



Early Childhood Development Center

University of Minnesota Crookston
Driven to Discover TM

Parent Handbook

Phone Numbers:

ECDC Program Office: (218) 281-8285

Website link:

Early Childhood Development Center
<https://crk.umn.edu/ecdc>



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Background Information

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) is:

1. To provide the students majoring in Early Childhood and Elementary Education at the University of Minnesota Crookston an opportunity to observe and participate in a teacher-training laboratory.
2. To provide the University (students, staff, and faculty) and Crookston community with an early childhood education/childcare service that ensures a high quality program for young children and their families.

Sponsorship

The University of Minnesota Crookston operates the Early Childhood Development Center and is a public and not for profit organization. The Early Childhood Development Center is inspected and licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, 444 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-3842, or call DHS at 651-431-6500.

Policy and Procedure Statement

The Early Childhood Development Center adheres to all required policies, procedures, and program records for [Rule 3](#) programs pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, [section 245.04, subdivision 14](#).

Early Childhood Development Center Administrative Committee

The Early Childhood Development Center Administrative Committee establishes the policy. Recommendations for policy are gathered from the ECDC staff, parent feedback, and suggestions on present and future services and policies. The committee consists of:

- Director of Finance
- Department Head of Liberal Arts and the Education Department
- Director of the Early Childhood Development Center

Philosophy

We believe that children need affectionate, secure, trusting relationships, new experiences, recognition, and respect as unique, whole persons. The Director and professional teaching staff members will strive to affirm the growth of the whole child by meeting his/her physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs in a positive, enthusiastic, and stimulating environment.

The ECDC is a safe and healthy learning environment. Teachers promote the development of a healthy and positive self-concept in children by providing success-oriented experiences, positive feedback, and encouragement. Teachers help children “learn how to learn” by supporting children’s efforts to question, experiment, and problem-solve.

Program Operation

The Early Childhood Development Center is located on the University of Minnesota Crookston campus in the Early Childhood Building. The Center is licensed to serve 43 children, ages six weeks through five years of age (Kindergarten).

The ECDC will open at 7:30 am and close at 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday during the school year.

Admission of children with special needs will be determined on an individual basis in order to meet the best interest of the child and family. The Director will make final determination after consulting with the child's parents, professional staff members, and qualified consultant.

The summer program begins in May, the first day after Memorial Day, and goes through mid-August. The last day of the summer program are dependent on Teacher Professional Development Days, which are determined annually. Summer operations are determined on an annual basis dependent on community need and personnel resources.

Holidays and Closings

The Center closes on all University observed holidays and blizzard days. If the University is closed, it will be broadcast on radio station KROX (AM 1260) and TV stations WDAZ (ABC) and KVLV (NBC). When the University closes, no credit is given for storm days or other causes over which we have no control. The ECDC may close independently of the University. We may also have planned closures for staff professional development and yearly maintenance (these dates will be determined on an annual basis at the beginning of each school year).

Any decision to close the campus due to bad weather, such as a snowstorm or blizzard, or any other situation is given careful consideration. Unreasonable risk and danger posed by travel to or from campus are considered in any decision to close campus. Explanations and interpretations are available on the policies and procedures page linked below.

UMC Campus Emergency Closing Policies and Procedures:
www.umcrookston.edu/info/policies/closing.htm

The Early Childhood Development Center may close independently of UMC and that decision is based on the safety of the children and extreme road conditions that may prevent the teaching staff from getting to work.

Services

The ECDC provides:

1. Educational Services – teacher guidance and instruction, activities, and materials
2. Nutritional Services – breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and nutrition education activities
3. Home and Center Coordination – parent-teacher conferences, written reports, newsletters, informal feedback and conversation, and parent information sessions

Child Enrollment

We offer full day enrollment, which includes teacher guidance, parent conferences, written progress reports, breakfast, lunch, snack, and classroom supplies. Credit is not offered on days your child is absent.

