SDSU Children's Center

...quality child care provided by the Associated Students

Family Handbook

www.childcare.sdsu.edu

License # 370805244 and 370805130

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Early Learning naeyc ACCREDITED Program

ASSOCIATED STUDENTS SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

SAN DIEGO QUALITY PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE

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Dear Families,

Welcome to the SDSU Children's Center. We are honored that you have chosen us as your partner in caring for and educating your child. We look forward to building a strong relationship with your family and creating a meaningful and enriching experience for your child.

Our program serves children ages 6 months to 5 years. We foster a warm, inclusive, and nurturing environment where children feel safe, valued, and inspired to learn. Guided by our Reggio Emilia-inspired philosophy, we view children as capable, curious learners and create opportunities for exploration, discovery, and growth.

As a program of Associated Students and additionally as the laboratory school for San Diego State University's Child and Family Development program, we are committed to excellence in early childhood education through teaching, learning, and collaboration. This partnership supports the preparation of future early childhood professionals while maintaining high standards of care and education for children and families.

We believe that families are a child's first and most important teachers. Strong partnerships between home and school are essential to children's success, and we encourage families to be active participants in our community. We maintain an open-door policy and welcome your involvement in your child's learning journey.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's care and education. We look forward to a wonderful year together.

Warmly,

Michelle Zamora
Director
SDSU Children's Center

About the SDSU Children's Center

Vision

To be recognized as a model early childhood program that fosters growth, inspires lifelong learning, and strengthens connections among children, families, students, faculty, staff, and the SDSU community through excellence in early childhood education, innovation, and continuous quality improvement.

Mission

The SDSU Children's Center provides high-quality early care and education that supports the development and well-being of children, families, university students, and the broader SDSU community.

Our Philosophy

At the SDSU Children's Center, we believe children are capable, curious, and competent learners who are naturally driven to explore and make sense of the world around them. We view childhood as a unique and valuable stage of life and strive to create environments where children feel safe, respected, challenged, and inspired.

Guided by a Reggio Emilia-inspired approach, we value play, inquiry, creativity, and meaningful relationships. Learning is viewed as a collaborative process that emerges through children's interests, experiences, and interactions with others. Teachers serve as researchers and partners in learning, thoughtfully observing, documenting, and extending children's thinking.

We celebrate diversity and recognize the strengths that each child, family, and staff member brings to our community. Through responsive relationships, inclusive practices, and strong family partnerships, we support the growth and development of the whole child.

In Practice, You Will See

- Children actively engaged in play, exploration, and project-based learning.
- Teachers use observation, documentation, and assessment to guide curriculum.
- Learning experiences that reflect children's interests, cultures, languages, and developmental needs.
- Classrooms that encourage creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and independence.
- Strong partnerships between families and educators.
- Inclusive environments where children of all abilities are welcomed and supported.
- Opportunities for children to connect with nature, their community, and the world around them.

A Laboratory School for SDSU

The SDSU Children's Center serves as the laboratory school for San Diego State University's Child and Family Development program. As a lab school, we support the preparation of future early childhood professionals by providing opportunities for observation, research, and supervised field experiences.

University students work alongside experienced educators to connect theory with practice while contributing to the learning community. This partnership strengthens our program and supports the advancement of high-quality early childhood education.

Administrative Office and Contact Information

The Children's Center administrative office is available to assist families with enrollment, billing, state-funded program services, referrals, and general program questions.

Children's Center
5500 Campanile Drive
San Diego, CA 92182-7803

Phone: (619) 594-7941
Fax: (619) 594-6292

Website: www.childcare.sdsu.edu

Families are encouraged to contact the administrative office whenever questions arise regarding enrollment, tuition, program policies, family resources, or other Center services.

Licensing and Oversight

The Children's Center is committed to maintaining open communication with families and addressing concerns in a timely and respectful manner. Families are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns, directly with their child's Master Teacher, Supervising Teacher, Assistant Director or Director. Most concerns can be resolved quickly through open communication and collaboration. Families also have the right to contact the Center's regulatory agencies at any time regarding licensing, health and safety, or state-funded program requirements.

The SDSU Children's Center is a program of Associated Students of San Diego State University (SDSU). The Center is licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD), and operates in compliance with all applicable state regulations governing child care programs. Community Care Licensing has the authority to inspect the Center, review records, and interview children, families, and staff as part of its responsibility to ensure compliance with state licensing requirements.

The Children's Center is also a state-funded child development program, including the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) and the General Child Care and Development Program (CCTR). As a recipient of state funding, the Center is guided by the California Department of Education for compliance with all applicable program requirements and for the administration of subsidized child care services for eligible families.

As a program of Associated Students, the Children's Center follows applicable Associated Students and SDSU policies and procedures while maintaining program-specific policies and practices designed to support the health, safety, education, and well-being of children and families. Children's Center policies are developed and administered by Center leadership and are guided by licensing regulations, state-funded program requirements, NAEYC Accreditation standards, university policies, and best practices in early childhood education.

Regulatory Agency Contact Information

California Department of Social Services
Community Care Licensing Division
Mission Valley Regional Office
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92108-4421

California Department of Education
Early Education Division
1430 N Street, Suite 6308
Sacramento, CA 95814

NAEYC Accreditation and Quality Improvement

The SDSU Children's Center is proud to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's leading organization for high-quality early childhood education. Accreditation reflects our commitment to maintaining rigorous standards in teaching practices, family engagement, health and safety, assessment, and program administration.

The Center also participates in the San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI), a countywide quality improvement system that supports high-quality teaching and learning through coaching, classroom quality assessments, professional development, child assessment practices, and continuous program improvement.

Through NAEYC Accreditation, SDQPI participation, ongoing professional development, reflective practice, and program self-evaluation, we continually assess and strengthen our program to ensure children and families receive the highest quality early care and education experience possible.

Quality Improvement and Program Excellence

The SDSU Children's Center is committed to continuous quality improvement and providing the highest quality early care and education experiences for children and families.

In addition to maintaining accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Center participates in the San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI), a countywide quality improvement program designed to strengthen teaching practices, family engagement, classroom environments, and child outcomes.

Through participation in SDQPI, the Center engages in ongoing professional development, coaching, classroom quality assessments, child assessment practices, and program self-evaluation. Information

gathered through these processes helps guide planning, strengthen teaching practices, and ensure children receive meaningful, high-quality learning experiences.

Our commitment to continuous improvement reflects our belief that excellence in early childhood education requires ongoing reflection, collaboration, and learning.

Commitment to Inclusion

The SDSU Children's Center welcomes children and families of all backgrounds, identities, abilities, and family structures. We strive to create a community where every child feels a sense of belonging and every family is treated with dignity and respect.

