



# STAFF MANUAL



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**Community Care Licensing a division of the Department of Social Services has the right to interview any family, staff or child affiliated with the Children's Center.**

## Philosophy

At the SDSU Children's Center we strongly believe that:

- Young children are born learners, who explore the world with eagerness and curiosity.
- Each day brings us the chance to make a significant difference in the lives of children and families, as well as a lasting contribution to society. We foster lasting relationships and strong partnerships.
- We are committed to providing high quality care and education using the most current developmentally appropriate practices and the best emerging research in brain development. Our guiding principles and best teaching practices include:
  - \* Excellence and equity. All children have the same right to learning opportunities. We know that an excellent early childhood education makes the difference.
  - \* Intentionality and effectiveness. Teachers make informed decisions in their daily practice and curriculum development. We believe that a child initiated, project based curriculum works most effectively when there is an active collaboration between children, teachers, and families.
  - \* Continuity and change. We uphold the enduring values in the field of early childhood education-Commitment to the whole child; recognition of the value of play; respect and responsiveness to individual and cultural diversity; and partnerships with families.
  - \* Joy and learning. We want childhood to be filled with joy. We understand that we are growing tomorrow's adults, but firmly believe that childhood must remain a journey and not a race. Each child will develop at his or her own pace. Our goal is to help children develop a life-long love of learning. On its best days, our program is filled with laughter, love, play and great fun.
- We practice continuity of care with teachers moving up with children all five years whenever possible.
- In the context of developmentally appropriate practice, we create a safe, nurturing and supportive place for young children to experience the unique time of childhood, in a program that allows families to have confidence in the knowledge that their children are in the best hands.
- The Children's Center serves as a critical component of the SDSU community, acting as a lab program for students to observe, participate and develop best practice techniques.
- We provide a model childcare program for other community child care facilities to use as a resource.

## **Programs**

We serve approximately 200 children ranging from 6 months of age through the start of kindergarten. Our adult/child ratios range from 1:3 for our infant programs up to a 1:8 for our preschool programs. Generally, there are 5 Cottage Schools, each with 2 classrooms, as well as an Outdoor Classroom, which are organized to meet the developmental need for various age groups. Children are placed in Cottages/Classrooms based on their age and development.

We offer a full inclusion program for children with exceptional needs. We aim to meet children's individual needs and we believe including all children is a reflection of our philosophy. Children with special needs are placed in the classroom that best suits their developmental level. Emphasis is on providing children with opportunities to interact in a safe, healthy, nurturing, accepting, and challenging environment.

Each of our Cottages/Classrooms makes a special effort to provide an environment and curriculum which fosters awareness and promotes the acceptance of diverse cultural, social, and family backgrounds. This is achieved through the teaching staffs' commitment to present children with a variety of experiences that inform them of various cultural practices and customs, thereby modeling an appreciation of differences within our community.

## **Required Paperwork for Employment**

***Employees Initial Paperwork:*** Must be completed in full to begin and sustain employment.

**Employment is contingent upon a clear criminal background.**

### ***Health Screening, TB Test, and Fingerprinting, Immunization Record***

All employees are required to have a health screening and a proof of negative TB clearance. We will provide you with a form to be completed by your physician, PA, or NP. It is your responsibility to have your health screening completed **before you begin your employment.** Student Health Services provides TB tests for students. You must also provide a current copy of your immunization record.

Fingerprinting is required for all positions. We will provide you with the required Live Scan form and give you information regarding where you can be fingerprinted. Once your fingerprints have cleared, the clearance can be transferred from one Center to another. If you have already had this completed by a licensed child care center, please let us know so we can request a transfer of your information.

There is also a basic background check conducted on line.

### ***Transcripts***

Many students have taken courses in Child Development or Early Childhood Education. California Licensing regulations requires that a person have at least 12 core ECE/CD units before they can be left alone to supervise children. If you believe you have the appropriate units to meet this qualification, bring in a copy of your transcripts to the Assistant Director who will verify the units and work with you to get the appropriate credentials.

### ***Pay Schedule***

Employees of the Center (except work study students) are paid every other Friday. A pay schedule is posted near the time clock. Work Study students are paid at the end of each calendar month. Associated Students issues a Red I.D. number to every employee. Hourly employees clock in and out using the electronic (Kronos) time clock.

### ***Identification Badges***

This is a very large Center with many people coming and going during the course of the day. In order to distinguish staff from other adults, and to facilitate a friendly atmosphere, name badges are worn. Every staff member is provided an identification badges and will be expected to wear them at all times while on duty.

### ***Job Classifications***

Staff are hired into the classification determined by their level of experience and completed units in Child Development/ECE.

## **General Policies for Employees**

### ***Confidentiality***

Any information about children, families, and staff that you receive as an employee of the Children's Center is to be considered confidential. Out of respect for our families of the Center, we expect you not to discuss any personal information with others. You must always refrain from discussing Children's Center business outside of the Center.

### ***Mandated Reporters***

California state law mandates that childcare workers report suspected child abuse. If you have any suspicions regarding child abuse you may talk to your supervisor, the Assistant Director or the Center Director. With their help, an appropriate course of action can be determined. Staff may also file a report independent of the Center Administration Staff. San Diego County hotline numbers are;

**(858) 560-2191 or (800) 344-6000**

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### ***Personal Belongings***

For the safety of the children and your belongings, it is not acceptable to leave purses, backpacks, etc... out in the classroom. There is a designated space in every Cottage/Classroom/Work area for staff to store their belongings. The Children's Center is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### ***Dress Code***

As an employee of the Center, for safety purposes, and to ensure that you are able to participate fully in all activities, you are required to dress appropriately. In general, employees are expected to wear clothing that is clean, fits properly, and is not distracting.

The dress code is as follows:

- ❖ Comfortable shoes are recommended (i.e. tennis shoes, flat soled shoes).
- ❖ Clothing must cover the midriff, and torso (including cleavage). Sagging pants are not permitted. Jeans are fine as long as they do not have holes.
- ❖ Tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, tank tops and see-through tops are not permitted.
- ❖ Undergarments are not to be exposed. Workout/gym clothes are not appropriate.
- ❖ Clothing may not denigrate any group, depict drugs, tobacco, alcohol, violence, weapons, inappropriate language or graphics, or be sexually suggestive.
- ❖ The length of shorts, skirts, and dresses must be appropriate.(mid-thigh or longer)
- ❖ Staff are expected to dress professionally, keeping in mind that they can get messy during their shift.
- ❖ Leggings are not considered pants and should be covered by a tunic or dress
- ❖ Infant staff wear smocks during their work shift.

Teachers may ask you to wear a center smock, change in to a t-shirt we provide, or ask you to go home to change your clothes (on your own time) if it is determined that you are dressed inappropriately.

Please bring clothing/shoes to change into if there is a need for different attire.

### ***Illness/Absence***

All employees of the Center are very important to us. The children and co-workers need you here on time on a regular basis. If an emergency arises or you become ill **it is imperative that you let us know as soon as possible!** Contact your Master Teacher or Supervisor as soon as you know you will not be able to come to work. If you need to be absent on a particular workday, advance notice allows you time to locate your substitute. Supervisor permission is required. Request a "Substitute Request Form" in your Cottage. Too many absences, last minute calls, and problems with tardiness may result in employment termination, at the discretion of Supervisors. **Remember, absences may be documented in your performance evaluation.**

#### **Part Time Staff absences:**

Last minute/unplanned absences:

1. Call the Cottage/work area phone. Leave a message informing us you will be out and your work shift. If you get voicemail, also call the front desk 619-594-7941 to leave the same message. It is critical that you speak to someone personally.
2. Find a substitute to work your shift using the sub lists provided by your Supervisor. Call or text staff that might be able to work your shift. (Note-if you are contacted to cover a shift, please be sure to respond, even if you cannot help).
3. Let us know who will be covering your shift.

Planned Time Off:

1. Request time off from your Master Teacher or Supervisor via email.
2. Once approved, find a substitute who can work your shift using the sub list.
3. Fill out Time Off Request form and make sure your substitute initials they will cover.
4. Submit Time Off Request form to your Supervisor for final approval.

#### **Full Time Staff absences:**

1. FT staff checks with other staff members on their team to coordinate time off. If both of the Master Teachers are gone on the same day, or both of the FT Kitchen staff are out, or all of the Admin staff are gone on the same day, the program is compromised. This does not allow for any "wiggle room" for unexpected illnesses or emergencies.
2. After it has been determined there is not conflict, the employee requests the time off from their Supervisor via email. This email will include substitute arrangements as necessary. No airline, train, bus, or other transport tickets should be purchased, nor any other reservations made until requests have been approved.
3. The Supervisor reviews the time off request within 24 hours, and forwards the email to the next level Supervisor, adding comments as needed regarding why they can or cannot approve. If a request is denied, all effort should be made to find an alternate date.
4. Once the Main Calendar has been checked, approved vacation can be added to the calendar. It is highly recommended that the FT staff keep their time off on their calendars, and that the Supervisors have all of the known time off on their calendars.
5. Before leaving, FT staff must send out an email informing families and relevant staff of time off, who is covering in their absence, and/or who to contact with questions or concerns.

## ***Staff Trainings***

All staff trainings are **mandatory** for all student assistants. Two missed trainings during a semester may result in termination. Staff meetings are paid and we expect you to actively participate. Your attendance and implementation of information from these trainings will be included in your performance evaluation. Staff trainings are usually on Friday evenings.

