition of Early Childhood Inclusion**, excerpted from: “A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), April 2009”

Our goal is to meet the needs of every child at the Early Childhood Education Center by acknowledging that all children have their own special needs at one time or another. We are often the first educators to identify these needs, and we see facilitation of early intervention services as a critically important aspect to our work with young children. We closely watch the development of all the children in our care and, should we have a question, we will take the following steps. Throughout this process, we ensure that the confidentiality of every child is protected:

- We will document development and note when behaviors seem outside the developmental range over time for children of this age (through anecdotal notes, and samples of work) and meet with the director.
- We will contact the family and communicate our concern in writing and verbally. We will request their permission to arrange for a screening. If the family agrees, we will help to coordinate a screening through the appropriate school system or agency for that family.

- If the family refuses to pursue a screening or consult with their child's school system, and the need presented by the child requires additional programmatic resources, families may be asked to assume the costs of those additional supports for their child's inclusion in the program. The Director will be responsible for the hiring and supervision of the additional staff.
- If the screening indicates an area of concern in a child's development, teachers, director and parents will meet with the special needs coordinator for that school system or agency and develop a plan for the child in writing.
- Typically these plans will involve modifications to our classroom environment or practice, and guidance will be provided to teachers to support their work.
- In some cases, a school system may recommend that a child be enrolled in a different program, where there may be more resources available to provide early intervention.
- In some cases, certain adaptations to our program may be impossible (an additional teacher at the cost of the family, for example) and we may recommend a different placement for the child. Please know that wherever possible, we will draw upon all resources to meet the child's needs.
- The Early Childhood Education Center may determine that we are not able to serve the child. Staff and administrators will let the family know as early in the year as possible if this is a possible outcome, so that the family can pursue other placement options. The family will be notified verbally and in writing.
- The program has three considerations when asking a child to leave: a) has implementation of strategies over time resulted in improvement, or have the concerns persisted or escalated? b) Is the program able to meet the needs of the individual child and the needs of the group as a whole? c) Is there a safety issue regarding the child or other children in the classroom? Each case is considered on a case-by-case basis, and the program will apply every recommended strategy to support the child's progress before considering termination.

**Our policy for inclusion of children with special needs is as follows:**

- The Early Childhood Education Center will integrate children with disabilities and other special needs (such as chronic illness) and children without disabilities in all activities possible.
- Children with special needs and their families shall have access to and be encouraged to receive a multidisciplinary assessment by qualified individuals, using reliable and valid age and culturally appropriate instruments and methodologies, before the child starts in the facility. The multidisciplinary assessment shall be voluntary and focus on the family's priorities, concerns, and resources that are relevant to providing services to the child and that optimize the child's development.
- The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) and any other plans for special services shall be developed for children identified as eligible in collaboration with the family, representatives from the disciplines and organizations involved with the child and family, the child's health care provider, the staff of the facility (depending on the family's wishes), and the agency's resources and state laws and regulations.
- If a child has an IEP or IFSP, the Director will be responsible for coordinating care within the facility and with



any caregivers and coordinators in other service settings, in accordance with the written plan.

- A child with special health care needs shall have a special care plan on file that includes emergency contact information, health provider, triggers, signs and symptoms of the condition and treatment instructions.
- In all cases, we place the best interest of our children and families at the center of all plans, and work with the family and with community partners to ensure that the best plan is developed.