Children with disabilities and other exceptional needs are fully included in our program whenever appropriate. Partnerships with families and community agencies are essential in supporting each child's individual development and success.

Enrollment & Programming

Hours of Operation and Closures

The SDSU Children's Center provides year-round care for children ages 6 months through 5 years.

The Center is open **Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m**. and Fridays **from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**, except on designated holidays, professional development days, University-approved closures, and emergency closures.

Our infant program is open Monday through Friday **8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m**.

To support staff development, curriculum planning, and program operations, the Center closes at 4:00 p.m. every Friday. Families are expected to pick up and sign out their child no later than 4:00 p.m. on Fridays.

The Children's Center observes holidays and scheduled closures throughout the year. Annual closure dates are included in the annual billing agreement.

In the event of emergencies, public health concerns, utility outages, severe weather, or University closures, operating hours may be adjusted or the Center may temporarily close. Families will be notified through the Center's listserve as soon as practical.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Children must be signed in upon arrival and signed out upon departure by a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult listed on the child's emergency contact form.

For the safety of all children, families are responsible for escorting their child into the classroom, ensuring the child is greeted by a staff member, and completing the required sign-in process before leaving. Likewise, children must be signed out and accompanied by an authorized adult when leaving the Center.

Children will only be released to individuals authorized by the parent or legal guardian. Staff may request photo identification before releasing a child to an authorized individual.

Families are responsible for maintaining current emergency contact and authorized pick-up information. Changes must be submitted to the Center in writing.

Once a child has been signed out, the parent or authorized adult assumes responsibility for the child's supervision. Children may not return to classrooms, playgrounds, or other Center areas after being signed out for the day.

Children may never be left unattended in vehicles while arriving at or departing from the Center.

The SDSU Children's Center was established to support the educational and professional success of San Diego State University students, faculty, and staff by providing high-quality early care and education for their children.

As a program operated by Associated Students of San Diego State University, enrollment opportunities are offered according to the Center's affiliation priorities and available space.

Enrollment priority is offered in the following order:

1. SDSU Students
2. SDSU Faculty and Staff
3. SDSU Alumni
4. Community Families

Within each affiliation category, additional consideration may be given to factors such as sibling enrollment, age of the child, program eligibility requirements, and available classroom openings.

State-Funded Programs

The SDSU Children's Center administers two state-funded programs through the California Department of Education:

- California State Preschool Program (CSPP)
- General Child Care and Development Program (CCTR)

These programs are available exclusively to eligible SDSU student families who meet state-established income and need requirements. Families participating in CSPP or CCTR must complete all certification and recertification requirements as required by the California Department of Education and California Department of Social Services.

Through a combination of state-funded and full-cost enrollment options, the Children's Center is committed to reducing barriers to higher education and supporting the success of SDSU student parents while continuing to serve the broader SDSU community.

Enrollment Requirements

To join the Children's Center Waiting Pool, families should first attend a Center tour. Tours provide an opportunity to learn about our philosophy, programs, classrooms, and enrollment process.

Families wishing to be added to the Waiting Pool must:

- Attend a Children's Center tour.
- Submit a completed Waiting Pool application.
- Pay the non-refundable Waiting Pool fee, if applicable.
- Submit additional documentation if applying for a state-funded program.

Applications are accepted year-round.

Enrollment Offers

When an opening becomes available, families will be contacted by a member of the Children's Center staff. Families have 72 hours to accept or decline the enrollment offer. If a response is not received within that timeframe, the Center may move to the next eligible family on the Waiting Pool.

Deposits

Families accepting an enrollment offer are required to submit a non-refundable deposit equal to the first month's tuition. The deposit secures the child's enrollment space and is applied toward the family's first month of care.

State-funded families participating in CSPP or CCTR programs may have different enrollment requirements and will receive additional information during the certification process.

Enrollment Meetings

Prior to attending the program, families will have an enrollment meeting to review program policies, complete required paperwork, and discuss their child's transition into the program.

Children will be invited to visit the classroom and meet teachers prior to their first day. We encourage families to schedule several visits to help establish familiarity and support a smooth transition into the program.

Failure to complete required paperwork, provide requested documentation, or meet enrollment deadlines may result in forfeiture of the offered space.

Tuition and Billing

Financial policies, tuition rates, registration fees, late fees, and other billing-related procedures are updated annually and published in the SDSU Children's Center Year Billing Agreement. Families are responsible for reviewing and complying with the current Billing Agreement.

The SDSU Children's Center offers both state-funded (available only to income qualifying SDSU students only) and full-cost enrollment options. Tuition and fees vary based on program type, enrollment schedule, classroom placement, and family eligibility.

Current tuition rates are available online and are subject to increases annually. Updates to rates are communicated to enrolled families via the annual billing agreement.

Billing

Tuition statements are issued monthly and are due upon receipt.

Families are encouraged to enroll in automatic payments through the Children's Center's approved payment system. Automatic payments are processed on the 16th day of each month, or the next business day if the 16th falls on a weekend or holiday.

Checks, money order payments are available and can be made at the front desk.

Credit card payments options can be established online using our enrollment management system.

Registration Fees

Registration fees are assessed annually in October and vary based on enrollment type. Registration fees help support classroom materials, emergency preparedness supplies, insurance costs, and program operations.

Current registration fees are outlined in the annual Billing Agreement.

Deposits

New enrollments require a non-refundable deposit to secure a child's enrollment space. Deposit requirements and timelines are outlined in the annual Billing Agreement.

Additional Attendance Days

Families can request additional attendance days outside of their contracted schedule when space is available. Requests must be approved in advance by the cottage supervising teacher.

Forms to request additional days are available at the front desk.

Additional fees may apply and are outlined in the annual Billing Agreement.

Late Pick-Up

Families are expected to pick up their child according to their contracted schedule hours. They should most especially pick up before the program's designated closing time.

Late pick-up fees will be assessed according to the current Billing Agreement. Repeated late pick-ups may result in changes to a family's contracted schedule and, in severe or ongoing situations, may impact continued enrollment.

Late Payments

Tuition payments received after the established due date are subject to late fees.

Accounts with outstanding balances may result in suspension of services or disenrollment if payment arrangements are not made. Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact the administrative office as soon as possible to discuss payment plan options.

Absences

Tuition is based on a child's contracted enrollment schedule rather than attendance. Therefore, tuition is not adjusted for absences, illness, vacations, holidays, or other missed days.

Missed days may not be exchanged for attendance on non-contracted days.