## ***Breaks/Staff Room/Personal Calls***

Anyone who works more than a three and a half hour shift is entitled to a break. We ask that you remain in the Center for your 15 minute break in case of an urgent need to call you back into the program. You must clock-out on the time clock for any break 30 minutes or longer. Talk to your Supervisor regarding the best time for your break. Please do not assume that you can take a break at a particular time before you have make arrangements with your Supervisor. They are the only one who can give you an accurate assessment of when the room is adequately supervised to begin sending people on break. If you have a special circumstance requiring a specific break time please speak with your supervisor. **Always inform someone that you are leaving to go on break, and NEVER leave a group of children unsupervised because it is your scheduled break time!**

There is a break room and small kitchen for staff members. A microwave and toaster oven is available for use on your breaks. You are expected to provide your own nutritional needs and to **CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF**. **Please wash your own dishes and dispose of your trash. Please be as green as possible!**

We ask that you make personal calls only on your break and in the Staff Lounge or Community Room: Classroom and office phones are for Center use only. Discourage friends and/or relatives from calling you while you're working. Emergencies are, of course the exception. **Cell phone use is prohibited in the classrooms. Please use your phone on your break and only in the staff Lounge or Community Room or outside the Center (not on the playgrounds or in the hallway).**

**Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside or outside of the Children's Center. SDSU is a smoke-free campus.**

## ***Babysitting***

Babysitting for families enrolled in our program is **not** encouraged. It is important to remember that your job in the Children's Center does not carry over to your outside activities. **Confidentiality is one of your critical job requirements.** Information you gain from working at the Center and babysitting in families' homes is to be kept confidential.

## ***Evaluation of Performance***

Evaluations and individual meetings take place at least once a year. The Full Time and Part Time staff will do a self-evaluation including setting goals, and will be evaluated by their Supervisor. Together each



staff member and his/her supervisor will discuss work performance, attendance of staff trainings, work schedule, and other job-related issues.

It is our aim to have students stay with us as they develop their skills within the Center.

## **GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISION/SETTING LIMITS**

Each child has the right to be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature. The Children's Center does not allow any physical or emotional punishment. Our emphasis is on redirection and helping children develop positive methods of problem solving.

Put yourself in the child's place. What is the root of this behavior? Consider the difference between hearing, "Don't touch that!" and "It's hard to wait; I know you're curious and it looks nice, but...." The second approach states the same limit, but it shows the child some understanding. Hurried teachers sometimes only see a child's surface behavior, not the whole child.

Expect children to test a limit; that's how they learn! The more the environment sets clear limits, the easier your job will be. Behavior problems often develop when children are either over stimulated, bored or restless. Sometime it helps to look at the environment or daily schedule when behavior problems occur.

Children will test you. Recognize when children are 'pushing your buttons.' Realize it is not a personal issue. Children do not come to school with a hidden agenda! Ask a supervisor for help when you feel a particular child is 'pushing your buttons.'

When you focus on negative behavior; it has a negative effect. Recognize positive behavior and focus your energy on encouraging these types of behaviors.

Express your own feelings honestly and directly: "I feel angry when you do that" "I don't like it when you bite me."

Express limits in positive terms. "Use your walking feet" vs. "Don't run in the classrooms."

If there isn't a choice, don't offer one or make a demand sound like a question. "Let's clean up now, OK?" or "Do you want to take a nap?" are a surefire way to set-up the answer for "NO!" then you're stuck. Instead, try, "It's time to clean up", and "It's nap time."

Notice your tone of voice. Yelling at the children is a kind of violence, often as destructive and painful as physical violence, and it never permitted at the Children's Center.

Name-calling and threats of ridicule are all forms of emotional abuse and are never permitted at the Children's Center.

Separate the feeling from the behavior. Children need permission to express feelings such as anger, sadness, and depression; although they can't hit another child when they are angry, the feeling of anger is OK.

The SDSU Children's Center strongly believes in using positive guidance techniques to help children become socially and emotionally competent. Humans are not born understanding how to share, take turns, wait for adult attention, and negotiate conflict effectively. When we learn to manage our impulses, engage in activities, and interact effectively with others, then we are able to grow socially/emotionally, and cognitively. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all of the adults in a child's life to set the framework for a positive social future. Working with children's behavior is an integral part of a teacher's job.

As professionals who work with young children, we must expect to be met with challenging behaviors from time to time. During the first five years of life, children are just beginning to learn how to handle their own intense emotions and conform to the behavioral expectations of society. We understand as adults that this is a long and difficult process. Challenging behavior is any behavior that interferes with children's learning, development and successful play. It can also be harmful to the child, other children, and/or adults. When children do not learn how to behave appropriately in the early years, they are at a much higher risk for later social problems or school failure later in life.

In an effort to simplify "following the rules", we have three basic guidelines under which most behaviors fall:

1. Respect Yourself (keep your body safe)
2. Respect Others (keep the others in your community safe)
3. Respect the Environment (keep the building and materials safe)

### **DISCIPLINE VS. PUNISHMENT**

**Discipline is not punishment.** It is a means of helping children learn acceptable ways to deal with personal feelings and desires. Punishment, on the other hand, is a reaction to misbehavior that is usually hurtful and may even be unrelated to the misbehavior. Punishment is ineffective in that it does not teach appropriate behavior. Though it may prevent a repeat of the behavior in the short term, it does not teach the child "what to do instead", so it rarely works in the long term. Punishment may release an adult's angry feelings and make them feel better, but it can create fear or humiliation in a child, and rarely leads to the creation of a respectful relationship. Research shows that children who are punished become very different people than children who are disciplined.

Criticizing, discouraging, creating obstacles and barriers, blaming, shaming, using sarcastic or cruel humor, or using physical punishment are some negative disciplinary methods. Saying "Stop that!", "Don't do it that way!" or "You never/always..." is harmful to children's self-esteem. Removing children from a group or isolation or a "time out" chair may also have negative consequences for a child. As adults working with young children, we must be intentional regarding our approach to discipline.

When children misbehave, teachers and other adults need to help the child learn appropriate behaviors.

Discipline/guidance is teaching. It is the process by which we help children:

- ❖ Identify appropriate and inappropriate behavior
- ❖ Learning appropriate problem-solving strategies-talk to children in a calm and quiet manner
- ❖ Develop impulse control, empathy, perspective taking and self-esteem
- ❖ Learn acceptance of self and others

Discipline/guidance is NOT:

- ❖ Punishing children for misbehaving. Corporal punishment or the threat thereof is prohibited at the Children's Center
- ❖ Valuing compliance over learning
- ❖ Power assertion...(I win, you lose)
- ❖ Using any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child.

### **Principles of a Guidance Approach**

It is very important that adults respect a child's stage of development and not to label a child's misbehaving as failure. Young children are naturally loud, curious, messy, willful, impatient, demanding, creative, forgetful, self-centered and full of energy. Accepting children as the individuals they are goes a long way toward helping them learn appropriate behaviors. Here are some basics in guiding children:

1. Children are in the process of learning acceptable behavior. Adults must have realistic expectations of children's behavior based on their age and stage of development.
2. A well designed environment minimizes conflict. Providing multiple toys and materials, defining classroom and outdoor areas clearly allows for active or quiet play and gauges children's need for calm or stimulation.
3. An effective guidance approach is preventative because it respects feelings even while addressing behavior.
4. Adults need to understand the reasons children misbehave.
5. A supportive relationship between adults and children is the most important critical component of effective guidance.
6. Important adults in a child's life must use consistent behavior management techniques for children to learn effectively.
7. Adults are always modeling for children-either in a positive or negative way. When we show children that we can accept, control and express our feelings in direct and non-aggressive ways, we let children know we are there for them in the process.
8. Adults continue to learn as we teach.

## **Positive Guidance Strategies**

- Show you value children-they can see right through any disingenuous tactics
- Offer a solution
- Be positive
- Set realistic goals
- Keep it light and non-judgmental
- Use active listening and repeat back what you understand for clarification
- Teach appropriate behavior through modeling
- Use natural and logical consequences
- Help children manage their strong emotions
- Redirect children's behavior by distracting, redirecting, substituting
- Let children know you are with them until the problem is resolved
- Use appropriate encouragement to reinforce acceptable behavior

## **Preventing Problems**

- ✓ Establish a loving and trusting relationship with children
- ✓ Demonstrate coping skills
- ✓ Be clear about your expectation
- ✓ Help children make good choices that solve problems

## **Specific Times for Supervision and Guidance of Children**

**Transitions**-As children move from one activity to the next, either indoors or out, it is the responsibility of the staff to keep an accurate head count and attendance sheets on all children. Children cannot not be expected to wait in line for very long when moving from one activity to another.

**Nap/rest time**-Adult to child ratios may be doubled during nap time, and a plan must be made for each Cottage on how to handle early risers. As children go outside, there must be one fully qualified (red badge) staff member wherever there are children. In the Infant classrooms, a paid staff member must be stationed in the nap room if any children are asleep.

**Inside/outside Time**-As small groups move from inside activities to outside, and vice versa, the teacher in charge is responsible for maintaining an accurate head count and attendance sheets. Children coming into the building from outside to use the restroom must be accompanied by a teacher.