Hours: anytime between 7:30 am- 5:00 pm

Enrollment procedure for parents:

1. Complete the Child Application form and return the form to get your child on our waitlist.
2. A \$20 registration fee will be billed once your child has been accepted into the program. This fee will be billed the first month of enrollment.
3. The Child Application form and \$20 registration fee are an annual requirement.
4. Once your child has been accepted into the program, you will be required to complete and return additional application materials which can be found at <https://www.crk.umn.edu/units/early-childhood-development-center>
5. Participation in a pre-admission conference is required. A brief meeting with the Director and child's teacher (upon request) allow you to ask specific questions about the program and staff. Arrangements for a tour of the facility and observation of the program by the parent and child is also encouraged.

Determination of child admission is based on the following prioritized factors:

- a. Licensing capacity
- b. Consistency of scheduling
- c. University ECDC staff, students, faculty, staff
- d. Date application received
- e. Currently enrolled families

Tuition Rates

Tuition fees and administrative policies related to tuition charges are effective September 1 of each calendar year. Tuition rates found at <https://www.crk.umn.edu/units/early-childhood-development-center>

Childcare tuition, fees, and administrative policies are subject to change at the beginning of each year (September 1). Childcare tuition is billed as a flat monthly rate.*

You will not receive a credit for sick days, vacations days, holidays, staff development days, season breaks, and emergency closure dates, as these are all considered part of the enrollment schedule.

*Preschoolers who will be kindergartners in the next school program year will have a pro-rate in May (who are not enrolled in the ECDC summer program) or August (who are enrolled in the summer program, ends the day before ECDC Professional Staff Development Days-TBD).

*Any new child to the program, who starts the first day of the new fall program year, will have a pro-rate.

The preferred payment method is to pay your invoice by credit card at <http://www.pay.umn.edu/>.

You will need the following information from your statement:

1. Full account name
2. Customer number
3. Invoice number
4. Amount due

Absences and Late Pick-up Policy

Parents, please call the Center by 9:00 am to notify the staff of your child's absence. There is no credit given for absent days.

The Early Childhood Development Center closes promptly at **5:00 pm**. When picking up your children after 4:55 pm, please understand that everyone needs to leave the Center by 5:00 pm. It is important to respect the families and personal obligations of the teachers and student staff. If parents are late to pick up their child/children, they will be assessed a minimum of a \$5 fee plus a \$1 per minute, per child for each minute past the 5:00 PM closing time. If parents are late more than once, this fee may be increased or assessed on an individual basis. A child who is picked up late repeatedly may be dropped from our enrollment.

Withdrawal of Child Enrollment

If you decide to withdraw your child from the program, you need to submit a written notice four (4) weeks or 28 days prior to your child's last day of enrollment. Tuition is charged through that monthly period.

The notice must include the following information:

- Child's full name
- Last day of enrollment
- Parent signature
- Date upon which it is given to the Director

Teachers will make every effort to make your child's last day at the ECDC a special and memorable day.

Medical Emergency Leave of Absence

In the event that a child at the ECDC become seriously ill or whose health is threatened by their presence, the Director may waive the notice of withdrawal. You may be asked to provide a medical statement declaring the date of onset and the extent of the health issue.

If you decide to re-enroll your child at a later date, you will be put on the top of the waiting list and every effort will be made to re-enroll the child by the preferred start date.

Medical Emergency Attendance Policy

In the event that the illness is temporary, but interferes with the child's attendance, the Director may decide to waive the monthly tuition and do a daily rate. You must provide a physician's documentation stating what the illness is, and when the child is expected to be able to resume full enrollment. In the event that the temporary illness develops into a more severe crisis, the child may be removed from enrollment according to the Emergency Medical Leave of Absence Policy (stated above).

Depending on the medical situation, the parent/guardian must update the Director weekly on the child's health status, in order to reevaluate the child's enrollment status.

Billing Policies

The UMC Business Office and Regents of the University of Minnesota oversee the ECDC billing process. Statements are issued at the beginning of the month and payment is due typically at the end of every month. Tuition must be paid in full by the due date. Any late fees for each month are included on the next tuition bill along with any fee credits or debits. Tuition and late fees not paid within 30 days may result in your child being withdrawn from the program.