### **Steps for Addressing Problem Behaviors:**

1. The behaviors of children shall be addressed by the classroom staff as outlined by our Positive Guidance Policy. This could include positive reinforcement for any appropriate behavior, redirection, reminders of classroom rules, modifying the classroom environment, or the teacher may respectfully help the child gain control when necessary. Classroom staff shall observe all children and document these behaviors to help ascertain any patterns or precipitating factors of the problem behavior. At no time shall the staff use shaming, the withholding of food, or physical punishment of any kind.
2. When a child exhibits a problem on a continual basis that is not resolved through the appropriate behavior management strategies, the classroom staff will meet with the center director to document the problem behavior and ask for further guidance.
3. If the behavior problem is still not resolved, the Director will request a meeting with the child's parent(s), to discuss the problem behavior. The Director, Parent(s), and Teaching staff will collaborate on the development of strategies to resolve the problem behavior. During this process, the teaching staff will keep the Director and Parent(s) informed of the progress in resolving the problem. Observations will be documented, and a copy will be given to the Parent(s) as well as placed in the child's file. If a child's behavior results in the injury of another child or staff member, that child's parent(s) will be notified as soon as possible and written documentation will be given and placed in the child's file.
4. If the center staff feel that they need further assistance in resolving the behavior problem, the program may, with parental permission, request the assistance of an outside agency. If the center staff feels the behavior may result in a special need, the program may, with parental permission, refer the child for an evaluation. If the parental permission is refused, and the problem behavior continues, the continued enrollment of the child will be reconsidered with the provisions of # 6 listed below.
5. If the results of an outside evaluation suggest the need for accommodations of special needs, the program will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they are not an undue hardship on the program as outlined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In some cases, certain adaptations to our program may be impossible (an additional teacher at the cost of the family, for example) and we may recommend a different placement for the child. Please know that wherever possible, we will draw upon all resources to meet the child's needs.
6. If all of the above steps fail to resolve the behavior problem, the program may ask the parent(s) to obtain care for their child at another center. The program will provide the parent(s) with 2 weeks' notice, except where such notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns, and will try to assist the parent(s) in obtaining alternative care and resources.
7. Written documentation of all of the steps above will be provided to the parent(s) and placed in the child's file.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is unlawful for any Early Childhood Education Center staff member to discriminate in the enrollment of children and families at the Early Childhood Education Center on the basis of race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, veteran status, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or citizenship status.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

All records provided regarding your child and family finances are confidential. We also ask that you respect this confidentiality by not asking staff to discuss your child or other children outside of the center. The staff at the Early Childhood Education Center understand the importance of this policy and feel uncomfortable when asked to discuss confidential issues concerning children in the program. We encourage you to bring up child and center issues with the Center Director.

All information about families and staff, including life circumstances are kept confidential. No personally identifying information will be released or discussed outside the program.

## PROGRAM CURRICULUM

All classrooms utilize the Creative Curriculum approach to learning, which is a comprehensive, rigorously researched curriculum model that honors creativity and respects the role that teachers play in making learning exciting and relevant for every child. Each classroom environment is set up around learning centers:

- **Creative Art** - The Creative Art Area is a place filled with materials that children can enjoy on a purely sensory level. Here children can create and represent their ideas in a visual form. On a table or the floor, at an easel or a workbench, children draw, paint, knead, cut, glue, and put together unique products of their own choosing. Sometimes they simply explore the materials and enjoy the process. At other times they create designs or make something that represents a real object, place, or living thing. Creative art is another language children use to express what they know and what they feel.
- **Library/Writing Center** - In the Library Area children develop the motivation and skills necessary to read and write. As they hear stories read aloud every day, look through books on their own, listen to story tapes, recite familiar stories, and make up their own stories, they also have many opportunities to grow in all areas of development.
- **Dramatic Play** - In the Dramatic Play Area, children break through the restrictions of reality. They pretend to be someone or something different from themselves and make up situations and actions that go along with the role they choose. When children engage in dramatic play they deepen their understanding of the world and develop skills that will serve them throughout their lives.
- **Blocks** - Blocks naturally appeal to young children because they feel good to the touch, are symmetrical, and invite open-ended explorations. When children construct, create, and represent their experiences with blocks, they grow in each area of development.
- **Science/Discovery and Math** - The Science Area is a place to find answers to questions. It is a place to spark curiosity and wonder using new and interesting materials. In the Science Area, children can use their senses to touch, feel, taste, smell, and see. They can act on objects and observe what happens next. Teachers help nurture children's curiosity by joining children in the Science Area and posing questions. Children respond by using their thinking skills to investigate and explore. In the Science Area, all areas of development can be enhanced.
- **Music and Movement** - Music naturally delights and interests children. By including time for music and movement, we provide an outlet for children's high spirits and creative energy. Music and movement experiences help develop both sides of the brain (an important finding in recent brain research) and contribute to children's social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development.