## **Inside Guidelines**

1. Adults and children may not sit on the counters and tables.
2. Children should walk inside the classrooms and down the hallway.
3. Toys should be returned to the general areas at the end of the scheduled activity time. (For example, dolls in the family living area, play dough at the play dough table, etc.)

4. Encourage children to clean up what they are playing with before moving onto another activity (relative to development).
5. Aprons may be worn for painting and water play. Remember to roll up long sleeves.
6. Always watch as you close a door so that a child is not in danger or catching their fingers in the door. Only adults are allowed to open classroom and outside doors.

### ***Outside Guidelines***

1. Sandbox: Please make sure children do not carry sand to areas other than the sandbox. Sand will clog drains if placed in the water faucets.
2. Water Play: Water is available in designated spaces. Playing with water from the drinking fountain is not permissible. Water fountains are for drinking.
3. Slide: Hard toys are not to be taken on the slide or other equipment that is above the child's height.
4. Throwing sand is dangerous. Children who persist in this behavior after having been spoken to several times need to leave the sandbox area for a short time.
5. Fences: Children may not climb on the fences. Adults may not step over the short fences.
6. You are to supervise all children. Do not leave a designated area unsupervised until someone can cover for you.

**Field Trips-**From time to time, the preschool children may walk on or off campus for a field trip. An email must go out in advance to let families know the plan (day to walk, place to go, time to return to the Center, and to allow families to volunteer to accompany the group). The adult to child ratio must be at least doubled (1:4) for walking safety (1:2 for off campus trips). Master Teachers will leave a list at the front desk before leaving the Center indicating where they are going for their walk as well as a list of all children and adults participating on the walk. Master Teachers must bring a cell phone and a small first aid kit on all walks.

***Releasing a child from the Center- All staff must be familiar with procedures for releasing a child to a person other than the parent. In the event that a person not cleared to pick up a child refuses to leave or insists on taking the child, the teacher must call campus police immediately:***

- Children may only be released to parents or persons designated on the child's registration form and emergency information card (underage siblings may not sign out a child - licensing requires the designated adult to sign each child in and out daily). Parents will have blue identification

badges and other adults authorized to pick up children will have an orange guest identification badge. Front desk staff will check to ensure all adults in the building are authorized to be here.

- Families provide information upon enrollment regarding emergency contacts authorized to take children from the Center. Contact lists are checked for accuracy and updated at least one time per semester or as needed.
- A full signature is required at drop off and pick up in classroom attendance book.
- Children are picked up in their classrooms, outdoor play areas, or in the Duckling Classroom from 5:45-6:00 PM.
- Policy prohibits you from releasing a child to someone other than those designated on the emergency card/form unless the classroom supervisor has given you the o.k.
- You are responsible for checking identification on any adult with whom you are not familiar who is picking up a child from the Center.
- If you suspect that parents is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, discreetly seek the assistance of the Master Teacher and/or any member of the Center Management Staff before releasing the child.
- When an unauthorized person demands release of a child, discreetly seek the assistance of the Master Teacher or any member of the Center Management Staff before releasing the child.

**Note:** *At no time may a staff member sign-out and/or remove a child from the Center unless the parent has given prior written consent.*

### ***Classroom/Play yard Safety & Supervision Techniques***

Common sense and close observation lead to a safe environment for children. Familiarize yourself with the following procedures to ensure a safe learning environment for the children. **Remember: it is the job of all adults working at the Center to keep all children safe and secure both indoors and out.** If you see a problem, it is your responsibility to report it to your immediate supervisor. If your supervisor is not available, all unusual incidents, accidents or questions should be directed to the Center Assistant Director and/or the Director. We count on everyone's eyes and ears to help keep the Center classrooms and play yards a safe place for all children. **Children must be supervised by sight AND sound at all times.**

#### **Supervision:**

- Always keep in mind the number of children in your immediate group. Know where each one is and what he/she is doing. Use the counting method as well as documenting on the attendance sheets during each transition from one activity to another, particularly when moving from indoors and outdoors. Make a point to count your primary group at least every 15-20 minutes, more often if you feel your group needs that.
- Children are not to go out of, or play on, the gates or fence around the playground or front of the Center.
- If you must leave a group for whom you have assumed responsibility, be sure to communicate directly with the person who will assume your duties until you return.

- Pets are to be handled only with a teacher in attendance. Teachers must instruct children in careful and appropriate handling of pets. Hands must always be washed after handling pets.
- It is not safe for children to be in the Kitchen, Staff Lounge, or Multi-Purpose (Community) Room unless accompanied by an adult.
- There are prescribed areas for various activities. Generally, they should be conducted there. (Example: painting at the easel or table, clay at the clay table, sand in the sandbox, bikes in the wheel toy area, etc.)
- SDSU Children’s Center adheres to a strict “NO NUT” policy. Children family members and staff with extreme nut allergies must not be exposed at any time. All foods containing nut products must be consumed in the adult areas of the center, and may not be taken into classrooms for any reason.

### **Movement:**

- Children are inexperienced when it comes to their personal safety. Always be alert to prevent children from running in front of trikes, slide, games, etc.
- Help keep the floor free of scattered blocks or toys not in use.
- An adult should be available to guide the moving flow of children in one direction on balance beam, tumbling mat, ladder, slide, trikes and other equipment to prevent bumping into one another.
- Items thrown should be safe and soft-free of anything that could injure others or damage property.
- Children need to sit on bikes. Banging bikes into each other is dangerous and damaging.
- Block building should be monitored by the teacher in charge of that group to ensure that the blocks are being used appropriately and not posing a danger to others.
- Children must have both hands free when climbing. You may need to show a child where to place her hands and feet when climbing in order to teach the safest way to get up and down. **Never lift children higher than they can climb on their own.**
- Wipe up spills on floor as soon as noticed to prevent falls.
- Do not permit children to stand on chairs or table tops.

### **Sharp Objects:**

- Remind children to always walk while holding scissors, sticks, shovels, or other sharp objects.
- Scissors are to be used at the table only.
- Knives used by children in cooking projects will need to be supervised by an adult.
- Remove broken toys; watch for splinters, protruding nails, etc., and report any hazards immediately to the teacher in charge and to the Front Desk for immediate attention. Submit work orders as necessary.

### **Choking:**

- Children need to be instructed to keep small objects out of their mouths.
- Choke Test tubes will be used in all classrooms with children under 3 years old to ensure all toys and materials are safe. Pay close attention to parts that might break off such as small wheels on cars.



- Special attention should be given to foods served to children under three. Small round snacks, and crackers with sharp edges pose a potential hazard, and should be avoided.
- Children are to remain seated while eating as choking can occur if they run or fall while eating.
- Balloons are not allowed in the program because of choking hazard should they burst.

#### **Poisoning:**

- Store all chemical products out of reach of children, and keep them in their original containers for identification purposes. All spray bottles must be clearly labeled with contents
- Poison Control phone numbers are near each classroom/office phone
- Safety Data Sheets for all chemicals are kept in a binder in the Staff Lounge.

#### **Warm and Cold Weather:**

- On warm sunny days, prevent children from getting overheated. Encourage them to drink extra water. Teach appropriate use of drinking fountain. Families apply sunscreen in the morning, and Center staff reapplies after nap time. Infants will stay inside if temperatures exceed 100 degrees.
- In cold weather make sure children wear warm protective clothing before allowing them outdoors.
- Be advised that children **DO** play outside on rainy days-dress accordingly

#### **Outdoor Play Areas**

Outdoor play is a key component of our curriculum and is critical to the overall health and education of young children. When you are outdoors, just as when you are indoors with children, the safety of the children is your primary responsibility at all times. Outdoor activities are part of the planned curriculum and need your full attention and involvement. It is not “recess.” In order for you to supervise effectively, you need to:

- Position yourself near the action but not in it unless invited
- Be aware of the entire outdoor area and who is “in charge”. Cast a wide net that allows for all staff to visually supervise a play area
- **Refrain from chatting with co-workers**
- Ensure safety by keeping these points in mind:
- Sweep and remove the sand and wood chips from all hard surfaces every day including the play structure and ramps
- Rake sand and wood chips to check for sharp objects and animal feces
- Distribute sand and wood chips to ensure appropriate cushioning under play structures, at the foot of slides, and under climbing areas.
- When moving from outdoors to indoors, use the daily attendance schedule to check off that your primary group of children who went outside with you are also coming back in with you.
- The last teacher helping a group move, either inside or outside, from one area to another, must do a complete visual check of the area you are leaving to be sure all children are together when moving your group of children. Using a one to one count with the sign in sheet will help ensure that no child is left inside or outside during a transition.

## ***Guidelines for Interaction***

It is often difficult to enter into a new work or school situation. You may be wondering, “What is expected of me? Your nervousness is natural and expected. During your first weeks here, explore the environment and become acquainted with the children. Observe them carefully; note their peer interactions as well as how they use the school environment and materials. This information should give you clues about how to relate to them. If you find yourself in situations that you are unsure of, feel free to ask your supervisor for help. Staff members are always available and are eager to give you assistance. Some simple guidelines are listed below that will help you as you participate.