Staff

Teachers are governed by the University of Minnesota Civil Service and AFSCME personnel policies and procedures. The Early Childhood Development Center Director, Department Head, Liberal Arts and Education, and Chancellor of the University of Minnesota Crookston determine the hiring procedures.

All personnel working at the ECDC will be supervised by and responsible to the Director. A training and probationary period is required for students and professionals.

Staff roles:

1. **Director:** lab supervisor for the early childhood education majors; administrative responsibilities for fiscal, programmatic and personal personnel management
2. **Teachers:** assume direct responsibility for groups of young children, provide guidance and instruction; individualized programming, parent conferences; progress reports and supervision of lab students
3. **Student Teachers:** assume role as childcare aides and assistant teachers depending on level of lab experience and individual capability; activities implemented receive prior approval from instructor
4. **Work-study Students:** work food preparation, clean up, and other tasks specified by the Director. Work-study students who qualify as childcare assistants or aides assist professional staff members in providing guidance to children
5. **Foster Grandparents:** volunteers from the Foster Grandparent Program and community-at-large given responsibilities as deemed appropriate by the Director; aides teachers in caring for children as the teacher sees fit

Arrival and Departure

An adult must accompany the child entering and leaving the Center. During drop-off and pick-up, all vehicles must park in the designated loading zone for the Early Childhood Development Center at the north entrance of the Early Childhood Building.

Children are not sent home with parents or adult friends unless the Director or professional staff members have been notified in advance. Review and update your authorization forms.

Parental Custody- ‘Right to Pick-Up’ Policy

Under the laws of the state of Minnesota, both parents may have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent, who chooses not to include the child’s other parent on the authorized pick up list, must file an official court document (current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document, the childcare program may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents his paternity/her maternity to the child.

Intoxication Policy

The Center’s first priority is the safety of the children. If a person (parent or other designated pick up person) appears to be impaired or inebriated when picking up a child, it is part of our mandated reporting that we DO NOT allow the person to leave with the child. The following characteristics would signal this judgment:

- smell of alcohol
- bloodshot eyes
- slurred, loud speech
- agitated behavior
- impaired motor function (particularly clumsy)
- impaired judgment

Even though there may be many reasons or excuses for the adult to smell of alcohol, it is our responsibility to the child, and family, that we restrict them from leaving our program with the child. Staff will refer to the contact list on file to ensure your child gets home safely. All new staff review this policy. For further information on our intoxication policy, please contact the Director.

Insurance

The Early Childhood Development Center carries liability insurance for the children enrolled and for the staff at the Center. If you have questions concerning insurance coverage, contact the Director of Finance by mailing to 108 Selvig Hall, University of Minnesota Crookston, 2900 University Avenue, Crookston MN, 56716 or calling 218-281-8326.

Equal Opportunity

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to Tina Marisam, Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, University of Minnesota, 274 McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455, 612-624-9547.

Abuse Reporting

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 431-6600.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 218-281-3127 or the local law enforcement, Crookston Police Department, at 218-281-3111.
- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at (651) 431-6500.

What to Report

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act ([Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556](#)).
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
 - An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

Abuse Reporting *(continued)*

Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

Retaliation Prohibited

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

Education Component

Curriculum

Curriculum may be best explained by what happens in the classroom. It is the manner in which the teacher provides for the needs of the children and achieves the desired goals.

Our curriculum is developmentally based, success-oriented, and supports a process approach to learning. A child's physical, emotional, and intellectual developmental level must always be considered before one can design an organized series of experiences to meet his/her individual needs.

We believe that a successful theory of teaching originates from a theory of development that explains learning. Children and adults take in information, sort, and organize it and then act upon it. Learning is essentially the ability to differentiate, integrate, and generalize knowledge and experience. Therefore, our program emphasizes "how to learn" rather than "what to learn."