- **Sand and Water** - Play with sand and water involves sensory experiences that appeal to young children. They need little introduction to playing with these materials. While sand and water play can delight the senses, it also can challenge children's minds and promote all areas of development.

\*This information was taken from the *Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, a curriculum program used by ECEC. Dodge, Diane Trister, Colker, L., and Heroman, C. (2002). *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc.

We believe children learn and develop skills and confidence through active engagement with these centers and each other. Children are encouraged to explore activities and materials at their own pace which have been planned to stimulate each of the five developmental areas (social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive). It is our goal to create a nurturing environment where a child's natural love of learning will thrive. Each teaching team plans weekly to create developmentally appropriate plans that are approved by our Curriculum Specialist and that focus on the developmental needs of the individual children, as well as the group, and that are embedded in the children's interests. We utilize the Creative Curriculum's learning objectives, which are aligned with national Core Curriculum objectives. We desire to partner with you regarding your child's care and education. Please take the time to review the weekly curriculum plan as well as communicate daily with the teaching staff regarding goals you may have for your child.

## Communication

Communication is a critical component of a quality program. Please watch for announcements through:

- EZ-Care when you check your child in/out
- Our website at <http://ecec.childcare.utah.edu>
- E-mail (**please make sure we have an updated address for your family**)
- Flyers on the Parent Board
- Signs posted on the classroom door
- Monthly Newsletter
- Children's Daily Forms/Chart

Sharing information is not always easy since parents and teachers are busy. If you have a concern or special insight that would help us with your child, please visit or email your child's teacher, call and leave a message, or drop a note for the director at the office. This will make things go smoother for your child, you, and the center.

**\*\*\* Your input is very important and always welcomed\*\*\***

## Parent Teacher Confernces

The teaching staff works hard along with the support of the Curriculum Specialist to observe, assess, and create developmentally appropriate experiences that meet the goals of your children. At the end of Fall/Spring semester, we will hold Parent Teacher Conferences. Our expectation is that you partner with us, and attend the conference for your child/children in order to maximize your children's learning experience, and prepare them to enter grade school with the necessary school readiness skills.

### ***What to Expect at Your Parent Teacher Conference***

- Your child's teacher(s) will have compiled daily observations and an assessment portfolio individualized for your child, prepared for your conference. The assessment portfolio is updated monthly and emailed to you so you are always kept up to date about your child's development.

- The teacher(s) will begin the conference by asking if you have any questions regarding your child's development, so he/s he can best know what areas of development to focus on.
- The teacher(s) will then proceed to go over those areas of development, highlighting strengths and areas of growth, as well as next steps individualized for your child.
- The teacher(s) will also present photo documentation of your child's development, creative artwork, and writing samples.
- Before the conference concludes, you and your child's teacher(s) will set goals, and discuss areas that you would like to focus on for the remainder of your time in our program, both at school and at home.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### TOILETING

When the parents and staff feel a child is ready, they will work together to create a supportive, positive approach to toileting. Older children are encouraged to use the toilet several times a day. The routine helps the younger children realize what is being asked of them. We never force a child to sit on the toilet. Our bathroom is an 'Open Bathroom' where the children use the toilet together. If a child asks to use the bathroom alone then staff stand with their backs to the child to give them privacy. The State of Utah requires us to be with the children at all times so turning our back gives them their PRIVACY but enables us to still follow State and NAEYC guidelines.

### HAND WASHING

All staff and children are required to wash their hands upon entering our classrooms. When you and your child arrive at school, please assist your child in this procedure. We require the children to wash their hands often at school. This enables us to decrease the exposure to communicable diseases.

Children and staff wash their hands:

- Upon arrival for the day
- Before and after meals and snacks, including bottles
- Before and after administering medication
- After using the bathroom, assisting with toileting, or diapering
- After outdoor play
- After playing with or handling animals
- After cleaning or taking out garbage
- After coming into contact with bodily fluids including breast milk
- Before and after using sensory tables
- Any time hands are visibly soiled

### Change of Address and Phone Numbers

**If your address or phone number changes, please contact the office immediately.** If we do not have the current phone number, it is difficult to notify you should an emergency occur. Emergencies can happen and if we cannot reach you we will try to contact your professor or send the campus police to your class.

