

TO: All CFD Student Volunteers

FROM: Sara Sanders, Assistant Director

Welcome to the **SDSU Children's Center, a quality service provided by Associated Students**. We are very pleased to have you join our teaching team this semester. You will quickly learn how important your participation is to our successful program. We pride ourselves in bringing a high quality program to children and families every day, and your support will make our program even better.

Our mission is to provide quality care and education to children, students, family, and staff of the SDSU Community. Our most important focus is on the care and development of children and their families. We are also committed to providing students such as yourself with a valuable learning laboratory that allows you to understand the complexities of working with children 5 years and under.

Establishing a rapport with children can be difficult, especially when you only work 4 hours or less per week with them. There are some things you can do that will assist in building stronger relationships with children:

1. Keep your attention focused on the children. Conversations with other adults detract from time spent with children.
2. Cell phones should be left in lockers or silenced. Teachers simply do not have time for their phones when they are working.
3. Get down on the children's level. Kneel, stoop, or sit in a chair or on the floor. Like anyone else, children respond to eye contact and interest.
4. Engage with the children. What you put into your time with them is what you will take away. If you are actively involved rather than standing away, children will know you want to be with them.

Volunteers will not be assigned to classrooms right away. We feel strongly that the children need time to "settle" into a new semester and get to know their teachers before we introduce any new adult faces. Before you receive your scheduled assignment and begin your first day in the classroom with children, we must have all of the necessary documentation from each student:

1. Volunteer application-please remember to sign!
2. Proof of negative TB clearance not more than 1 year old
3. Statement of Health
4. Criminal Record Statement
5. Confidential Data Sheet
6. Emergency Contact Information
7. Insight into working with Infant and Toddlers or Preschoolers

Once we have received all of the paperwork, you are ready to begin in the classroom. You may be working in any of the areas of our program-inside, outside, or out in Memory Park. It is important that you fully understand all aspects of the program and their purpose in providing a quality experience to children. Please ask questions as needed, but be sensitive to the fact that teaching staff are very busy when working directly with children. If you are looking forward to teaching with the children, they will catch your enthusiasm. Spending time with the children will help you plan meaningful experiences and activities.

Children develop in many different ways, each using their own time table. Plan your activities for a broad spectrum of abilities and interest levels. It is so important that you plan flexibility into every activity.

Our wish to you is a very productive and rewarding semester with us. Feel free to ask questions about anything. The Children's Center Staff is committed to clear and open communication. There are many years of teaching experience here at the Center, and we are all lifelong learners. Keep in mind that most of our Full Time Staff were once new to the field just like you!

Thank you.