Teachers focus on helping children learn to move and perceive (physical), to think (intellectual), to communicate (social), and to create (emotional). In our efforts to develop the whole child, curriculum areas are dependent on developmental goals. Curriculum areas include, but are not limited to the following:

- Inquiry Curriculum – math, science, social studies, and nutrition
- Physical Curriculum – sensory, fine and gross motor development
- Language Curriculum – language development, literature, pre-reading and writing
- Creative Curriculum – art, music, drama, and movement

Discovery, guided exploration, and play are vehicles for implementing this curriculum. It is our intent to convey to the child the value, challenge, and excitement of learning.

The curriculum continues with the summer program, which offers increased water play with sprinklers and other various water activities.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule includes individual, small group and large group activities, quiet and active, indoor and outdoor activity periods. Each program's schedule is posted in the classroom.

The daily schedule of each room is carefully planned by the teachers dependent on the children's developmental levels, interests, and engagement. The goal of each schedule is to meet the needs of individuals and the group as a whole throughout the day.

Programs

Children are enrolled in separate programs. The programs include a highly individualized Infant Program, Toddler Program, and Preschool Program. Each program has a designated caregiver to strengthen relationships and encourage individual attention to the needs of children.

Group Size

Our program meets and exceeds the Minnesota Department of Human Services standards and reflects guidelines recommended on the national level.

Infant Program

(eight children from 6 weeks to 16 months – 1:3 ratio)

- one professional teacher
- one student teacher
- one childcare aide

Toddler Program

(twelve children from 16 months-35 months – 1:4 ratio)

- one professional teacher
- one-two student teachers
- one childcare aide to meet ratio

Preschool Program

(twenty children from 33 months to kindergarten – 1:8 ratio)

- one professional teacher
- one-two student teachers
- one childcare aide to meet ratio

Child Guidance and Discipline

We define discipline as helping a child learn alternative ways to express their emotions, problem-solve, and self-regulate for a positive outcome.

We believe that knowledge of a child's developmental level forms the groundwork for all guidance techniques. A young child's abilities and limitations in language, logical thinking, perception, and memory all affect his/her relationship with others and the degree to which a parent or teacher's guidance is effective.

The ECDC staff will encourage the development of self-control, pro-social behavior, and competence in young children. This is done in part by demonstrating respect for your child as a unique person, developing trusting relationships with him/her, and demonstrating warmth and enthusiasm. We will help children by setting as few rules as possible, by stating our expectations clearly and frequently, and providing opportunities for them to make choices and learn responsibilities for their choices and actions.

Teachers act as role models for the children by using language and demonstrating appropriate ways for children to express their feelings and emotions. The teachers acknowledge appropriate behaviors several times daily. Ignoring the behavior, redirecting a child's interest, giving choices, discussing and/or reasoning through the problem are examples of responses made by a teacher when inappropriate behavior arises.

Temporarily separating the child from the immediate group may be necessary when preventative and problem-solving methods have not worked. In this situation, the child will remain within an unenclosed part of the classroom where he/she can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person.

When a child requires more attention that is feasible, a parent-teacher conference may be needed to work out solutions. Occasionally, outside professional consultation and evaluation may be necessary. If a serious behavioral problem continues and solutions cannot be reached, concerns for the well-being of other children in the program would require that childcare services would no longer be available to the child.

Biting Policy

Biting is a common developmental stage that some children experience. It is important to remember that children rarely bite out of aggression. Most often, biting occurs when children lack the words to express their wants, needs, and feelings. Biting is also common during teething in some children.

Teachers and other staff will be conscientious of possible biting situations throughout the day. Supervision and limiting a child's frustrations are two ways teachers help lessen biting occurrences. Of course, there may be times when biting simply cannot be stopped in time. As a parent, it is important to recognize that the ECDC staff makes every effort to keep all children as safe as possible. **All incidents of biting will be documented for the child that is bitten and the child that bit. When discussing with parents, the child's names will never be used to maintain confidentiality.**

Biting Policy *continued*

In the event of a biting incident, the teacher will comfort the bitten child and follow first aid protocol as necessary. The teacher will also address the child that bit by showing them how to use gentle hands, telling them “biting hurts” or “mouths are for food,” redirecting the child’s attention to another activity, or helping the child learn the words to express their want, need, or emotion.