Illness Exclusion

The health and well-being of all children is a shared responsibility between families and the Children's Center. Children who are ill should remain home until they are well enough to comfortably participate in all daily activities, including outdoor play.

Please notify the Children's Center whenever your child will be absent due to illness.

Children Should Remain Home If They Have:

- Fever of 100°F or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe or persistent coughing
- Sore throat accompanied by fever
- Unusual rash
- Skin conditions that are contagious
- Red, inflamed eyes with discharge
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes
- Unusual fatigue, irritability, or lethargy
- Dark yellow or green discharge from the eyes, ears, nose, throat, vagina, or rectum
- Any illness that prevents participation in normal activities

If these symptoms develop while at the Center, families will be contacted and expected to pick up their child within one hour.

Illness Exclusion Guidelines

Illness	Return to Care
Varicella/Hand Foot & Mouth	When all lesions have crusted over
Giardia	Medical release required; symptom-free for 24 hours
Measles	Medical release required
Meningitis	Medical release required
Mumps	Medical release required
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Excluded for 3 weeks or as directed by physician/public health
Pinworms	24 hours after treatment begins
Scabies	24 hours after treatment begins
Staph Skin Infection	Medical release required; lesions must be covered

Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever	24 hours after antibiotics begin and child is improving
Salmonella/Shigella	Medical release required; diarrhea-free for 24 hours
Viral Gastroenteritis	Symptom-free for 24 hours

Conditions That May Not Require Exclusion

Children may generally attend if they:

- Have a clear runny nose and are otherwise healthy and active
- Are being treated for allergies
- Are being treated for asthma
- Are being treated for eczema
- Are being treated for poison oak and are able to participate comfortably

Conditions Requiring Parent Notification

Families will be informed if their child exhibits or is diagnosed with:

- Fifth Disease
- COVID-19
- Conjunctivitis without fever
- Impetigo (may attend if being treated and lesions are covered)
- Hand Foot and Mouth (may return went sores are healed & dry)
- Head Lice (may return after treatment and removal of nits)
- Ringworm (may attend if being treated and lesions are covered)
- Thrush

The SDSU Children's Center follows guidance from the California Department of Public Health, San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, Community Care Licensing, and Caring for Our Children health and safety standards. Exclusion decisions may be adjusted based on current public health guidance.

Vacation Credit

Families enrolled in the Year-Round Program may be eligible for vacation credit after twelve consecutive months of enrollment.

Eligibility requirements, request procedures, and credit limits are outlined in the annual Billing Agreement.

Schedule Changes

Requests for permanent schedule changes must be submitted in writing and are approved based on classroom capacity and program availability.

Changes to a child's contracted schedule generally become effective at the beginning of the following month.

Withdrawal from the Program

Families wishing to withdraw from the Children's Center must submit written notice by the first day of the month. Withdrawal becomes effective on the last day of that month.

Families remain financially responsible for tuition through the required notice period. Tuition is not prorated for partial-month attendance.

Additional withdrawal procedures are outlined in the annual Billing Agreement.

Family Communication and Partnerships

Our Partnership with Families

At the SDSU Children's Center, we believe families are a child's first and most important teachers. Partnerships between home and school are essential to children's growth, development, and success.

We work towards building respectful, collaborative relationships with families based on open communication, mutual trust, and shared responsibility. We value the unique perspectives, cultures, languages, experiences, and strengths that each family brings to our community.

Open Door Policy

The SDSU Children's Center maintains an open-door policy. Families are welcome to visit the Center, observe their child's classroom, participate in program activities, and communicate with teachers and administrators throughout the year.

We encourage families to remain actively involved in their child's learning experience and to share questions, ideas, concerns, and celebrations with us.

Daily Communication

Ongoing communication between families and teachers is an important part of building strong relationships and supporting children's success.

Families are encouraged to share information that may affect their child's day, including:

- Changes in routines
- Family events or transitions
- Health concerns
- Developmental milestones
- Questions or observations

Teachers will communicate important information regarding your child's experiences, development, and well-being while at the Center.

Communication Methods

The Children's Center uses a variety of communication methods to keep families informed and connected to their child's learning experience, including:

- Classroom conversations at arrival and departure
- Weekly classroom emails from teachers highlighting classroom activities, curriculum experiences, reminders, and upcoming events
- Monthly program updates from the Director providing Center-wide news, important announcements, and program information
- Email and listserv communications
- Classroom documentation, displays, and learning stories
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Family events and meetings
- Children's Center website and social media platforms

Families are responsible for reviewing communications distributed by the Center and ensuring that their contact information remains current. Open and timely communication between families and staff helps support children's success and strengthens our partnership as a learning community.

Parent Conferences

Formal parent-teacher conferences are offered within the first 60 days of enrollment and at least twice each year thereafter.

Conferences provide an opportunity to:

- Review your child's development and learning
- Discuss classroom experiences and emerging interests
- Share family observations, goals, and concerns
- Review assessment information, including the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)
- Collaboratively identify ways to support your child's growth at home and at school

The SDSU Children's Center uses the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), California's assessment system for young children, to observe, document, and monitor children's development across multiple domains. Information gathered through the DRDP helps teachers plan meaningful learning experiences and individualize support for each child.

Parent conferences provide an opportunity for families and teachers to review DRDP results together, celebrate progress, and discuss goals for continued growth and development.

Additional conferences may be requested by families, teachers, or administrators at any time.

Family Engagement

Families are encouraged to participate in the life of the Center in ways that are meaningful.

Opportunities for engagement may include:

- Classroom participation
- Family events and celebrations
- Parent education workshops
- Children's Center Board participation
- Volunteer opportunities
- Sharing family traditions, cultures, languages, and talents

Family involvement enriches the educational experience for all children and helps strengthen our learning community.

As part of the California State Preschool Program (CSPP), family engagement is recognized as an important component of children's learning and development. Families are encouraged to participate in conferences, family events, educational opportunities, and program feedback activities throughout the year.

Children's Center Board

The Board includes parent representatives that are SDSU students, faculty, staff, and community members who work collaboratively to support the mission and goals of the Children's Center.

The Children's Center Board provides opportunities for families to collaborate board events such as :

- Fundraising
- Family connections
- Staff Appreciation
- A is for Art

Supporting Student Families

As part of San Diego State University's commitment to student success, the Children's Center recognizes the unique challenges faced by student parents.

The Center works to connect families with available campus and community resources, including academic support services, basic needs resources, food assistance programs, health and wellness services, the SDSU Women's Resource Center, and other programs that promote family well-being and educational success.

Addressing Questions and Concerns

Open communication is essential to maintaining positive relationships and resolving concerns effectively.