1. Learn the children’s names as soon as possible. Speak clearly and calmly to each child.
2. Put yourself physically at a child’s level as often as possible. If a child is sitting at a table, sit with him/her; if the child is on the floor, get at that level.
3. Become aware of the daily routine. Try to remember the sequence of activities and duties so you will be able to predict what to do next.
4. Follow the duties assigned by your supervisor. Do not leave an area that is assigned to you unless there is someone who can relieve you. **NEVER leave children unsupervised.**
5. Willingly do whatever you are assigned. Be flexible! If you are requested to do something you are not comfortable doing, speak with your supervisor.
6. Display a positive and cheerful attitude when working with children and families; treat them with respect and fairness.
7. Be supportive of what children are doing—make yourself available to meet their needs; i.e. answering questions, helping to tie shoes.
8. Allow children enough time to do things by themselves; i.e. to move from one activity to another and/or respond to your suggestions. They need extra time to zip zippers, finish puzzles by themselves or pour their own milk, but it is worth it to have them learn through experience.
9. Competition among the children should be avoided. Allow each child to express his/her own level of development.
10. All Staff are expected to counter potential bias and discrimination by...
  - a) Treating all children with and consideration.
  - b) Intervening when children tease or reject others.
  - c) Avoiding stereotypes in language references, media, photographs, etc.
11. Never discuss a child’s behavior with others when the child or other children are near.
12. Be aware of the whole group. Know where the children are and what they are doing, even when they are not in your immediate area.

13. Check with your supervisor before using or removing materials and supplies.
14. In general, it is inappropriate for teachers to participate in the children's art activities. Refrain from making pictures for them to follow. Such models limit the child's creativity and may frustrate the child if he/she cannot copy them.
15. Teachers may model simple skills; rolling play dough, cutting, holding pencils, throwing balls, etc...
16. Children are more inclined to use materials that are neatly and attractively arranged. Make sure that you continually reorganize activities to look inviting to the children.
17. You will be responsible for cleaning assigned areas. There are checklists in each Cottage to ensure all duties are completed.
18. **Supervision is one of the most important parts of your responsibilities at the Center.** Make sure each area is adequately covered. Do not congregate with other teachers while supervising! Position yourself in the room or yard so that you can view as much as possible. Outdoor and classroom times are not for socialization amongst staff.
19. Try to interact with the children as much as possible. However, make sure that you do not interrupt them when they are contently engaged in play or other activities.
20. Step in immediately if the children's safety is threatened!
21. Parents may approach with questions about their children. Feel free to tell about **POSITIVE** interactions that you have had with them. Refer any challenges to the supervisor.
22. If you have a problem or need assistance with one of the children, or an activity, ask a supervisor for help.
23. Maintain a good working relationship with your fellow students. If you have a problem, discuss it with your supervisor. Be courteous and confidential.
24. Personal snack items are not allowed to be eaten in front of children. Bottled water is the only thing allowed in the classrooms. Please bring a reusable water bottle.

**Inside/Outside Guidelines**  
**MEMORY PARK /OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AGREEMENTS**

**Age Limit-**

- Children 2+ may use Memory Park

- As children “age up”, small groups will be introduced at first. Coordinate with other Cottages to determine schedule.

### **Teeter Totter**

- It’s okay to sit or stand in the middle
- 2 children per seat is okay if an adult is standing nearby

### **Plants and Trees**

- Please be gentle. Stay out of the hedges, and keep the leaves on the trees. Except in the Mud Kitchen and with teacher help, please leave the flowers intact for everyone to enjoy.

### **MOAT (Mini Open-Air Theater)**

- The concrete benches and amphitheater are places to sit. Jumping is not safe, and needs to happen with a designated fall zone
- The light posts are not safe to climb on or jump from.

### **Pirate Ship**

- Loose parts need to be at least 6 feet from the pirate ship.
- Adults stay near the slide and/or stairs if children are playing there.
- Jumping from the top of the pirate ship is not safe. Help the children find appropriate places to jump.

### **Garden**

- Children may visit the garden in small groups with a staff member. Volunteers and Student Interns may accompany the group, but cannot be responsible for the group.
- It is expected that every class using Memory Park will visit and tend to the garden at least once weekly.

### **Storage Sheds/Miscellaneous**

- Sheds are to be unlocked only to retrieve materials and locked at all other times.
- Red hopping balls, dancing scarves and hula hoops are to be hung on ropes for storage. Hula hoop play is to be supervised to ensure children are not pushing down on the hoops to make them bend.
- Return items where they were found. Report any missing or damaged materials
- Ball pump is hanging on the shelf
- Please keep the Memory Park inventory list up to date. If you use the last of something, report it.

### **Outdoor Blocks**

- Shed doors are to be opened by a staff member in the morning. It is not safe for children to open and close the shed doors.
- Unless directly supervised, blocks are not to be stacked higher than children's shoulders.
- Crates are stored at the bottom of the shed
- Wheel barrows are stored in the metal storage container.

### **Climber (Monkey Bars)**

- Whenever any children are using the climber, an adult must be standing by to supervise.

### **Obstacle Course**

- Be sure there is a logical beginning and end to the course.
- Once the course has been designed for the day, it can only be altered by staff adapting for age appropriateness.
- Mats cannot be left on the grass.

### **Bike Path**

- Bikes must be in working condition with no missing parts. Bikes in need of repair must stay in the storage container.
- Bikes need to be parked in the designated area at the end of the day

### **Nature Tables**

- All natural items need to be sorted and returned to the cabinet at the Nature Table

### **Sand and Water Area**

- Sand area is to be checked in the morning before use for any potentially dangerous or foreign objects
- Sand toys are to be kept in the sand box
- Never leave a body of standing water unattended
- Remind children that water in water play tables is not for drinking
- Drain and sanitize water tables after activity ends

### **"Wild Walk"**

- Small supervised groups may use these areas with planned activities with a Red Badge staff member.

### **Mud Kitchen**

- Our Mud Kitchen is located at the far east side of Memory Park, through the gate and adjacent to the Wild Walk. The Mud Kitchen is comprised of equipment, natural materials and supplies that will allow children the opportunity to engage in “cooking” and family meal activities. There is access to water, and the children will be encouraged to get wet and messy.
- The Mud Kitchen context and materials result in young children engaging in an incredible variety of actions including but not limited to:
  - filling, pouring, emptying, transferring, mixing, stirring, whisking, frothing, scooping, ladling, handling, molding, patting, smoothing, mark-making, throwing, splatting, splashing, sharing out, serving, foraging, selecting, picking, collecting, gathering, garnishing, shredding, crushing, mashing, grinding, measuring, adding, brewing, boiling, sieving, filtering, separating, pipetting and decanting!
- The main role teachers need to take is of facilitator and enabler – making the kitchen available (best constructed by helping the children to create it to their own specifications), and supporting the play that then emerges from the children.
- Good teacher support consists of *observing* (noticing what is really taking place), striving to *understand* (recognizing the significance of this for this child and this group of children) and then *responding* according to careful consideration as to what would help the child the most (which might be standing back out of the way!).
- Supplying useful language for equipment, actions and descriptions can be very helpful provided it is done in context where it makes sense (and is not overdone!).
- There is so much to Mud Kitchen play and its deeper meanings for children that the role of researcher would be highly valuable.
- Other adults may not understand why this is all so valuable and important, and may have many objections, so supporting teachers also need to interpret what is really happening and advocate for mud play in all children’s lives.
- Children may visit the Mud Kitchen in ratio size small groups (4:1 for 2-3 year olds/8:1 for 3 and up) with a Teacher or Teacher Assistant. The Master Teacher in Memory Park is responsible for making sure all staff know and understand the “rules” of using the Mud Kitchen, and assumes responsibility during its use.
- **Safety is always the most important consideration in the Mud Kitchen!**
- Children must always be supervised and may not put materials in their mouths.
- Children and staff need to wear rain boots or waterproof shoes in the Mud Kitchen. Shoes can be left on the shelf outside the kitchen.

- Watch for items going over the fence into the Preschool East yard. Items in the Mud Kitchen must stay in the kitchen.
- Items in the Mud Kitchen must be returned to their appropriate spot after use. Pots, pans, dishes and cups should be rinsed before returning.
- Children may pick the herbs and leaves to cook with.
- All children and adults must wash their hands thoroughly after using the Mud Kitchen.

### **Big Body Play**

- We believe in the value of exuberant and boisterous rough and tumble play to a child's overall development. This vigorous body play allows very young children to learn about their bodies and how to regulate them as well as how to begin to relate to other children and show concern for them. Big Body Play contributes to infant and toddler physical development because it is so vigorous and because children - since they enjoy it so much - tend to engage in it for an extended amount of time. For Preschoolers, the vigorous body play allows children to negotiate, take turns, wait, compromise, sometimes dominate and sometimes hold back and make and follow rules.

### **Set-Up/Clean-Up**

- Activities set up for specific age groups should be taken down when not in use.
- "Loose Parts" should have a home.
- Any unsafe conditions must be reported to a Full Time staff member immediately

Be aware of the groups of children, where they are playing, and what interests them. If you are supervising a group of children on the pirate ship, and most of them move to play elsewhere, your supervision may not be best served at the pirate ship. Supervision requires staff to move often from one part of the play area to another.

Focus on limiting the "no's" that children hear all day, especially when they are playing freely. Rules must be short, make sense, and the intent is to keep children safe while also learning to take appropriate risks. If children hear adults using the same rules for every occasion, they begin to understand, and are more likely to comply. Full Time staff are responsible that all Part Time staff understand the expectations for supervising a large open play space.