Some reasons children bite are:

- to explore the world around them
- they may be hungry
- express affection (like kissing)
- to get attention
- result of possible teething or earache

Outdoor Play

An outdoor playground is available for the children and outdoor play is a scheduled part of each day’s activities. The children will be supervised at all times.

Please dress your child for outdoor weather as Minnesota weather can be unpredictable. We go outside every morning and afternoon, weather permitting. Layers are recommended as the temperature and wind chill fluctuate throughout the day. Layers allow children to take off items when they are hot, and add layers when they are cold.

When temperature and wind-chill prevent children from going outside, we utilize our multipurpose room for gross motor activities.

Field Trips

Teachers regularly take groups of children on field trips around campus, as we are fortunate to have many different resources available to us. If are interested in joining a planned field trip, please contact your child’s teacher. Parents are always welcome.

Field trip destinations include, but are not limited to:

- UMC Animal Science facilities (to see various animals such as horses, cows, sheep, goats)
- Nature Nook (referred to as the Butterfly Garden by the children)
- Bog Garden (referred to as the Frog Pond by the children)
- Natural Resource Wildlife Museum
- UMC Greenhouse

Nutrition, Health, and Safety

Health Care Standards

According to the rules of the Minnesota Department of Human Services concerning childcare center, it is required that every child enrolling at a center complete a Health Care Summary. The Health Care Summary described any special precautions for diet, medication, or activity; and that the child has received immunizations in accordance with the Minnesota State Law. All children should be fully immunized or in the process of becoming fully immunized. Children must have an updated medical report when changing from one age group to another.

CDC Children's Immunization schedule:

Birth	- Hep B (Hepatitis B)
2 months	- DTaP/IPV/PCV/Hep B/Hib/RV
4 months	- DTaP/IPV/ PCV/Hib/ RV
6 months*	- DTaP/IPV/ PCV/Hep B/ Hib/ RV
12-18 months*	- DTaP/IPV/PCV/Hep B/Hib/MMR/Varicella/Hep A
5 years*	- DTaP/IPV/MMR/Varicella

*Influenza shot yearly

Illnesses

If a child becomes ill while at the Center, the staff will contact the parent/guardian. The child will be cared for and placed in isolation or on a cot until an authorized person is able to pick up the child. The Center has no facilities to care for sick children. Parents will be called and we ask that you pick up your child within 1 hour of being notified.

We are mandated to exclude a child:

- who has a 100 degree axillary or high temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever reducing medication is given;
- who has contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye;
- who has unexplained lethargy;
- who has vomited or had three or more abnormally loose stools since admission that day;
- who has an undiagnosed rash;
- who has a bacterial infection and has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy;
- who is not able to participate in childcare program activities with reasonable comfort;
- who requires more care than the program staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in their care.

NOTE: Please remember that a child must be symptom free (fever, eye drainage, loose stool, etc.) for 24 hours before returning to the Center or have a note from a medical source stating otherwise.

Medication

When a child is to be given oral or surface medication, a parent must give written authorization for its administration. A Medication Authorization Form will be provided when you bring your child's medication. Please be sure to hand it directly to an ECDC staff member, preferably the lead teacher.

Any staff person, regardless of parental direction, will not administer non-prescription medicines such as cough drops, children's Tylenol, cough syrup, or decongestant! **Parents may administer over-the-counter medications to their child if they are able to do so.**

Prescription medications will be kept in their original containers bearing the original label with legible information stating:

- a. prescription number of drug
- b. name of drug
- c. strength and quantity of drug
- d. expiration date
- e. directions for use
- f. child's name
- g. date of issue
- h. name and address of the licensed pharmacy issuing the medication

The parent is notified of the date, time, amount of medication given, and the name of the professional teacher administering the medication.