Families are encouraged to first discuss questions or concerns directly with their child's teaching team. Most concerns can be resolved through respectful conversation and collaboration.

If additional support is needed, families are encouraged to contact the Cottage Supervisor, Assistant Director, or Director. Center administration is committed to listening, problem-solving, and working collaboratively with families to address concerns.

Information regarding formal complaint procedures and parent rights is included in the Parent Rights and Responsibilities section of this handbook.

Family Surveys and Continuous Improvement

The SDSU Children's Center values family feedback as an important part of our continuous quality improvement efforts.

Throughout the year, families may be invited to participate in surveys, program evaluations, and other opportunities to share feedback. Information gathered through these processes helps inform program planning, professional development, and ongoing improvements.

As a NAEYC-accredited program and participant in the San Diego Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI), family input plays an important role in helping us evaluate and strengthen the quality of services we provide.

We appreciate the partnership, trust, and support of our families and look forward to working together to create a positive and meaningful experience for every child.

Health, Safety, and Wellness

The health, safety, and well-being of children are our highest priorities. The SDSU Children's Center maintains policies and procedures designed to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for all children, families, and staff.

Daily Health Checks

Teachers conduct daily health observations as children arrive to ensure they are well enough to participate in the program. Families should inform staff of any health concerns, recent illnesses, injuries, medications, or changes that may affect their child's day.

Children should arrive healthy and able to participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor play and physical activities.

Illness and Exclusion Policy

To help prevent the spread of illness, children who are ill should remain at home until they are well enough to return to group care.

A child may be excluded from care if they exhibit symptoms that:

- Prevent them from comfortably participating in program activities
- Require more care than staff can reasonably provide while supervising other children
- Pose a risk of spreading illness to others

Families will be contacted and expected to pick up their child within one hour if a child develops symptoms of illness while at the Center.

The Children's Center follows current guidance from local and state public health agencies regarding communicable diseases and illness prevention.

Additional information regarding specific exclusion periods for communicable illnesses is available in the Illness Exclusion Guide included in the handbook appendices.

Handwashing and Health Practices

Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of illness.

Children and staff wash their hands throughout the day.

Families are encouraged to wash their hands and their child's hands upon arrival each day.

Medication Administration

Prescription medications may be administered only when proper authorization and required documentation have been provided.

Medications must:

- Be in the original prescription container
- Be clearly labeled with the child's name
- Include dosage and administration instructions
- Be accompanied by required authorization forms

The Children's Center administers only medications prescribed to the individual child by a licensed healthcare provider. The Center does not maintain stock medications, including EpiPens.

Additional documentation may be required for inhalers, nebulizers, emergency medications, and other specialized medical needs. Families should contact Center staff in advance to discuss any medication needs during program hours.

Allergies and Individual Health Needs

The Children's Center works closely with families to support children with allergies, medical conditions, and other health needs.

Families are responsible for providing current health information and any required medical documentation. Individual health care plans may be developed as needed to support children's safety and participation in the program.

Accidents and Incidents

Minor injuries that occur during the day will be treated by staff and communicated to families.

If a child experiences a significant injury, illness, or unusual incident, families will be notified promptly. Written documentation may be provided depending on the nature of the incident.

In emergency situations, emergency medical services may be contacted immediately. Staff will make every effort to notify parents or emergency contacts as quickly as possible.

Emergency Preparedness

The SDSU Children's Center maintains comprehensive emergency procedures and regularly conducts emergency drills in accordance with licensing requirements and university guidelines.

Children participate in age-appropriate emergency drills throughout the year, including:

- Fire drills
- Earthquake drills
- Evacuation procedures
- Shelter-in-place procedures

Emergency preparedness plans are reviewed regularly to ensure the safety of children and staff.

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, children will remain in the care of Children's Center staff until released to an authorized adult listed on the child's emergency contact information.

Authorized Release and Emergency Contacts

Children will only be released to individuals authorized by a parent or legal guardian and listed on the child's emergency contact information.

Families are responsible for maintaining current emergency contact information and notifying the Center immediately of any changes.

Valid photo identification may be required when a child is picked up by an authorized individual.

Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Environment

The SDSU Children's Center and San Diego State University campus are smoke-free and tobacco-free environments. Smoking, vaping, and the use of tobacco products are prohibited on Center property and throughout the university campus.

Commitment to Safety

Creating a safe environment is a shared responsibility among staff, families, and children. Through ongoing communication, health practices, supervision, emergency preparedness, and partnership with families, we strive to provide a healthy and secure environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive.

Curriculum, Learning, and Assessment

Our Approach to Learning

At the SDSU Children's Center, we believe children are capable, curious, and competent learners who actively construct knowledge through their interactions with people, materials, and the world around them.

Our curriculum is inspired by the Reggio Emilia and play based approach and grounded in current research and best practices in early childhood education. We view learning as a collaborative process that develops through exploration, inquiry, play, relationships, and meaningful experiences.

Teachers create engaging learning environments that encourage children to ask questions, investigate ideas, solve problems, and express their thinking in a variety of ways.

Learning Through Play

Play is the foundation of learning in early childhood. Through play, children develop social skills, language, creativity, problem-solving abilities, self-regulation, and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

Children are provided opportunities each day to:

- Explore materials and ideas
- Engage in imaginative and dramatic play
- Build relationships with peers and adults
- Investigate questions and interests
- Develop independence and confidence

- Practice emerging academic skills through meaningful experiences

Project-Based Learning

Children's interests and questions serve as the foundation for curriculum development. Teachers observe children's play, conversations, and experiences to identify topics that spark curiosity and engagement.

These interests often develop into projects that may last days, weeks, or months depending on children's involvement and exploration. Projects encourage children to investigate topics in depth while developing critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.

The Learning Environment

We believe the environment plays an important role in children's learning and development. Classrooms are intentionally designed to be welcoming, engaging, and responsive to children's interests and developmental needs.

Children have access to a variety of materials and experiences that support learning across all developmental domains, including:

- Art and creative expression
- Literacy and language
- Science and discovery
- Mathematics
- Music and movement
- Dramatic play
- Sensory exploration
- Fine and gross motor development

Outdoor Learning

The outdoor environment is an extension of the classroom and an essential part of children's daily experiences.

Children spend time outdoors every day engaging in:

- Active physical play
- Nature exploration
- Gardening experiences
- Sensory investigation
- Creative expression
- Cooperative play and problem-solving

We believe meaningful connections with nature help foster curiosity, resilience, environmental awareness, and a lifelong appreciation for the natural world.

Inclusion and Individualized Learning

Every child develops at their own pace and brings unique strengths, experiences, and perspectives to the learning environment.