## **"House" Rules (for staff)**

1. If you open it, close it.
2. If you turn it on, turn it off
3. If you unlock it, lock it.
4. If you break it, fix it
5. If you can't fix it, find someone who can
6. If you borrow it, return it.
7. If you use it, take care of it.
8. If you make a mess, clean it up.
9. If you move it, put it back.
10. If it belongs to someone else and you want to use it, get permission.
11. If you don't know how to operate it, leave it alone.
12. If it doesn't concern you, don't mess with it.

**When in doubt, treat it like you bought it yourself**



## **Food/Nutrition Policy**

The Children's Center participates in the USDA Child/Adult Care Food Program. Our nutrition program for the children is an extension of our philosophy regarding the nurturance of healthy individuals. We provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack in a family style meal pattern for the children in our program. All meals are nutritionally balanced and our menus are planned to present a variety of food taste experiences. It is our policy to make every effort to accommodate any food sensitivity or allergy a child may have. Allergy information is posted on the cupboard doors near the tables in all classrooms. ***Never give a child a food item unless you are certain they are not allergic to it!*** Your supervisor will make sure that information of this type is relayed to staff during meals. As you work with your supervisor you will get to know what is expected during meals that fall under your work shift. We require staff to sit with children and model appropriate mealtime manners and enjoyment of nutritional food. **Teaching staff never use threats or derogatory remarks and neither withhold not threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.**

## **Healthy Environments**

You will be taught proper sanitization for your classroom/work environment. There are clear guidelines on children and staff exclusions from the programs when ill. These can be found in every classroom. If a parent indicates a concern about their child's health, direct them to your supervisor immediately.

**Hand washing** is the number one tool for prevention of the spread of illness for you as well as for the children. Tissues, washcloths, bibs, utensils, etc. are used for only once for one child. Placing soiled tissues, clothing or toys in their proper place can decrease the spread of illness.

## **General Health & Safety Guidelines**

### ***Minor Injuries***

First aid supplies and general information for treatment of minor injuries are located in the classrooms and outdoor areas.

### ***General Safety Rules with Children***

1. Report to your immediate Supervisor any unsafe condition or unsafe practices.
2. Horseplay or teasing are potentially dangerous and do not have a place in the Children's Center. Staff are not to swing children by their arms. Do not lift or toss children over your head. Do not allow children to climb on your back or body.
3. Keep outdoor ground and walk areas free of toys and clutter.
4. Report any adult on the premises that you do not recognize or feel may be a threat to the staff and/or children of the center.
5. Wash you hands every time you come into the room, wipe a child's nose, before and after you serve a meal, feed/bottle a young child, before and after every diaper change, after helping a child use the toilet, before and after meals and snacks/ cooking/art activities, after group water activities, before and after administering medication, after handling garbage, and after handling pets. Proper hand washing signs are posted throughout the building
6. Sanitizers are kept in locked cabinets and gloves are kept out of children's reach.

## ***IIPP – Illness, Injury, and Illness Prevention for Adults***

It is the responsibility of every employee to prevent the spread of illnesses and prevent possible injury whenever possible. Alert a supervisor if you see anything you feel may be unsafe. Wipe up spills on the floors, sanitize meal surfaces, diapering/toileting areas, wash your hands frequently, and keep areas free from clutter. You may check our safety IIPP and Material Data Sheet binders located in the Staff Lounge.

1. Wear gloves when you come into contact with blood, urine, feces, or vomit.
2. If you are too ill to work, (running a fever (100.5 or above), diagnosed with a contagious illness), immediately call your supervisor and work on finding a substitute to cover your shift. Do not come to work. Please let us know if you have been diagnosed with a communicable disease.
3. Read signs and postings. Obey warnings; they are posted for your protection.
4. If you injure yourself while on the job—report it to your supervisor immediately. Minor injuries are documented. Plans are in place for injuries requiring a doctor visit.
5. Lift all heavy objects correctly. (This includes children.) Bend your knees; keep your back straight; lift with your legs. **DO NOT LIFT WITH YOUR BACK!**
6. Help keep walkways clear so that people do not trip on debris, boxes, cables, cords, toys or equipment.
7. Do not touch any electrical equipment if your hands are wet or if you are standing on wet ground. All Center outlets have a built in safety feature.
8. Never use chairs or tables as “makeshift” ladders, if ladders are not available, wait until a proper ladder is available for use.
9. Do not lift children or handle equipment that is too heavy or puts you in an awkward position.
10. Kitchen staff members wear toe covered shoes.

## Emergency Procedures

Prevention is the key—**NEVER** leave a child or children unsupervised!

All Center Full Time Staff and Associate teachers are certified in CPR and First Aid procedures. In case of an emergency, notify a Supervisor at once. Do not try to handle a situation you are not properly trained for!

Fire and other evacuation drills are conducted monthly. The emphasis is on helping children evacuate the building calmly and safely. Exit routes are posted in each classroom and work area. When in doubt, ask your supervisor.

All accidents, bumps, scrapes, or a fall that a child has while in the Center are recorded on an accident form. Please report even the smallest incident to your supervisor and s/he will help you fill out an accident form for the child. All accidents and incidents must be recorded.

There is a silent alarm switch at the Front Desk near the top of the knee hole. Opening the case to the AED machine will also activate a silent alarm. The alarm notifies SDSU Police that we need help.

### ***Major Injuries***

1. Call 911 to request emergency campus support services.
2. Alert the supervisor who is closest to the incident.
3. Do not move a victim that cannot get up on her/his own.
4. In life-threatening situations CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid qualified staff may begin CPR or first aid.
5. If not life-threatening, make the victim as comfortable as possible until emergency support services arrive.

### ***Fire Safety***

If you come upon evidence or even suspect a fire:

1. Pull the closest fire alarm.
2. Notify supervising personnel as soon as possible.
3. Begin evacuation of the building following escape routes.
4. Follow your Supervisor's instruction to provide a safe escape route for yourself and proper supervision of children.
5. Go to the designated evacuation site for your work area.

## ***Earthquakes***

1. Stay indoors during tremor.
2. Gather children and drop, cover, and hold on.
3. Stay clear of areas where glass may break out or cabinets may fall over.
4. After tremor subsides, follow the same evacuation procedures as used in the case of fire.

## ***Threatening Intruders/Kidnapping***

1. If you suspect that someone on the premises is a threat to your safety or the safety of a child, identify the individuals immediately to your supervising staff.
2. Call 911 to activate campus emergency services.
3. If you are directly involved in a threatening situation, remain calm and cooperative.
4. Obtain as much identifying information as possible: significant markings on skin, body movements (e.g. Limp), language style, general appearance—height, weight, and clothing.
5. As a member of the Children's Center staff, you always have the right and responsibility to ask an individual for identification if you do not recognize them.

### Curriculum Statement

**"Each child has a unique Internal Curriculum based on personal interest, experiences, and needs. The job of parents and teachers is to support that curriculum as it is revealed in the child's play."** Anonymous

#### **From our mission and vision statement:**

**We use a child- initiated, project- based curriculum** that capitalizes on children's individual needs and their interests while encouraging growth and development across all learning domains.

**Teachers make informed decisions in their daily practice** utilizing formal and informal tools to build curriculum. These include:

- Families' knowledge of their children's development and needs
- Anecdotal observations, reflection and documentation of past experiences
- California Learning Foundations (our framework)
- California Desired Results for Children and Families Assessment Tools (DRDP).

As a relationship- based program, teachers, families, and CFD students work together to develop curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, relevant, and fun for children. Within the framework of our play based curriculum, children in our program are ready with all skills and dispositions of success in kindergarten and beyond.

The SDSU Children's Center uses an emergent curriculum model through which children learn skills and dispositions in the context of what interests them rather than through a pre-planned, teacher-driven curriculum. We believe this is a much more respectful way to create learning opportunities for children. Working together, we ask, "What are the children asking about, and how can we extend that learning/interest?"

In an emergent curriculum model, adults first set the stage for learning by creating engaging and inviting, child-friendly classroom environments, then use information gathered by a variety of sources to plan and implement activities, and finally, facilitate learning by asking questions, presenting appropriate challenges, and enriching the environment.

While the classroom have a fluid schedule of activity times, we feel strongly that children also need extended times to spend with projects that interest them. We also save room for serendipity, or "teachable moments" when something interesting pops into our day unexpectedly, such as a fire truck in the driveway, or the one week during each spring when a tree in Memory Park is covered with fuzzy caterpillars.

We see the children as active and self-motivated individual learners, who need an open ended approach to meet their needs and interests. Emergent curriculum lends itself well to our play based environment

as the teachers and families co-construct the learning, using the classroom environment as the “third teacher”.

The planning is broken down into 4 distinct parts:

1. Observation-what do we see that the children are interested in? What are they trying to understand?
2. Collaboration-how can the adults add to that interest in meaningful ways? Can we bring in elements of language, math, science and nature, creative expression, physical and cognitive development?
3. Implementation-providing opportunities for children to engage in the activities.
4. Review-how did it go? What changes need to be made? What did the children learn? What’s next?

Once children indicate by their actions or words that they are ready to move on, the process begins anew.