Medical Emergency Procedures

It is important to remember that children often get bumps, scratches, cuts, and bruises in their daily lives due to their active lifestyle. If a nonthreatening injury occurs (see first sentence), the teacher that was present at the time of the injury will document said injury on a Health Observation Report.

In the case of an emergent injury, the ECDC staff are trained in first aid and CPR. Emergency first aid is rendered immediately when needed by the teaching staff member directly responsible for and/or in closest proximity to the child. When an accident is in need of immediate medical treatment, we would contact emergency resources and the child will be taken to the Riverview Hospital in Crookston. If it is a less serious injury, the staff would administer the necessary first aid and a parent will be contacted to take the child to the family physician for medical treatment.

It is the parent's responsibility for keeping the emergency references current. Parents who are students are responsible for submitting to the Director, each semester, their class schedules and advisor's name.

A detailed emergency provision is posted on the Parent's Bulletin Board and Staff Bulletin Board. Emergency numbers for fire, police, ambulance, hospital, and clinic are posted by each telephone.

Emergency Procedures

Fire

Children and staff meet by the classroom door. The teacher will do a headcount and compare it to the attendance sheet. The teacher will lead the children to the nearest exit once all children are accounted for.

Tornado

Children and teachers will meet by the classroom door. The teacher will compare the children to the attendance sheet, and then continue to move the children through the hallway. Preschool and Toddlers, along with their teachers, will walk to Room 119, within the ECDC and take cover. Infants and teachers will move to the infant napping room and take cover.

Blizzard

Teachers will locate all children and the Director will call parents/guardians. A sufficient number of staff will remain with the children until all children are picked up. Emergency food will be given as needed and as available.

Missing Person

The Director will be notified immediately upon the discovery of a missing child. All rooms in the center will be assigned to staff members to search. If the child is still missing after the search, the Crookston Police and parents/guardians will be notified. A staff member will be assigned to each corner of the block and move clockwise while searching until the police arrive.

Emergency Transportation

In case of a transportation emergency, the Center will utilize the University of Minnesota Crookston's vehicles. If no University vehicles are readily available, a staff personnel's vehicle will be utilized for transportation.

Meals

Every child will be offered breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack if they are in attendance at the time the meals are served. Breakfast and afternoon snack are prepared by the ECDC staff. Lunch is prepared by UMC Dining Services and served by the ECDC staff.

Breakfast is at 9:00 am, lunch is at 11:15 (Toddlers) and 12 noon (Preschool), snacks are at 3:00 pm for all programs. The meals offered at the Center comply with the [USDA Child Care Food Program](#) guidelines and do not permit discrimination of children based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap. Any person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against in any USDA related activity should write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Meals *continued*

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program /discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter the USDA by:

- 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- 2) fax: 202-690-7442; or
- 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Children are encouraged to taste every item, but they need not “clean their plate.” Menus are posted on the Parent’s Bulletin Board in each classroom as well as the Parent Bulletin Board in the entry.

Infants

As part of enrollment, parents will have to complete Napping and Feeding /Instruction Forms prior to a child’s first day of attendance. Infants who are bottle-fed will be held and rocked for feeding. Babies will not be put to bed with a propped bottle.

If you are a nursing mother, the infant classroom provides a specifically dedicated room to nurse your child in. The ECDC does provide commercial baby food, formula, and infant cereal. A refrigerator is available in the Infant Program if needed.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

It is necessary to be aware of all children’s backgrounds and thoughtfully consider the implications to each family’s beliefs, traditions, and practices when acknowledging individual birthdays. Please do not distribute birthday invitations at the Center.

Birthdays and special occasions are acknowledged at the Center and any food offered must meet the standards of the Child Nutrition Program. Items served must be commercially prepared and thought given to the nutrient content. Home baked good items cannot be served in observance of State Health Regulations.