Teachers intentionally adapt curriculum, materials, and teaching strategies to support individual learning styles, developmental needs, cultures, languages, and abilities. Our goal is to ensure all children have meaningful opportunities to participate, learn, and succeed.

Assessment and Documentation

Assessment is an ongoing process that helps teachers understand children's development, learning, and interests.

Teachers use a variety of tools and strategies to gather information about children's growth, including:

- Daily observations
- Anecdotal notes
- Photographs and documentation
- Samples of children's work
- Family input and collaboration
- Developmental assessments

Assessment information is used to individualize curriculum, plan meaningful learning experiences, and support children's continued growth and development.

Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)

The SDSU Children's Center utilizes the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), California's assessment system for young children.

The DRDP is an observation-based assessment that helps teachers monitor children's progress across multiple developmental domains, including:

- Social-emotional development
- Language and literacy
- Cognitive development
- Physical development
- Approaches to learning
- Mathematics and science

Teachers complete DRDP assessments at designated times throughout the year and use the information to guide curriculum planning and support individual learning goals.

Families receive information about their child's development through conferences, ongoing communication, and documentation shared throughout the year.

Documentation of Learning

Documentation is an important part of our teaching practice and helps make children's learning visible.Teachers document children's ideas, conversations, projects, and discoveries through:

- Photographs
- Written observations
- Children's work samples
- Classroom displays
- Learning stories and project documentation

Documentation allows children, families, and teachers to reflect on learning experiences and celebrate growth over time.

Preparing Children for Future Success

School readiness is not defined by a single set of academic skills. Rather, it reflects a child's ability to approach new experiences with confidence, curiosity, independence, and a love of learning.

Through meaningful relationships, engaging learning experiences, play, exploration, and intentional teaching, we help children develop the social, emotional, cognitive, language, and physical skills that support future success in school and in life.

A Learning Community

As the laboratory school for San Diego State University's Child and Family Development program, the Children's Center serves as a community of learners where children, families, teachers, university students, and faculty learn together.

This partnership strengthens the educational experiences offered to children while contributing to the preparation of future early childhood professionals and the advancement of high-quality early childhood education.

Guidance, Relationships, and Social-Emotional Development

Our Approach to Guidance

At the SDSU Children's Center, we believe children learn social and emotional skills through supportive relationships, meaningful experiences, and consistent guidance from caring adults.

Our approach to guidance is rooted in respect for children and a belief that all behavior communicates a need, feeling, or stage of development. Rather than focusing on punishment, we focus on teaching children the skills they need to build relationships, solve problems, regulate emotions, and become responsible members of a community.

Teachers create safe, predictable environments where children feel valued, supported, and empowered to learn from their experiences.

Building Relationships

Positive relationships are at the heart of everything we do. Teachers work to establish trusting relationships with children and families while creating classroom communities where children feel a sense of belonging.

Through warm, responsive interactions, children learn to:

- Express feelings appropriately
- Develop empathy and compassion
- Build friendships
- Communicate effectively
- Develop confidence and independence
- Respect the rights and perspectives of others

Learning Social and Emotional Skills

Young children are still learning how to manage emotions, navigate social situations, and solve problems. These skills develop over time and require practice, support, and guidance.

Teachers help children:

- Identify and express emotions
- Recognize the feelings of others
- Develop self-regulation skills
- Practice cooperation and negotiation
- Resolve conflicts peacefully
- Build resilience and persistence

Social-emotional learning is embedded throughout the daily program and is considered an essential part of children's overall development and school readiness.

Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving

Conflict is a natural part of learning and growing. Rather than immediately solving problems for children, teachers support them in developing the skills needed to resolve conflicts independently whenever appropriate.

Teachers help children:

- Communicate their thoughts and feelings
- Listen to the perspectives of others
- Identify problems
- Generate possible solutions
- Work collaboratively toward resolution

As children gain experience, they develop confidence in their ability to navigate social situations and advocate for themselves respectfully.

Positive Guidance Practices

Teachers use a variety of positive guidance strategies, including:

- Modeling respectful communication
- Establishing clear and consistent expectations
- Redirecting behavior when appropriate
- Supporting emotional regulation
- Encouraging problem-solving
- Reinforcing positive social interactions
- Providing choices and opportunities for independence

Corporal punishment, humiliation, intimidation, withholding of basic needs, or other punitive practices are never used.

Biting

Biting is a common developmental behavior among infants and toddlers. Young children may bite when they are frustrated, overwhelmed, teething, excited, or unable to communicate their needs effectively.

When biting occurs, teachers respond immediately to ensure safety, comfort the child who was bitten, and support the child who bit in learning more appropriate ways to express feelings and needs.

Teachers work closely with families to identify patterns, develop strategies, and support children through this developmental stage. Families of all children involved will be informed when biting incidents occur.

Supporting Developing Social Skills

Skills such as sharing, taking turns, cooperating, and understanding another person's perspective develop gradually over time.

Teachers recognize that young children are still learning these skills and provide guidance, modeling, and opportunities for practice throughout the day. Rather than forcing children to share before they are developmentally ready, teachers help children learn negotiation, waiting, turn-taking, and problem-solving strategies that support successful interactions with peers.

Apologies and Restorative Practices

Our goal is for children to develop genuine empathy and understanding of how their actions affect others.

Rather than requiring automatic apologies, teachers help children understand the impact of their actions and identify ways to repair relationships when conflicts occur. Depending on the situation, children may be encouraged to offer comfort, help solve a problem, assist a friend, or participate in another meaningful act of restoration.

As children mature and develop a deeper understanding of empathy and responsibility, verbal apologies often become a natural part of the process.

Respecting Children as Individuals

At the SDSU Children's Center, we focus on describing children's actions rather than labeling children themselves.

Teachers strive to recognize effort, persistence, problem-solving, kindness, and growth rather than assigning labels such as "good" or "bad." This approach helps children develop a positive sense of self and understand that mistakes are opportunities for learning.

Individualized Support

Some children may require additional support as they develop social, emotional, or behavioral skills.

When concerns arise, teachers partner with families to better understand the child's needs and develop consistent strategies that can be used both at home and at school. When appropriate, the Center may collaborate with specialists, community agencies, or other professionals to support a child's success.

Supporting Children with Persistent Behavioral Challenges

The SDSU Children's Center is committed to supporting the success and full participation of every child. We recognize that challenging behaviors are often a form of communication and that children benefit most from consistent support, strong relationships, and collaborative problem-solving among families, teachers, and support professionals.