**Observation**-Teachers, parents, lab students and other relevant adults pay close attention to what children are interested in. Making objective observations by anecdotal note or photos, they collect information that helps determine what the children want to know more about.

**Collaboration**- Teachers, parents, lab students and other relevant adults take time at least each week to share their observations of the children’s work/play/exploration/inquiry. Discussions are centered on ways to enhance the children’s learning within a specific area of interest. The adults consider the following domains, disciplines, and classroom areas:


- The classroom and outdoor environments
- Language and literacy ( i.e., reading, baby signs, rhymes)
- Math ( i.e., counting, shapes, measuring, graphing, patterns, time)
- Science/Nature ( i.e., weather, cause and effect, critical thinking)
- Small and large motor development
- Creative expression (i.e., including art, dramatic play, and other social sciences)
- Large group and small group
- Cognitive development
- Social-emotional (i.e., cooperative play, conflict resolution, self-regulation)
- Health and safety ( i.e., emerging sense of respect for self, others, and materials)

**Implementation**- Developmentally appropriate activities-which we refer to as “planned possibilities”- are offered to large and small groups or to individual children. Such activities invite children to demonstrate what they know, challenge their assumptions, and enable them to build upon that knowledge. As children engage in these experiences, adults facilitate and observe, responding when more materials or activities should be provided, and recognizing when the children’s interest may be waning. Activities are implemented by teaching staff, parents, and lab students.

**Review**-The collaboration team meets to see how the planned activities went, how materials were used, and what learning took place. The team asks, “What else could have been done?” and “What adaptations took place?”

The process begins anew with observations to determine where the children’s interests are taking them next.

The curriculum framework includes the following elements:

- 
- California Learning and Development Foundations
  - Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)
  - Monthly Curriculum Record
  - Weekly Curriculum Plan & Outdoor Environment Plan
  - Planned Possibilities Forms

#### Expectations for Classroom Teachers

1. The Weekly Curriculum Plan and Outdoor Environment forms are used by the Master Teacher to document what is planned, what happens and to identify ideas for future curriculum activities.
  - a. Current Weekly Curriculum Plans are posted on the parent bulletin board in the classroom inviting all adults to participate in the process.
  - b. At least weekly, Master Teachers document information from “Planned Possibilities” forms onto the Weekly Curriculum Plan. Planned Possibilities are comprised from input provided by all teachers, parents, lab students and other relevant adults. Master Teachers are responsible to see that there is a clear connection between what the children are interested in and the planning and implementation of curriculum.
  - c. Supervising Teachers are responsible for oversight of the curriculum process using the Monthly Curriculum Record to document to record/document that all areas of curriculum development are met.
  - d. Weekly Curriculum Plans, Outdoor Environment Plans, Planned Possibilities, and Short Stories are kept in one binder, divided by month, in chronological order, with most recent information at the front.



- e. Master Teachers share weekly “Short Stories” via the family email list serve. These short stories are mini documentations for families to see what has been taking place in the classroom during the week, and what specific learning is taking place (using language from the DRDP and/or the Foundations. The Short Stories include both photos and text, in a dated Power Point format. The Short Stories are also posted on the parent bulletin board.
- f. Weekly Curriculum Plans for the upcoming week are to be completed by the end of Admin Time each Friday and submitted to the Supervisor for review and approval.

### **DRDP**

The Children’s Center receives funding through the California Department of Education, Child Development Division, to help support income eligible student families. Our contract requires us to use the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) on all funded children, but as best practice, we use the tool for all children and families.

- The DRDP tool is an observation based assessment. DRDP instruments are conducted by Master Teachers for each child 60 days after enrollment, and every 6 months thereafter for as long as the child is enrolled in our program.
- Each assessment period is followed by a family conference. Families are invited to meet with Master Teachers for a conference that covers;
  - What their child was interested in and has accomplished over the period of time.
  - What we can expect the next developmental stages to be
  - How families can enhance children’s learning outside of the Center
  - Questions and concerns from families

The data provided by the DRDP individual assessments is put together by the Master Teacher in a classroom group summary called the DRDP Summary of Findings. This summary assists teachers in developing goals for curriculum planning, both with the group as well as individual children, within the foundation of a play based program. At least twice annually, the Supervising Teachers and Assistant Director, using the data from the Summary of Findings, select one or two domains from the DRDP to develop curriculum plans and goals going forward. The California Learning Foundations and Guidelines are used for infants/toddlers, and preschool. Classroom and Center goals are shared each semester with the Child and Family Development Department, so that students taking relevant courses will be able to plan appropriate activities. The overarching Desired Results for Children and Families are:

1. Children are personally and socially competent
2. Children are effective learners
3. Children show physical and motor competence
4. Children are safe and healthy
5. Families support their child’s learning and development
6. Families achieve their goals

## Statement on Technology in the Classroom

The Children's Center understands that most of our children have access to a significant amount of screen time (technology) outside of school hours, and therefore believed that the use of technology during school hours will be limited). It is our intention to provide as much face to face social interaction as possible throughout the day. It is our goal that the rare times technology is used, there is a clear plan to extend learning within the classroom or group of children.

During the Infant and Toddler Years, children will be interacting primarily with people. If technology is used with this age group, it is only in the context of conversation and interactions with adults. Passive screen time is to be avoided.

During the Preschool Years, children are beginning to use their initiative and creativity. Appropriate technology usage may provide another outlet to demonstrate their creativity and learning.

Social Media technology might be used to contact a classroom friend who is traveling in a foreign country, or a video on a relevant topic of interest may be shown. Technology may also be used as a tool in the classroom, with cameras, video and other means. For example:

- Teachers may use digital, audio or video files to document children's progress
- Capture photos of work in progress, or to replay for children to build on an interest area
- Children's stories that accompany drawing could be recorded to document progress
- Digital books might be created with photos of the children at play/work with narration by adults or children.

## Toilet Learning Policy

In our program, we base our toilet learning practices on the following philosophy:

Learning to use the toilet is an important self-help skill. We are helping children learn to use the toilet successfully, which is very different from "training" them. Children who are ready need no reward to **make** them go. Learning is reward enough.

We consider toilet learning to be a process that will help children master independent toileting. In our program, we strive to make this process a stress-free experience. We work hard to ensure that the entire process is appropriate to each child's individual development and include the child, family, and caregivers in the process. We believe that when children are in group care, families and caregivers must work as partners so that children can be comfortable, confident, and successful while they learn toileting skills.

Toilet learning readiness is not determined by the age of your child, but rather by their overall developmental readiness which may be different for each individual child.

Before we begin your child's individual toilet learning plan, we expect that the following signs are evident and agreed upon by both family and caregivers:

Your child is ready for toilet learning when he or she:

1. Has bowel movements at about the same time every day
2. Can stay dry for a few hours or wakes up dry from sleep
3. Knows that he/she has to go to the bathroom
4. Understands the association between dry pants and using the potty
5. Can pull her pants up and down
6. Lets you know when he/she has soiled his/her diaper (likes to stay dry)
  
7. Can follow simple directions like, "let's go to the potty"
8. Understands appropriate training terms (wet, dry, pee, poop, and potty)
9. Can tell you he/she has to go to the bathroom
10. Imitates other family members
11. Shows interest in toilet learning
12. Wants to do things "by myself"
13. Gets upset if his/her belongings are not in their proper place
14. Enjoys washing his/her hands (likes to be clean)
15. Wants to please you!

We will take the following steps to support the best possible training experience for each child:

We will work with families to ensure that toilet learning is consistent between home and our program

Families and Teachers will have a conference before a child actually begins this process.

Families and Teachers will maintain communication about progress and share any concerns or questions they may have.

We will never force a child to sit on the potty.

We don't bribe children to use the potty.

We cannot cooperate with parents' attempts to promise treats or rewards if they use the potty.

We will not punish or shame children for any accidents. We recognize that accidents are part of the learning process and may be attributed to other factors.

We will not allow children to remain in wet or soiled clothing following accidents. Changing them immediately into dry clothing demonstrates respect for the child, acceptance of accidents as inevitable, and the understanding that young children do not learn by intimidation, fear, or shame.

We will need an adequate supply of clothes during the process to keep the child dry all day.

Our clothing guidelines are the following:

Appropriate clothing for children who are toilet training:

- Elastic waist, loose-fitting pants
- Waist-length shirts
- Thickly padded cotton training pants (to begin the process)
- Regular underwear (as children experience success, should not be used as reward but rather as a tool for training)
- Lots of extra clothes including underwear, pants, socks, and shoes

Unacceptable clothing for children who are toilet training:

- Pull-ups
- Bib overalls or pants with belts, buckles, snaps, or buttons
- Tight fitting pants
- One-piece outfits or jumpsuits
- Onesie type undershirts or body suits
- Dresses, skirts, and tights

The SDSU Children's Center does not exclude children from our preschool program if they are not fully ready to toilet learn. Instead we provide the same opportunities and use similar methods which are offered in the Toddler and/or Transition Cottages. We consider children to be fully toilet learned when they;

- Realize they need to use the potty/toilet without anyone reminding them
- Take themselves to the potty/toilet
- Undress enough to use the potty/toilet
- Urinate and have bowel movements in the potty/toilet
- Wipe themselves
- Pull up their pants
- Flush the toilet
- Wash their hands

## Behavior Support Plan

It is the goal of all staff at the Children's Center that children learn through positive consequences to follow basic rules and make socially acceptable choices. We believe that the social-emotional learning during the early years sets the tone for a child's ongoing experiences in educational settings. We strive to offer secure, safe and consistent limits to all of the children. It is our goal to help children develop effective strategies for their behaviors and social interactions so that they can better understand the world around them. For children with persistent, serious, challenging behavior, teachers, families and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

The Behavior Support Plan is developed to address challenging behaviors and look at productive ways to support children as they learn replacement behaviors. It is the intent that teachers, families and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement individualized plans that support children's inclusion and success.