Birthdays and Special Occasions *continued*

We suggest nutritious items such as muffins, granola bars, yogurt, cheese sticks, fruit snack, etc. Decorative objects with sharp edges, like those used by bakeries, are not allowed as they are considered hazardous. We ask that no birthday hats, favors, or candy be given as “gifts” for children in the program.

We also ask that no candy or gum be given at other holidays; Halloween, Valentine’s Day, etc. If parents choose to bring a “gift” for children in the class, you are encouraged to discuss possibilities with your child’s teacher. Gifts such as stickers, pencils, and marker are preferred.

Naps and Rest Time

Naps and rest periods are regularly scheduled during the day. A cot or crib is provided for each child. Each child is to bring his/her blanket with his/her name marked on it. Preschool children are not forced to sleep or nap, but are encouraged to rest. After 30 minutes of rest, or after your child naps, they are not required to stay on their cot or crib. Quiet activities are provided as the other children wake up.

Code of Conduct for Respectful Environment

The Early Childhood Development Center believes that all children, parents, teachers, and students have a right to learn and work in a safe environment that is free from offensive, intimidating, threatening, or harassing images, actions, and/or behaviors. It is essential that all children, parents, teachers, and students mutually respect the values and sensitivities of others.

Civil Rights Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

(1) **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

(2) **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

(3) **email:** program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Home and Center Coordination

Parent-Teacher Communication

Professional staff members communicate with parents on a daily basis to keep communication channels open and to enhance commitment for honest, friendly, and sincere communication. Parents are encouraged to communicate to teachers of their child's day such as sleepless night, injury or illness, etc. This will allow the staff to better understand your child's mood and behavior.

There are also several other ways that we communicate with parents:

1. "Today Sheet" – written record sent home on a daily basis for parents with children enrolled in the Infant and Toddler Programs. The record specifies the physical care given to their child (food intake, elimination or toileting, and sleeping behaviors); child's activities; and additional comments from teacher to parent.
2. Preschool Newsletter – newsletter from the Preschool teachers to parents regarding activities and skills children are working on and/or accomplished, comments, etc.
3. Electronic Newsletter – is available bi-monthly to all parents. The newsletter is on current issues and activities. Examples include: upcoming events, parenting issues, recommended materials and/or activities for parents and children to do together.
4. Parent's Bulletin Board – this is located at the main entrance to the Center. Information is posted regarding lost and found articles, weekly menu, emergency procedures, articles in regards to child rearing or development, Center closings, and special events announcements. Please check it daily!
5. Program Bulletin Board – each program has a Bulletin Board located in their classroom. Information includes daily schedule, daily and weekly activities, a menu, and photos of children's participation in activities.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Discussions and conferences with the ECDC Teachers or Director will be formally offered a minimum of twice per school year. Each child has a developmental profile completed by his/her teacher. Parents are strongly encouraged to call the Director or ask a Teacher if they have questions regarding their child's progress so that a conference can be arranged.

Hiring Private Babysitters Policy

The ECDC does not give references for any staff or student workers for babysitting services. The ECDC will not provide a list of possible babysitters or allow postings at the Center.

Parents that wish to hire a staff member or student worker as a private babysitter may do so independently. Please know that the Center is not liable for any services provided outside of the Center. The Director and Teachers do not make recommendations or supply families with contact information of employees for liability reasons.

Hiring Private Babysitters Policy *continued*

The following requirements must be followed if any ECDC staff are hired as private babysitters:

1. Parents must authorize every pick-up by a Center employee.
2. Any information the employee learns outside of the Center must stay confidential. Any information that is not common knowledge to all families of the Center is not to be discussed with the parents or family of the private employer.
3. The agreement between the staff member and the parent is independent of the Center. The Center holds no responsibility for any private agreements or any disagreements between the staff member and the parents.
4. Private childcare is not permitted on Center grounds. ECDC employees may only perform private drop-offs or pick-ups outside of their scheduled hours.