## Volunteer Policy

Families are always welcome and encouraged to volunteer and spend time in the classrooms. We ask that families assist the teaching staff in promoting our program policies and mission. Disciplining of any child, including that family's child, must be left up to the teaching staff in order to ensure consistency with our positive guidance policy. In the event a family is inappropriate in the classroom, or is not following program policies, they may be asked to immediately leave the classroom, and this will be left up to the Director's discretion.

Ways for families to help out include:

- Volunteering in the classroom – make sure to coordinate with your child(ren)'s teacher(s) to ensure that you have something to do while in the classroom (reading to the children, working on a project, helping with a walking field trip, etc.)
- Washing laundry for your child(ren)'s classroom
- Making things like play dough, "welcome" door signs, etc. for your child(ren)'s classroom
- Cleaning the playground
- Donating items (recyclables, extra stationary, etc.)

## Rest Time

We provide mats or cots for all children. While all children may not sleep, they are all required to rest during this time as sleep is a natural by-product of rest. Please do not request for child to be kept awake during this time, as it is healthy for children to sleep if they are tired, and even a rest rejuvenates them for the rest of their day. Utah State Licensing requires nap time to be a part of the day for all children birth thru 5 years of age. We ask that there are no drop-offs or pick-ups between the hours of 12:30pm-1:30pm, as this time is critical in easing the children into a restful state. Parents may enter the room but are reminded that any loud disturbances may wake the children. Blankets and soft toys must be taken home and washed weekly.

## Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is part of the early childhood curriculum. During the winter your child needs a coat, hat, and gloves. During the summer your child will need to come with sunscreen already applied and the teachers will reapply as the day progresses. We will go outside every day except in the following cases:

- Orange or Red Air days (Yellow days we will limit outside time to 15 minutes)
- Temperatures above 99° (Temperatures between 90-99° we will limit outside time to 15 minutes)
- Temperatures under 30° (Temperatures between 30-32° we will limit outside time to 15 minutes)
- During active precipitation

All children will go outside, except for those who are restricted for medical reasons. **Medical restrictions must be in writing and signed by the child's physician.**

## Toys From Home

We encourage toys to stay home unless needed for the following:

- Comfort item to assist children with transitions
- Show and Tell in your child's classroom (these days are rare, so please check curriculum)
- One soft sleeping toy (must be able to fit in child's cubby)

## Daily Schedule

Your child's classroom schedule is placed on the wall for all to view. We do our best to maintain flexibility within the schedule to make sure we are following the child's lead and accommodating their needs. Each individual classroom has an area where the schedule, lesson plans, and any changes that will be made to the routine or environment are posted. Please note when your child will be doing certain activities. This will enable you to talk with your child regarding what they did at school.

## Transitions

### Home to School

It can be difficult for both parents and children to start in a new child care program or classroom. Here are some tips on how to help:

- **Allow time for hellos and goodbyes.** At the beginning of the semester, you can expect some children to have difficulty with separation. Allow time for transitions from home to school by staying for a few minutes to help your child ease into an activity.
- **Reminders of home** can be helpful as well. Invite your child to bring a special object such as a stuffed animal or blanket for rest time. Bringing in a family picture to display in your child's classroom is another way to ease the transition.
- **Please do not sneak away when your child is distracted.** This can make transitions even more difficult and promotes mistrust. As the parent, it is important to be as calm and relaxed as possible. If you are nervous about leaving your child, or in a hurry to leave, it will make your child feel more anxious and uneasy about the transition. Tell your child goodbye and reassure them that you will be back.
- **The teachers are there to help make it easier on you.** You can be assured that your child's teachers will be there to comfort your child and provide activities to ease their transition.

### New Classroom

Transitions are based on the child's age and personal readiness. We do not automatically move a child into a new classroom on their birthday. We also cannot guarantee there will be slots available in the next class when your child has a birthday. Your child will change classes when they are personally ready and space is available.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### Emergency Drills

We are required by state licensing to do fire drills monthly as well as other disaster drills once every 6 months. Fire drills are held on random days and times. We practice evacuating the classrooms, meeting on the playground, accounting for all staff and children, etc. We discuss the importance of the drills with the children and talk about any fears they may have. As per University policy, during an earthquake drill we are required to evacuate to University Student Apartments, West Community Center.