The focus is not solely on reducing challenging behaviors but rather on

- Teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills that will be managed by the classroom teachers and implemented by any and all teaching staff
- Using environmental modifications, adult or peer support, and other developmentally appropriate teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior through unified team effort of Supervisors, Full Time classroom staff, Assistant Directors, SDSU Child and Family Development Department, and outside agencies

Young children deserve careful attention to every aspect of their social-emotional development. They are complex individuals worthy of respect and the recognition that they are each unique, valuable, capable, and loveable.

Each child comes to our program with a unique set of defining characteristics, including family background, abilities, temperament, and learning styles. Positive relationships between children and adults are fundamental to a harmonious environment that promotes optimal growth.

Master Teachers will read the developmental histories of all of the children in the classroom. Updates will be made at least annually to continue to capture new information. Does the family have any developmental or behavioral concerns regarding the child? How does he/she typically behave at home & outside the home?

Families are expected to ask staff about any specific behavior concerns regarding their child. In developing a Behavior Support Plan, families will be asked to complete forms and share information about how their child behaves outside of the Center community.

The “Rules of the School” that apply to all are:

1. Keep yourself safe
2. Keep everyone else safe
3. Keep the Center safe (materials, supplies, etc.)

All adults at the Children’s Center use the following tools when working with children:

Get down on the child’s eye level when speaking to him/her

Make eye contact

Touch the child gently on the shoulder or back (if they are comfortable with touch)

Use a calm voice

Explain why the behavior is inappropriate/unacceptable

Acknowledge and validate feelings “It’s okay to be angry-it is not okay to \_\_\_\_\_”

Tell the child which behaviors are appropriate/acceptable

Redirect whenever possible

On some occasions these methods may not be effective with all children. If this occurs, it is important for the Master and Cottage Supervisors to work together to determine if there is anything in the classroom environment that may be adding to a child’s inability to behave appropriately. Consider:

- The physical environment-what is the culture of this particular group of children with their teachers? Do the colors/sounds/displays represent them? Is the room soft and comfortable? Is it beautiful? Are there obvious places for children to be active and/or quiet? Is the environment stimulating or over-stimulating?
- The emotional environment-is it possible to meet physical needs? Is the room welcoming and inclusive?

- The cultural environment-is it evident that the classroom values and supports all of the cultures represented? Is there a sense of “I belong. You belong. They belong.”?
- The cognitive environments-does the classroom challenge children and provoke wonder?
- The social environment-does it meet this group’s age range?

All adults working in the Children’s Center are expected to respond to any child’s challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that

- Provides for the safety of the child
- Provides for the safety of the others in the classroom
- Is calm
- Is respectful to the child
- Provides the child with information on acceptable behavior

All adults in the Children’s Center are expected to work together to help children manage their behavior by guiding and supporting children to:

1. Persist when frustrated
2. Play and work cooperatively with other children (“You can’t say you can’t play”)
3. Use language to communicate needs (without tantrums, whining, or refusal to follow directions)
4. Learn turn taking
5. Gain control of physical impulses (without hitting, biting, shoving)
6. Express negative emotions in ways that do not harm others or themselves
7. Use problem-solving techniques
8. Learn about self and others

For children with persistent, serious, challenging behaviors, who are not responding to the above mentioned guidance, the following steps will be taken:

Step #1 Within two weeks of identifying a persistent challenging behavior, the Master Teacher takes the lead by;

- a) Creating a communication log to document daily discussions with the family to problem solve. What is being done at home? Is this something we can do in the Center?
- b) Requesting a medical examination within 3 weeks to rule out any physiological reason for the behavior.

c) During this process, the Supervisor and/or Assistant Director have begun conducting a minimum of 2 behavioral observations each week. Observations should create a snapshot of the child's entire day.

Step # 2 During regular weekly ITT or Preschool staff meeting, the child's behavior is brainstormed with other team members for possible antecedents/ suggestions. During this time, the family will have taken the child for a medical examination. Family meets with the Cottage Supervisor and Master Teachers to develop a plan. Families may be asked to journal at home (Home Observation Cards) regarding the child's behavior to determine any antecedents in the home environment. Family meets weekly with teaching staff to discuss progress and/or continuing challenges. The Assistant Director will contact the SDSU CFD Behavioral Support Specialist for input and support. In-depth involvement with the Behavioral Specialist will require parental permission.

Step #3 If after 3 weekly meetings the behavior has not improved, the family meets with the Master and Supervising Teacher and the Assistant Director to develop the Behavioral Support Plan. Issues to be discussed might include:

- a) Hours per week the child is in care. Might reducing the days/hours provide the child with some respite?
- b) Observations made regarding possible "triggers" for the behavior. It is important that all of the adults in the child's life use the same verbiage when redirecting and/or offering suggestions regarding appropriate behavior.
- c) The Behavioral Support Plan will continue for one month, during which time regular teacher/family meetings will take place. These meetings may include Master Teacher, Cottage Supervisor and/or Assistant Director.

Step # 4 Referrals are made to outside specialists (YMCA, child's elementary school district office, California Inclusion and Behavior Consultation Network). Outside specialist will review all previous plans for appropriateness and make suggestions to be added to any plans.

Step # 5 If after all steps have been tried without success, all staff involved thusfar (Assistant Director, Supervisors and Master Teacher) will meet to make a final determination regarding the best environment for the child to be in, such as a Family Child Care Home or a smaller Center.



## Celebration Policy

Celebrations often play an important role in the lives of children and their families. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with families in sharing meaningful celebrations that are complementary to our daily programs. This policy is meant to provide opportunities for children and families to share their cultural traditions and celebrations with their peers in the classroom.

**Prior Approval** – Prior approval for any in classroom celebration is required. Families are asked to talk directly with their Classroom Master Teacher to discuss their interest and collaborate in making a plan for a celebration. The next step is to fill out the “Let’s Celebrate” form and turn it in to the Front Desk. The Supervising Teacher will review the form, talk to the classroom Master Teacher with any questions and approve the form. You will be notified by the Master Teacher if your request has been approved with any changes in your original request. Families must request at least one week in advance of any planned celebration to be held in the Center. Those who do not get prior approval will be turned away and asked to schedule their celebration at a later date.

**Times** – Celebrations will typically occur during the afternoon snack in your child’s classroom, generally between 2:30 and 3:30 p.m.

**Food/Drink** – The Center works hard to promote healthy eating for all children and this includes food choices for celebrations and events. Some food choices include: fruit that we serve infrequently during meals such as strawberries, watermelon, cantaloupe, grapes, berries, or a combination; frozen fruit bars; yogurt/gogurt; string cheese; veggies & dip or any food to dip is always a hit! All food and drink items must adhere to the Children’s Center Food Policy, including the Nut-Free Policy. (See Appendix F of the Parent Manual.) If you would like more ideas on what to bring, the Food Services Supervisor would be happy to answer any questions.

**Where to Sign-In Food for Special Celebrations or Events:** Please sign in all food items at the Front Desk and notify them that the item is for a special event in your child’s classroom. If the food is perishable, please let them know that as well. Also notify the classroom teacher that food has been left at the Front Desk for the celebration.

**No Homemade Treats** – Due to the challenge of ensuring that homemade treats are completely nut free the Center must insist only items packaged with labeling reflecting no nut exposure are used within the Center. Cross contamination with utensils, ingredients and cooking surfaces are a potential hazard and hard to control in homemade treats.

**Storage** – Space is very limited in The Children’s Center kitchen so please keep this in mind when making food choices. If the food item you bring needs special storage, simply sign it in at the Front Desk and notify them that a perishable item has been left. Also notify your child’s teacher so that someone will be sure to come to the Front Desk to verify the items and place them in proper storage area. Be sure to discuss storage of your item(s) when planning for your event with the classroom Master Teacher.

**Inclusion** – Please keep in mind that we are aware that some children have certain food allergies. If a treat for snack time is brought in that your child cannot eat, the Center will provide the regularly scheduled snack for that day.

**Toys, Presents, Trinkets, Goodie/Gift Bags** – The Children’s Center does not allow any toys, presents, trinkets, or goodie/gift bags to be passed out to children for any celebrations or to be left in cubbies or parent mail files.

**Other Ways to Celebrate** – Families are encouraged to enjoy celebrations in ways other than food as well. This may include reading your child’s favorite book to their class on a special day, donating a favorite book or providing some other special item that the children in the Center would enjoy having in the classroom.

**Checklist for Celebrations:**

- Choose a date to celebrate
- Decide on food/drink-remember our NO NUTS POLICY!
- Obtain prior approval in writing from Cottage Supervisors and Master Teacher one week before the intended celebration
- Items to decide with the Master Teacher/Supervisor:
  - date and time
  - food and drink
  - storage/cooling requirements
  - family member(s) attending – yes or no
- Carefully check all food labels for nuts or cross-contamination of nuts.
- Celebrate!!