When concerns arise regarding a child's behavior, teachers and administrators work closely with families to better understand the child's needs and identify strategies that support success both at home and at school. Depending on the situation, support may include:

- Increased observation and documentation
- Individualized behavior support strategies
- Collaboration with families
- Developmental and social-emotional screening
- Consultation with specialists or support agencies
- Referrals to community resources
- Collaboration with IEP, IFSP, or other support teams when applicable

Our goal is to ensure that every child has meaningful opportunities to participate successfully in all aspects of the program.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The SDSU Children's Center is committed to maintaining inclusive learning environments and, to the greatest extent possible, ensuring the full participation of all enrolled children in program activities.

In accordance with California law, children will not be suspended, expelled, unenrolled, or encouraged to withdraw from the program due to behavior except in the limited circumstances outlined below.

Suspension

Suspension is used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances when a child's behavior presents a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated through reasonable support and interventions.

Prior to any suspension, the Children's Center will:

- Inform the child's parent or guardian, both verbally and in writing, regarding the specific behavior concerns.
- Collaborate with the family, teaching staff, administrative staff, and appropriate community resources to support the child's continued participation.
- Develop and implement strategies designed to reduce safety concerns and support the child within the classroom environment.

If suspension becomes necessary, the Children's Center will:

- Continue to engage with the family and appropriate support agencies.
- Develop a written plan outlining the supports and actions needed to facilitate the child's return to full participation.
- Provide referrals to community resources and support services.
- Consult with IEP or IFSP teams, when applicable and with parental consent.
- Document all interventions, actions, and resources provided.

Families will receive a Notice of Action and information regarding their appeal rights as required by state regulations.

Expulsion and Disenrollment

The SDSU Children's Center will not expel, unenroll, or encourage the withdrawal of a child due to behavior unless all reasonable efforts have been made to support the child's successful participation and a serious safety threat remains.

Before considering disenrollment, the Center will:

- Collaborate extensively with families, teachers, administrators, and support professionals.
- Implement and document reasonable interventions and support strategies.
- Utilize available screening, consultation, and referral resources.

- Consult with Special Education personnel and other support agencies when appropriate.
- Develop and review individualized support plans.
- Maintain documentation of all efforts and interventions.

Disenrollment due to behavior may only occur when:

1. Reasonable efforts to maintain the child's safe participation have been exhausted and documented.
2. The child's continued enrollment presents a serious safety threat to the child or others.
3. The determination has been made in consultation with the child's family and appropriate support personnel.
4. The Children's Center has worked to identify and refer the family to other potentially appropriate services or placements.
5. To the greatest extent possible, a transition plan has been developed to support the child and family.

Families will receive a Notice of Action and information regarding their appeal rights in accordance with applicable state requirements.

The SDSU Children's Center remains committed to inclusion, collaboration, and providing individualized supports that allow children to succeed within our program whenever possible.

Toilet Learning

Toilet learning is an important developmental milestone that occurs at different times for each child.

The Children's Center approaches toilet learning as a partnership between families and teachers. Children are encouraged and supported as they develop readiness and interest in learning this skill.

Teachers work closely with families to establish consistent routines and expectations while respecting each child's individual pace of development. Accidents are viewed as a normal part of the learning process and are handled in a calm, respectful, and supportive manner.

Our goal is to create a positive experience that builds children's confidence, independence, and self-help skills

Partnering with Families

Families play an essential role in children's social and emotional development. Ongoing communication between home and school helps ensure consistency and provides children with the support they need to thrive.

Together, families and teachers create nurturing environments where children can develop the skills, confidence, and resilience needed to build positive relationships and successfully navigate the challenges of growing up.

Nutrition, Meals, and Food Allergies

Healthy Eating and Nutrition

The SDSU Children's Center believes that healthy eating habits developed during early childhood contribute to lifelong health and well-being. Mealtimes are viewed as important opportunities for children to develop independence, social skills, healthy food preferences, and positive relationships with others.

The Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and follows federal nutrition guidelines to ensure children receive balanced, nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day.

Meals and Snacks

The Children's Center provides:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Afternoon snack

All meals and snacks are planned to meet CACFP nutrition requirements and are prepared with a focus on variety, quality, and age-appropriate nutrition.

Menus are posted and shared with families in advance. Menu substitutions may occasionally occur based on food availability or operational needs.

Infant Nutrition

The Children's Center supports each infant's individual feeding schedule and nutritional needs in partnership with families.

For infants, the Center provides:

- Iron-fortified infant formula
- Infant cereal
- Age-appropriate baby foods and solid foods as children are developmentally ready

Families who choose to provide breast milk may bring expressed breast milk to the Center. Breast milk must be properly labeled, stored, and transported according to Center guidelines.

Teachers work closely with families to ensure feeding practices align with each child's developmental needs and family preferences.

Family-Style Dining

Mealtimes are an important part of the educational experience at the SDSU Children's Center.

Children participate in family-style dining whenever developmentally appropriate. During family-style meals, children are encouraged to:

- Serve themselves with assistance as needed
- Make choices about what and how much they would like to eat
- Practice self-help skills and independence
- Engage in conversation with peers and teachers
- Learn table manners and social skills

Teachers sit with children during meals and model healthy eating habits, positive social interactions, and respectful mealtime conversations.

Children are never forced to eat and are encouraged to listen to their own hunger and fullness cues.

Food Allergies and Dietary Accommodations

The health and safety of children with food allergies or special dietary needs is a priority.

The SDSU Children's Center is a **nut-free facility**. Families may not bring peanuts, tree nuts, or foods containing nut products into the Center. This policy helps reduce the risk of accidental exposure and supports the safety of children with severe food allergies.

Families must notify the Center of any food allergies, dietary restrictions, or medical conditions that may affect a child's participation in meals and snacks.

Medical documentation from a licensed healthcare provider is required for:

- Food allergies
- Medical dietary restrictions
- Requests for meal modifications or substitutions

The Children's Center will work collaboratively with families and healthcare providers to develop appropriate plans that support children's nutritional and medical needs while maintaining a safe environment.

Children with documented food allergies or medical dietary needs may have individualized health or meal plans developed to ensure their safety while participating fully in program activities.

Celebrations and Special Events

The SDSU Children's Center recognizes that celebrations are meaningful opportunities for children and families to connect and build community.

Celebrations at the Center focus on building relationships, creating memories, and honoring children's experiences. Depending on the classroom and occasion, celebrations may include special activities, books, music, family participation, cultural traditions, classroom projects, or other meaningful experiences.

To support children's health and safety and comply with CACFP guidelines, all celebrations must follow the Children's Center Celebration Policy.

Families wishing to celebrate a special occasion should coordinate with the classroom master teacher in advance. Information regarding approved celebration options and procedures is available from your child's teaching team.