### Evacuation Procedures

If we are advised to evacuate the building because it is deemed unsafe for us to remain in our space, we will go to the University Student Apartments, West Community Center. In the event that the West Community Center is not safe for us to relocate to, we will relocate to Rice Eccles Stadium or a location determined by the University of Utah Emergency Operation Center. We will post this information on signs on our doors and gates. After arriving at the

West Community Center or Rice Eccles Stadium, we will attempt to contact parents or emergency contacts for all children to notify you of where your child is located. Children will be grouped according to age and staff members will stay with the children until the Director releases them from their responsibilities. We are prepared to care for children for seventy-two (72) hours, if necessary.

## Failure to Pick up Your Child

In the event that a child has not been picked up 15 minutes after their scheduled pick-up time, we will call you. If we are unsuccessful, the Center will call the campus police and dispatch them to your class. Prior to calling security, every attempt will be made to reach a parent's cell phone or emergency contacts. **Please make sure your contact names and numbers are updated on your registration forms.**

## ALLERGY POLICY

Although the Early Childhood Education Program strives to be a nut free/allergy free environment, **we cannot guarantee our classrooms to be a food allergen free zone.** Due to the fact that parents provide lunches for their children on a daily basis, it would be extremely difficult to ensure that there are no nut products in every child's lunch. Instead we ask parents to exclude all nut products from your child's lunch. If nut products are found in your child's lunch we will not serve that food to your child and do our best to supplement with snack items. Please label sandwiches made with seed butters (sunflower, tahini, etc.) If a teacher is unsure whether it is nut butter or seed butter, we will not serve it. We will make sure to have all pertinent allergy information in your child's classroom with specific procedures in the event that a reaction does occur.

*The Early Childhood Education Center and its staff cannot be held responsible for any allergic reactions caused by contact with any allergen while a child is in the care of the center, whether it occurs inside or outside the facility.*

## HEALTH RELATED ISSUES

In order for your child to attend the Early Childhood Education Center, he/she must be well enough to eat the meals from home and snacks provided by the center. They must also be able to go outdoors. If your child exhibits symptoms of illness (**fever, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, frequent cough, heavily running nose, frequent sneezing, unknown rash, Conjunctivitis (pink eye) etc.**) during the 24-hour period prior to scheduled attendance at the center, your child **should be kept home** until the symptoms mentioned have disappeared or a note is obtained from your physician stating that your child does not have a contagious condition. Children must wait 24 hours after the last fever, vomiting and diarrhea episode. Please note with Conjunctivitis your child cannot attend the center until he/she has been on medication for 48 hours.

## Sick Child Pick-up

Children who are mildly ill and do not exhibit any of the following conditions may attend. Children must be able to participate in activities (which includes outside time, as well as gross movement activities.)

If children develop any symptoms while at ECEC, the child will be separated from the other children and parents will be contacted. Arrangements should be made to pick-up children as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached within 15 minutes, an authorized person from the registration forms will be called to pick up your child. Please make sure your registration forms are updated.

Please make every effort to follow these state Health Department requirements.

## State Guidelines for Illness

For the welfare of all the children in the center, the Early Childhood Development Center is required by the state to exclude a child from care if the following symptoms exist:

- The child has an oral or rectal temperature of 100 degrees F or greater
- Diarrhea, which is defined as an increase in number of stools compared to the child's normal amount, with increased and/or decreased stool water
- Vomiting in the previous 24 hours
- Mouth sores associated with the inability to control his/her saliva
- Rash with fever or behavior change
- Infected eyes with discharge, until 48 hours after treatment started by a physician
- Infestation (scabies, head lice, pinworm), until after first treatment with a medicated product.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun
- Strep Throat, until 24 hours after medication started
- Ringworm infection, until 24 hours after medication started
- Chicken Pox, until one week after the onset of rash, or until all lesions have dried and crusted
- Children needing individual one-on-one care

Lead teachers and/or director may turn away children brought to ECEC who exhibit any of the required exclusion illnesses, so please have a reliable back up child care plan for the possibility your child may become sick. Please do not mask your child's symptoms with Tylenol or similar medication. To control the spread of illnesses, contagious children must stay home. We want your child here at child care, but in order to protect all the children, we must take illness very seriously.