Exceptions:

- a. Staff Parent: If a staff member provides childcare to their own child at the end of the day, they need to make sure they are in compliance with DHS teacher/child ratios and with approval of the Director.
 - b. Emergencies: Exceptions may be made by the Director and/or Lead Teacher in an emergency situations such as early closings, car accidents, etc.
5. Private babysitting services must be decided upon outside of the employee's work shift. ECDC employees are not to be approached about private services while at work. Phone calls or emails must occur outside of the employee's work hours at the ECDC.

Please note that these policies are not to inconvenience you, but are a liability of the Center.

Clothing and Footwear

Play is children's work so they need to wear washable and comfortable clothing. We ask that children wear tennis shoes and socks during active play. This type of footwear provides support, flexibility, comfort, and safety. If your child wears sandals to school, please send tennis shoes and socks for the playground. Sandals must have a secure ankle strap, no flip-flops. Please remember to switch your child's back-up clothing in accordance to their growth and the season. All children must have a bag at the Center that contains the following:

1. Two change of undergarments and socks
2. Two change of outer clothing (pants, shirts, etc.)
3. Warm winter clothing must be provided during winter months. Examples: two pairs of gloves or mittens, hat, winter jacket, snow pants, pair of snow boots
4. A bag of disposable diapers if your child is not toilet trained. Toilet learning basics are available upon request.
5. A child-sized blanket for rest and naptime.

Please be sure to label all items from home.

Lost and Found

Parents are responsible for labeling their children's clothing articles. Teachers are responsible for encouraging children's responsible actions in placement of clothing, but items do get misplaced. When an item is missing, parents should ask the classroom teacher. If the item is not immediately retrievable, write a note, or talk to the Director who will enlist a staff member to search the next day.

Toys from Home

It is natural for a child to not want to share his/her toys. Please help your child keep their "home" toys in the car or at home. Other children are often curious about it and may want to play with it. This often makes for an upset friend.

Toys might get lost or broken. We do not permit children to bring toys from home to prevent these issues. If it is a special book, or CD to share, label all items and give it to your child's teacher to keep it safe.

Pets

The ECDC only allows outside pets to enter the building upon approval of the Director. Allowance of animals into a room is also dependent on any allergies the children may have. Parents will be made aware of any pets kept in the classroom.

The pet must appear to be in good health, clean, and must have all of their required immunizations with documentation from a veterinarian or shelter.

Before a pet enters the room, the teacher will instruct and model for the children how to properly handle the animal. The person bringing the animal and the teacher staff will supervise all interactions between children and the pet. All children will wash their hands before and after touching any animal.

*Reptiles are not allowed due to the risk of salmonella infection.

Public Relations

As part of the child enrollment, parents will sign a parental permission form in regards to your child being photographed and videotaped during the time he/she are involved in the Center's program. This permission is granted based on the assumption that there will be no commercial use of the photographs without further consent. Rather, photography and videotaping will be done for publicity, promotional, and educational purposes.

Social Media and Photography Policy

Please do not post any pictures taken at the Center, at a Center event, or fieldtrip of the children at the Center, who are not your own, on any social media, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, or personal blogs.

Child Care Program Plan

A child care program plan is available upon request in the Director's office. Notify the Director for a copy if you would like to review it.

Tours and Visitors

Opportunities for parents and members of the community-at-large to visit and observe program activities are available on all days of Center operation. Parents have the freedom to visit the Center anytime during the Center's hours of operation. It is recommended that all persons wishing to visit our program call in advance to schedule an appointment. Tours are not scheduled during the children's naptime (12 noon to 2 pm). Tours are also only available Tuesday-Thursday.

Parent Involvement

The ECDC collaborates with families to provide a high quality program for the children who attend the Center. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's program. The ECDC welcomes parents into the classroom anytime. We ask that you inform the Director and/or the teacher out of respect for their schedules and the children's routines. If you choose to visit the center and you know your child may have trouble separating from you, it would be best to visit at a time that allows the child to leave with you.

Parents are welcome to have lunch with their child. We ask that if you choose to do so, please inform the Director at least 24 hours in advance.