All food items brought to the Center for approved celebrations must comply with the Children's Center's nut-free policy and celebration guidelines. Celebration forms are available at the front desk.

Personal Belongings and What to Bring

Providing children with the items they need each day helps ensure they are comfortable, successful, and able to fully participate in all program activities.

The Children's Center provides many daily necessities, including meals, snacks, infant formula, baby food, diapers, and wipes. Families are primarily responsible for providing appropriate clothing, extra clothing, rest time items, and any approved personal care items.

Clothing

Children should arrive each day dressed for active play, exploration, and outdoor activities.

Because children participate in art, sensory experiences, outdoor play, and other hands-on learning activities, clothing may become messy. Families are encouraged to send children in comfortable clothing that can withstand active play.

Children should wear:

- Comfortable clothing that allows for movement and independence
- Closed-toe shoes with secure soles
- Weather-appropriate outerwear when needed

For safety reasons, flip-flops, slippery footwear, and shoes that interfere with active play are discouraged.

Extra Clothing

Each child should have at least one complete change of clothing available at the Center at all times.

Extra clothing should include:

- Shirt
- Pants or shorts
- Underwear (if applicable)
- Socks

Children who are toilet learning should have multiple changes of clothing available.

Families are responsible for replacing clothing as needed and ensuring items remain seasonally appropriate.

Diapers and Toileting Supplies

The Children's Center provides diapers and wipes for children who are not yet toilet independent.

Families who wish to use a specific diapering product or brand should discuss their child's needs with classroom staff.

If diaper cream or ointment is needed, families must provide the product and complete the required authorization forms before it can be applied by staff.

Rest Time Items

Children who participate in rest time should bring:

- A fitted crib or cot sheet (as appropriate for their classroom)
- A small blanket
- One comfort item ("lovey"), if needed

All items should be clearly labeled with the child's name and taken home regularly for cleaning.

Family Photos and Comfort Items

Young children often benefit from having connections between home and school.

Families are invited to provide a framed family photograph for the classroom and a family book. These materials help children develop a sense of belonging and comfort within the classroom environment.

Sunscreen

The Children's Center provides daily outdoor experiences and encourages families to apply sunscreen to their child before arriving at the Center.

To support children's health and safety during outdoor play, sunscreen is reapplied by staff following nap or rest time before children return outdoors in the afternoon.

Families must complete the required authorization forms and provide sunscreen in accordance with Center procedures.

Labeling Belongings

To help prevent lost or misplaced items, families should clearly label all personal belongings with their child's first and last name.

Items that should be labeled include:

- Clothing and jackets
- Blankets and rest time items
- Comfort items ("loveys")
- Water bottles
- bottles
- Any other personal belongings brought to the Center

The Children's Center is not responsible for lost, damaged, or misplaced personal items.

Toys and Items from Home

Children should leave toys and valuable items at home.

Bringing personal items from home may create challenges related to sharing, loss, or damage.

Lost and Found

Items found at the Center will be placed in the Lost and Found area.

Families are encouraged to check Lost and Found regularly. Unclaimed items may be donated or discarded at the end of each semester.

Parent Rights and Responsibilities

The SDSU Children's Center is committed to building strong partnerships with families based on mutual respect, open communication, and shared responsibility. Families play an essential role in their child's education and well-being, and we value the trust families place in us each day.

This section outlines the rights and responsibilities of families, as well as important policies that help ensure a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for all children.

Family Rights

Families have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity, respect, and professionalism.
- Receive information about their child's development, experiences, and progress.
- Participate in conferences, meetings, and program activities.
- Visit their child's classroom and observe the program in accordance with the Center's open-door policy.
- Receive information about Center policies, procedures, and program operations.

- Share concerns, suggestions, and feedback regarding the program.
- Access community resources and referrals when appropriate.
- Review records related to their child, as permitted by law.
- Receive written notification regarding decisions affecting enrollment in state-funded programs.

Community Care Licensing Parent Rights

The SDSU Children's Center is licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD), and operates in accordance with all applicable licensing regulations.

Families receive the California Community Care Licensing Parent Rights form during enrollment. This form outlines important rights related to licensing, facility inspections, complaint procedures, access to records, and other protections afforded to families under California law.

These rights include, but are not limited to:

- The right to enter and inspect the Children's Center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
- The right to file a complaint with Community Care Licensing regarding the operation of the facility.
- The right to review licensing reports and complaint investigation findings maintained by the facility.
- The right to review records related to their child.
- The right to be informed of any licensing actions affecting the facility.

The SDSU Children's Center fully supports these rights and encourages families to contact program administration with questions or concerns regarding licensing requirements or program operations.

Current licensing information, required notices, and inspection reports are available for review as required by law.

Official Community Care Licensing Parent Rights and Personal Rights forms are included in the handbook appendices and are provided during enrollment.

Family Responsibilities

Families are responsible for:

- Maintaining current emergency contact information.
- Informing the Center of changes in address, phone number, employment, school enrollment, or family circumstances.
- Reviewing Center communications and responding to requests in a timely manner.
- Following Center policies and procedures.
- Ensuring their child arrives healthy and ready to participate.
- Picking up their child on time.
- Treating children, families, and staff with respect.
- Providing required documentation for enrollment, health needs, and state-funded programs.
- Communicating concerns directly with staff so they may be addressed collaboratively.

Confidentiality

The SDSU Children's Center respects the privacy of children and families.

Information regarding children, families, and staff is treated as confidential and is shared only with individuals who have a legitimate educational, legal, or operational need to know, or as otherwise required by law.

Staff are prohibited from discussing information about other children or families with anyone outside of authorized personnel.

Babysitting and Outside Employment

To maintain professional boundaries, protect the confidentiality of children and families, and ensure adequate staffing during program hours, Children's Center employees may not provide babysitting or child care services for currently enrolled families.

The Children's Center recognizes the importance of maintaining professional relationships between staff and families. Providing care outside of the program may create conflicts of interest, confidentiality concerns, and challenges in maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

Additionally, the Center relies on staff availability to support program operations, maintain required staffing ratios, and provide consistent care during scheduled work hours.

For these reasons, families may not request or arrange babysitting, nanny services, transportation, or other child care arrangements with current Children's Center employees.

We appreciate families' understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain a professional and equitable environment for all children, families, and staff.

Child Custody and Court Orders

The Children's Center recognizes the rights of parents and legal guardians as established by law.

Unless legal documentation is provided to the Center, both parents or legal guardians may have access to their child and may pick up their child from the program.

Families are responsible for providing current court orders, custody agreements, restraining orders, or other legal documents that affect a child's care, release, or access to records. The Center cannot enforce custody arrangements without written legal documentation on file.