## Injuries

Every effort is made to keep your child safe; however, children are likely to acquire bumps, bruises, and scratches during their early years. An "Accident/Incident Report" will be filled out and given to you to sign. You will receive the top copy of the report, and the bottom copy will be placed in your child's file. If the injury is serious you will be notified by phone. If, in the opinion of our staff on duty, the injury warrants emergency treatment, an ambulance will be called and your child will be taken to the nearest medical facility (Primary Children's Hospital). You will then be notified immediately. Parents will be responsible for any costs incurred due to any emergency treatment. In case of serious injuries requiring medical attention the center will notify the Bureau of Child Care Licensing within 24 hours.

## Medication

If your child does have an illness that requires medication, the following policy will be in place.

No over-the-counter medicine will be dispensed except for diaper rash ointments, teething gel and sunscreen.

Many antibiotics and other medications can be administered 1 or 2 times per day. When visiting the doctor for your child's illness, please request a medication that can be administered in the morning before child care and the evening after leaving child care.

In the event your child is placed on prescription medication that needs to be administered during the day the following will be applied:



1. All medication must be given to a staff member upon arrival at the center and will be stored out of reach from children. No medications should be left in cubbies.
2. Prescription medication must be in the original containers, with the child's full name, have the original pharmacy label and date clearly marked on the prescription. Must have a child safety cap.
3. Medications must be accompanied with a medication permission form. No medication will be administered if there is not a current form signed with date and submitted.
4. Medication will only be given by the director or director designee between 12:00 and 1:00. This coincides with lunch time. Other doses must be arranged to be given at home.

## Immunizations

Your child must be up-to-date on immunizations as required by the Utah Department of Human Services prior to enrollment at the Center. After admission to the Center, you are responsible for regularly updating your child's health files to reflect current immunizations.

If you opt out of having your child immunized the center must have a current Personal Exemption Form from the Board of Health on file. Those who choose personal exemption will be informed about health issues at the center and must assume all risks that result from communicable diseases that are passed in a group environment.

## Nutrition

### Meals and Snacks

Snack (provided by center) and lunch (brought from home) are served on the following schedule:

- Snack 8:30-9:00 am
- Lunch 11:30 am to 12:00 pm
- Snack 2:30 to 3:00 pm

The daily snack menu is posted on the parent board behind the sign-in computer. The snacks are developed to provide children with nutrient rich foods. The Center uses the food groups and USDA recommendations as guidelines to our snacks, and our menu is approved by a registered dietician.

## Special Diet

It is your responsibility to notify the center if your child has a known food allergy and/or a specific diet. Please give us or fax us a doctor's signed statement to put in your child's file.

For parents who prefer to have their child on a certain diet, we ask that you provide snack for your child on the days that they attend, for example, vegetarian or religious preferences.

## Lunch Box Suggestions:

**Every child must have a lunch labeled with both first and last name if they attend during their scheduled lunch time. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

To make the lunch you put in the child's lunch box tasty and nutritious, consider the following tips:

- Create interest by having your child assist in food shopping and preparing lunch. Let your child make his/her own sandwich.
- Use a variety of foods for more nutrients and avoid monotony.

- Select and prepare food that is appropriate for your child's age. Children in the Infant and Toddler classroom must have their food cut into quarter inch pieces as per Utah State Licensing.
- Try to include a protein, a whole grain, a fruit, a vegetable, and a dairy whenever possible.
- Try avoiding foods with excessive amounts of saturated fats, sugars and additives. Pre-packaged puddings, cakes and other snacks may seem convenient but offer little nutritional value and are hard on the budget.
- The program provides water all throughout the day. If you wish your child to have milk or juice, please pack it in their lunchbox for meal time only.
- Surprises do not have to be food. A message such as *"You are wonderful! Love mom and dad"* can perk up a youngster's day, as well as any treat.