## **Infant/Toddler Cottage Policy**

The SDSU Children's Center is committed to providing the highest quality of care for all children enrolled. Due to their young age and inability to communicate clearly, the children in the Infant Cottage (Chicks and Ducklings) and Toddler Cottage (Koalas and Otters) often need additional requirements to ensure this quality is met at all times.

The following infant policies are created as a foundation to build Center policy using guidelines from;

- NAEYC Accreditation Standards
- PITC
- ITERS Criteria
- California Community Care Licensing Requirements (CCL) Title V

**Ratios:** Infants (Birth-18 months old) 1:3 adult-child ratio, 1:18 Associate Teacher or higher-child ratio.

Toddlers (19-30 months old) 1:4 adult-child ratio, 1:16 Associate Teacher or higher-child ratio.

**Associate Teachers:** An Associate Teacher work in all classrooms to cover lunch and admin breaks for Master Teachers. Associate Teachers are required to hold a California Child Development Permit at the Associate Teacher or above level, and to maintain current CPR and 1<sup>st</sup> Aid certification. Associate Teachers are responsible for visually supervising groups of children both indoors and out, whether in small or large groups, during the absence of the Master Teacher.

Associate Teachers are an integral part of our successful teaching team. They can act as the Teacher Qualified staff member, as well as supervise Teacher Assistants, Teacher Aides, and/or CFD lab students and volunteers.

### **Associate Teachers must:**

- \* Provide proof of a minimum of 12 CFD units, including 3 units specifically related to the care of infants and toddlers when working with that age group.
- \* Provide proof of a minimum of 50 days of experience within 2 years of working in a program providing services for children less than 5 year of age.
- \* Provide proof of certification in 1<sup>st</sup> Aid and CPR including infants and children.
- \* Provide the Center with a copy of their permit and/or an approved receipt for permit application from a California County Office of Education.

**REMINDER-** If no Associate Teacher is available, the Full Time Team will alternate lunch periods and modify Admin Time to ensure one fully qualified person is on the floor and available to children whether indoors or out. **There must always be a fully qualified (Red Badge) teacher with every group of children whether inside or outside.**

All Full Time Staff and Associate Teachers shall have current CPR and 1<sup>st</sup> aid certification with emphasis on infants and children.

Teacher qualified staff shall be responsible for visually supervising groups of children both indoors and out, whether in small or large groups. Lab students and volunteers cannot be counted in ratio.

Infants and Toddlers must be **directly supervised by sight** by a staff person at all times. This means to be in the same room/area with the children, including the nap room. Children shall be within the line of sight at all times. Under no circumstances shall any infant be left unattended.

**Lab Students and volunteers** cannot be counted in the ratio, and cannot be left alone with children. They cannot change diapers nor supervise the bathroom. They are never to be considered “in charge”, regardless of the number of units they may have.

**Nap Time:** Infants must *always* be put to sleep on their backs. When they are old enough to adjust themselves to another position, they can remain in that position as they are comfortable. Crib sides must always be up.

A caregiver shall be in the nap room whenever **any** sleeping children are present. It is the Master Teacher’s responsibility to determine what is the best use of qualified staff time and attention, and which staff are best suited to provide supervision for sleeping infants. The supervision of the nap room will in most cases be left to Teacher Assistants so long as a fully qualified teacher (Red Badge) is in the classroom and available. Best practices requires the Supervisors and Master Teachers are typically not in the nap room, but rather are actively modeling effective teaching for the Assistant Teachers who are working with the children who are awake and active.

Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys and other soft items are not allowed in cribs with children under 8 months old.

Infant and Toddler’s heads are to remain uncovered while they are asleep.

**Diapering:** The Children’s Center uses disposable diapers unless children have a medical reason that does not permit their use. Staff shall check for signs that a diaper is wet or soiled;

1. At least every 2 hours when children are awake and
2. When children awaken
3. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled
4. Only staff and parents may change diapers. Parents may change their own child’s diaper. Lab students and volunteers may not change diapers. Kitchen staff do not change diapers.
5. Staff changes diapers in the designated areas only. The diaper changing area is separated from the rest of the classroom by a partial wall and is located at least three feet from other areas that children use
6. At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when he/she is being changed from an elevated surface
7. Each diaper change requires careful adherence to the posted diapering/sanitation guidelines

## **Feeding**

- Infants unable to sit are held for bottle feeding
- Infants and Toddlers are not to have bottles in cribs or cots. Bottles are not propped at any time
- Mobile Infants and Toddlers are not to carry bottles, sippy-cups, or regular cups while crawling or walking
- Teaching staff will offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together the child is ready

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE INFANT CLASSROOMS ARE A “SHOES OFF” ENVIRONMENT FOR ADULTS**

This is to keep the floors as clean as possible for the infants to freely explore their play space

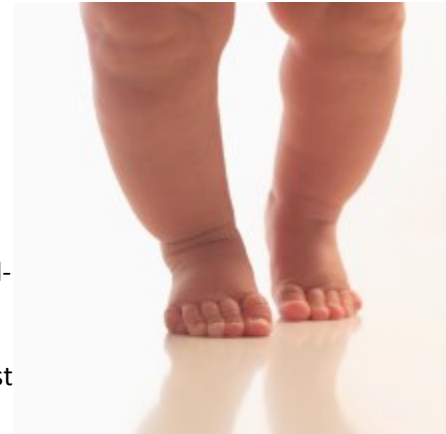
## Diapering Procedures

**Get Organized.** Assemble supplies in changing area within reach (disposable diaper, wipes, gloves, non-absorbent paper liner, wipes, spot of diaper cream (if needed) on tissue, and plastic bag). Wipe changing area surface with paper towel if wet and cover with paper. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water. Dry hands with paper towel and put on gloves.

- 2. Place child on paper on changing surface or table. ALWAYS** keep a hand on the child.
- 3. Remove child's clothing.** If clothes are soiled put them in a plastic bag and set aside to be sent home.
- 4. Unfasten diaper and leave soiled diaper under child.** Lift the child's legs and use disposable wipes to clean skin creases, genitalia, and bottom. Wipe front to back using a clean wipe each time. Place used wipes in the dirty diaper.
- 5. Remove soiled diaper.** Fold diaper inward and place in covered, hands-free, plastic-lined container. Fold back paper liner if a clean surface is needed. Remove gloves.
- 6. Clean your hands** with a disposable wipe and then clean the child's hands with another fresh wipe.
- 7. Put clean diaper on child.** Put on ointment (if needed) provided by parents upon their written request.
- 8. Dress the child.** Change child's clothing if wet or soiled.
- 9. Wash the child's hands.** With soap and running water. May use wipe to clean child's hands if child cannot support self or reach sink safely. Return child safely in supervised area.
- 10. Clean and sanitize the changing surface.** Throw away the paper liner in covered, hands-free, plastic lined container. Clean any visible soil with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and paper towel. Rinse with wet paper towel. Wet the entire changing area with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and let dry for 3 minutes.
- 11. Wash your hands with soap and water.**
- 12. Label soiled clothes bag and place in child's cubby/soiled clothing storage.**
- 13. Enter diaper change on child's Daily Sheet.**

## Stand-up diapering procedure

1. Wash hands.
2. Gather necessary supplies (diaper/underpants, wipes, cleaner and sanitizer, paper towels, gloves, plastic bag).
3. Put on disposable gloves, if desired.
4. Coach child in pulling down pants and removing diaper/pull-up/underpants (and assist as needed).
5. Put soiled diaper/pull-up/underpants in plastic bag (or assist child in doing so).
6. Coach child in cleaning diaper area front to back using a clean, damp wipe for each stroke (and assist as needed).
7. Put soiled wipes in plastic bag (or assist child in doing so).
8. Close and dispose of plastic bag into hands-free covered trash can lined with a plastic garbage bag.
9. Remove gloves, if worn.
10. Wash hands (in bathroom/handwashing sink) and coach child in doing the same.
11. If a signed medication authorization indicates, apply topical cream/ointment/lotion using disposable gloves then remove gloves.
12. Coach child in putting on clean diaper/underpants and clothing and washing hands (in bathroom/handwashing sink).
13. Close and put any bag of soiled clothing or underpants into child's cubby.
14. Use 3-step method on floor where change has occurred:
  1. Clean with detergent and water.
  2. Rinse with water.
  3. Disinfect with bleach solution (1 T. bleach in 1 quart water). Allow the bleach solution to air dry or to remain on the surface for at least 2 minutes before drying with a paper towel.
15. Wash hands (in bathroom/handwashing sink).



## Daily Table Sanitation

### All Classrooms

#### Opening staff:

- Take chairs down off tables
- Spray with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and wipe tables with a clean rag
- Put rag in dirty laundry basket
- Spray tables with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and allow to air dry for 3 minutes

#### **1. Before all meals:**

- Spray clean tables with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and allow to air dry for 3 minutes
- Put tablecloths on tables as used and set table

#### **2. After lunch:**

- Wipe any visible food from table
- Put chairs on table
- Sweep/mop floor as needed
- Spray chairs with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and clean with a rag
- Take cleaned chairs off table
- Spray tables with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and clean with a new rag
- Spray tables with peroxide cleaner/disinfectant and allow to air dry for 3 minutes