Mandated Reporting

All Children's Center employees are mandated reporters under California law.

Mandated reporters are legally required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Staff members do not investigate allegations or determine whether abuse has occurred; they are required to report reasonable suspicions to the appropriate agency.

Families will not necessarily be notified when a report is made, as notification may be prohibited by law or could interfere with an investigation.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The SDSU Children's Center is committed to providing an inclusive environment that values diversity, equity, belonging, and respect.

The Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or any other protected characteristic.

We strive to create an environment where all children, families, and staff feel welcomed, valued, and respected.

Inclusion of Children with Disabilities and Exceptional Needs

The SDSU Children's Center welcomes children of all abilities and is committed to supporting their participation in the program.

When appropriate, the Center collaborates with families, service providers, school districts, Regional Center staff, and other professionals to support children's developmental, educational, and health needs.

Reasonable accommodations will be considered to support children's successful participation in the program.

Complaint Resolution

The Children's Center encourages families to address questions or concerns directly with the classroom master teacher whenever possible.

If concerns cannot be resolved at the classroom level, families are encouraged to contact the Cottage Supervisor, Assistant Director, or Director.

The Center is committed to addressing concerns in a timely, respectful, and collaborative manner.

State-Funded Programs: Notice of Action and Appeals

Families participating in California State Preschool Program (CSPP) or General Child Care and Development Program (CCTR) services have specific rights regarding eligibility determinations, enrollment decisions, family fees, suspension, expulsion, and other actions affecting services.

When required by state regulations, families will receive a Notice of Action (NOA) explaining the action being taken and information regarding their appeal rights.

Families have the right to appeal actions related to state-funded services in accordance with California Department of Education and California Department of Social Services requirements.

Additional information regarding appeal procedures will be provided with the Notice of Action.

Licensing Information

The SDSU Children's Center is licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division.

Families have the right to review licensing reports and may contact Community Care Licensing regarding concerns related to licensing compliance.

Information regarding licensing inspections, reports, and complaint procedures is available upon request and will be posted as required by licensing regulations.

Technology, Photography, and Social Media

Photography and Documentation

Photography is an important part of the Children's Center's educational philosophy and documentation practices. Teachers regularly use photographs, children's work samples, and written observations to document learning, share classroom experiences, and make children's thinking visible.

Documentation may be displayed in classrooms, hallways, newsletters, presentations, the Center website, social media platforms, or other program materials when families have provided the appropriate authorization.

Families will be asked to complete photo and media release permissions during enrollment and may update their preferences at any time.

Social Media and Privacy

The Children's Center uses social media and digital communication platforms to share program information, celebrate learning, and highlight Center activities. You will be given a photo release form that provides your consent of your child’s photos.

To protect the privacy of all children and families, we ask that parents and visitors refrain from posting photographs or videos of children other than their own on social media or other public platforms without the express permission of the child's parent or guardian.

Families are encouraged to be mindful of the privacy and confidentiality of other children, families, and staff when sharing photos or information online.

Technology Use

Technology may be used by staff for documentation, communication, assessment, and educational purposes. Any technology used with children is developmentally appropriate, intentional, and supports learning goals.

Personal use of electronic devices by staff is limited during program hours to ensure supervision and engagement with children remain the primary focus. When adults are present in the building we ask that you refrain from phone usage in the center in order to remain focused on your child.

Campus Safety, Parking, and Emergency Operations

Campus Safety and Parking

As part of the San Diego State University community, the Children's Center operates within a busy campus environment. Families are to follow all university parking regulations, traffic laws, and posted safety requirements when arriving and departing from the Center.

Please allow sufficient time for parking, signing children in and out, and safely escorting children to and from the classroom.

Children may never be left unattended in vehicles, even for a brief period of time. Leaving a child unattended in a vehicle creates a serious safety risk and may result in intervention by law enforcement or other authorities.

Campus Emergencies

The Children's Center works closely with San Diego State University and emergency response agencies to maintain safe and secure operations. In the event of a campus emergency, the Center may implement emergency procedures including evacuation, shelter-in-place, lockdown, or other protective actions.

Families should ensure emergency contact information remains current so that staff can communicate important information when necessary.

Emergency Closures and Operations

While the Children's Center strives to maintain normal operations whenever possible, circumstances may arise that require temporary closure, delayed opening, or modified operations.

Examples may include:

- Severe weather or natural disasters
- Power outages or utility disruptions
- Public health emergencies
- Campus emergencies
- Building or facility safety concerns
- Other circumstances affecting the safety of children, families, or staff

The Children's Center may also close when San Diego State University suspends campus operations or when conditions make it unsafe to operate.

Communication During Emergencies

In the event of an emergency or unexpected closure, the Children's Center will make every effort to communicate with families as quickly as possible through available communication methods, including:

- Email
- Telephone calls
- Website updates
- Other emergency communication systems

Families are responsible for maintaining current contact information and monitoring communications during emergency situations.

Emergency Preparedness

The Children's Center maintains emergency preparedness plans and conducts regular drills in accordance with licensing requirements and university procedures. Emergency supplies are maintained on-site, and staff receive ongoing training related to emergency response and child safety.

Family Conduct and Respectful Community Expectations

The SDSU Children's Center is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful environment for children, families, staff, students, and visitors.

We believe positive relationships and respectful communication are essential to maintaining a strong learning community. All members of the Children's Center community are expected to interact with one another in a manner that reflects courtesy, professionalism, and mutual respect.

The following behaviors are not acceptable on Children's Center property, at Center-sponsored events, or in communications with staff, families, or children:

- Threatening, intimidating, or aggressive behavior
- Harassment, discrimination, or bullying
- Profanity or abusive language directed toward others
- Physical violence or threats of violence
- Disruptive behavior that interferes with program operations
- Conduct that compromises the safety or well-being of children, families, staff, students, or visitors

The Children's Center reserves the right to take appropriate action to address behavior that disrupts the program or creates an unsafe or hostile environment.

We are committed to working collaboratively with families to address concerns and resolve conflicts in a respectful and constructive manner. Together, we create a community where children and families can learn, grow, and thrive.

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the SDSU Children's Center Parent Handbook.

I understand that the handbook contains important information regarding program policies, procedures, family expectations, health and safety requirements, billing practices, and enrollment requirements.

I agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook and understand that updates may be made periodically. I understand that I will be notified of significant changes to program policies.

I understand that additional documents, including the Annual Billing Agreement, Licensing Forms, and State-Funded Program Notices (when applicable), are incorporated by reference and may contain additional requirements.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Office Use Only

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____