## Field Trips

- Field trips and walks away from ECEC are a regular part of the curriculum. Children enjoy the opportunity to explore and learn from the resources throughout the community.
- Methods of transportation include the UTA transit system, campus shuttles, and walking.
- For all fieldtrips, a sign-up sheet is posted in the parent area notifying parents of the date, time, destination, and means of transportation at least 3 days in advance.
- Written parental permission is required before your child may participate in any field trip.
- All fieldtrips are approved by the Director and are planned to ensure a positive experience for the children at ECEC.

## PHOTOGRAPHS & MEDIA

ECEC staff may use the center's digital camera to document children's activities. These photos are primarily used to document your child's progress and may be hung up for view in ECEC. You will receive a release form during the registration process, granting or declining permission to ECEC and all staff to use still, motion, video or audio recording of your child's image for use in conjunction with the production of visual bulletin boards, social media or other educational purposes.

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The State of Utah has a law (Code 62A-4a-403) that places a "duty to notify" on every person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child may be neglected or abused. They do not have to prove that abuse is occurring, just that there is reasonable cause to believe abuse or neglect is occurring and it must be reported.

- Any contracted, licensed, or certified agency, individual, or employee is responsible to document and report abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, neglect, maltreatment, and exploitation as outlined in the Provider Code of Conduct (Utah Department of Administrative Services) and cooperate fully in any resulting investigation.
- Any person will immediately report abuse, sexual and sexual exploitation, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation by contacting the Department of Child and Family Services within 24 hours.
- All reports and documentation made regarding situations will be made available upon request, or with court order when required by federal regulations, to appropriate personnel and law enforcement.
- Immunity from Legal Action (Code 62A-4a-410) states "any person making a report in good faith is immune from liability, civil or criminal."
- Failure to Report (Code 62A-4a-411) states that "any person who willfully fails to report child abuse or neglect is guilty of a class B misdemeanor punishable by up to \$1,000 fine and six months in jail."
- All injuries to children (explained or unexplained) shall be documented in writing and immediately reported to supervisory personnel.

## **FAMILY GRIEVANCE AND DISMISSAL POLICY**

The Early Childhood Education Program administration and staff are committed to maintaining an open door, open-forum approach to problem solving and conflict resolution. If a family has a concern regarding the behavior of a teacher, the concern should be discussed with the director. If a family has a concern regarding the behavior of the director, they should speak directly to the director. If they feel their concerns still have not adequately been addressed, they should present their grievance in writing to the Center for Child Care & Family Resources (CCCFR) director. The CCFR will respond in writing to the parents and schedule a meeting if necessary.

The Early Childhood Education Program reserves the right to withdraw a child or family from the center if it is decided that the relationship between the center, child and parent or guardian is not mutually beneficial. The most important factor is assuring the child is in an environment that best meets his/her needs. The Early Childhood Education Center is a unique setting with many transitions, which may not meet every child's needs. A two week written notice will be given to the parent or guardian should the center decide to exercise this right to withdraw a child or family. In extreme situations, the immediate removal of a child or family from the Center may be necessary. Reasons may include health and safety issues for the child or for the larger group of children or employees.

### **Reasons for Dismissal:**

- Child or parents needs cannot be met by the center.
- Child appears to be a danger to himself, other children or staff, and behavioral issues cannot be resolved through a support process:
  - a. Documented concerns
  - b. Meeting with child's parents/guardians to develop a behavioral plan
  - c. Follow through with action plan which may include bringing in an outside specialist
  - d. Follow up meeting to discuss child's progress and subsequent actions
  - e. Continued enrollment or dismissal
- Nonpayment or habitual late payment of fees
- A family owing tuition at the end of the school year may not re-enroll their child until the balance due has been paid. A tuition hold may be placed on student parent records
- Not completing and returning required enrollment forms promptly, including physical/medical information, emergency information, employment status, etc.
- Physical or verbal abuse or intimidation of staff or children.
- Habitual late pick-ups

## **TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES, & SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATERIALS**

The use of tobacco or alcohol on the premises is prohibited. The use or possession of illegal substances or sexually explicit materials on the premises is prohibited.

## **FIREARMS, EXPLOSIVES & WEAPONS**

Except as expressly permitted by law, firearms, explosives (including firecrackers, fireworks, and pyrotechnics) and other weapons are not permitted on the premises.