



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program Family Handbook

NAEYC Standard 10.B

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FSU UNIVERSITY HOUSING ● FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program

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Welcome to the FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you and your child to our program. We hope that this first educational experience will be a positive one that will launch your child on a lifetime of learning. Our program is staffed by a great team that is committed to ensuring your child is well cared for and is learning in an environment that is both enriching and stimulating. We are partners with you in the education of your child and look forward to our mutual collaboration and cooperation. This handbook was prepared to help you learn about us and to communicate our policies and procedures that help ensure that our relationship has clear expectations and guidelines. Most of your questions about how we operate are answered in this handbook but if not, please do not hesitate to ask us about anything that concerns you. We know how hard it can be to bring your child to the school for the first time and to leave to go to class or work. We are here not only to help make that transition a smooth one, but to put in place a learning environment that is characterized by enthusiasm, excitement and one that is imbued with a genuine love of learning. We're happy to serve you and your children.

Our Team

The **Associate Director** provides the leadership and coordination for the program, serves as Project Director for grants, and supervises the program's administrative team. The Associate Director is responsible preparing, reviewing and reconciling the program's operating budget (NAEYC 10C.3); generate and manage financial resources to support a program of excellence (NAEYC 10C.4); and for staying informed about changes in local, state, tribal and national government policies related to childcare and family services (NAEYC 8C.2). The Associate Director is an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors.

The **Faculty and Academic Coordinator** oversees the daily academic operations, supervises the teaching staff, plans, implements the curriculum and facilitates communication between families and the program. The Faculty and Academic Coordinator holds a state Childcare Center Director's Credential. The Faculty and Academic Coordinator is part of the program's leadership team and assists the Associate Director with the overall administration and management of the program and assist in the generation and management of financial resources to support a program of excellence (NAEYC 10C.4). The **Faculty and Academic Coordinator** is also responsible for staying informed about changes in local, state, tribal and national government policies related to childcare and family services (NAEYC 8C.2).

The **Assistant Faculty and Academic Coordinator and Early Intervention Specialist** is part of the program's leadership team. This position is responsible for responding to children with exceptionalities including reviewing ADA accommodation and IEP/IDEA requests; coordinating and facilitating child progress staffing reviews and family conferences; providing support services to teachers, children, and families such as implementing IEP/IDEA plans, developing, and reviewing lesson plans, resource brokering for families, direct work with children and conducting assessments; working with and educating families on extending classroom activities and interventions into the home environment. In addition, this position oversees, coordinates and develops the orientation, training, and professional development activities for the program; acts as backup to Faculty and Academic Coordinator for hiring, supervision and guidance of teaching staff and faculty; inspections and liaison to Academic departments and student participates for service learning, practicum, internships observations and research activities.

The **Program Coordinator** is responsible for the overall administration of fiscal activities and various federal, state and local grants. The Program Coordinator assists the Associate Director with overall budget management (preparing, reviewing and reconciling the program's operating budget (NAEYC 10C.3)); generate and manage financial resources to support a program of excellence (NAEYC 10C.4); inventory control; and financial tracking and purchasing. The Program Coordinator is part of the program's leadership team and assists the

Associate Director with the overall administration and management of the program. The program coordinator is also responsible for staying informed about changes in local, state, tribal and national government policies related to childcare and family services (NAEYC 8C.2).

The **Program Associate** maintains the waitlist for the program and enrollment activities and assists the Associate Director with the various aspects of the program. The Program Associate is responsible for preparing all Human Resource and Payroll paperwork and prepares and distributes various types of communications to staff and families.

The program employs both **faculty and student teachers** as part of teaching teams. These teams are assigned to specific classroom and designed to provide consistent and stable day to day care for the children (NAEYC 10B.21). Faculty Pod Leaders oversee and train the student teachers in the center. All faculty are professionally trained and committed to the field of early childhood education and dedicated to the education of young children.

Student teachers comprise a majority of the teaching team and are pursuing degrees in child related fields. These teachers are an important and valued part of our program and are attributed the same responsibilities for teaching and classroom management as faculty. Our program is committed to supporting and providing student teachers with training and hands-on experiences to help them develop professionally.

All teachers undergo background checks and complete all the required training for teachers of young children. All teaching staff undergo continuous training both internal and external, taking advantage of the many free or inexpensive local training workshops and University resources.

Clerks provide reception and administrative support to the program. Clerks are trained to assist in the kitchen and classroom if needed.

Cooks ensure that the program meets the nutritional and health and safety requirements for food service. Cooks ensure that food preparation, service and clean up, follow state, accreditation and federal guidelines.

Volunteers, Interns, Practicum and Observing students that participate in the program are receiving hands-on training. Volunteers, Interns and Practicum students are background screened prior to beginning their participation. **Researchers and observing students** for academic purposes are not background screened. These participants are never left alone with children and only participate under the supervision of teaching staff while at the center (NAEYC 10E.3)

Oversight, Licensing and Accreditation

Board (NAEYC 10B.17)

An advisory board oversees FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program. The Vice President for Student Affairs serves as chairman. The Board is composed of two-family representatives (one student parent/guardian and one faculty/staff parent/guardian), student government representatives, University faculty representatives, community representatives and program staff. The Board is responsible for reviewing and participating in the strategic planning process; assisting the Associate Director in generating and managing financial resources to support a program of excellence (NAEYC 10C.4) setting major policies, hiring selected staff and providing support and guidance to ensure the success of the program. Family representatives are elected annually. The family must be in good standing with the program, have no grievance procedure pending, have no criminal record and be willing to serve for the good of the center. The duties include attending all meetings of the board

and voting. Candidates for election as family representatives are nominated at the first family meeting in the Fall semester. Information about the candidates is published in the monthly newsletter. The election is held on two consecutive days following the announcement in the newsletter. Each family is entitled to one vote. The elected representative serves a one-year term or until leaving the program or resigning. Should their child leave the center during their term they would no longer be eligible to serve on the board.

State Licensing (NAEYC 10B.16)

The program is licensed by the State of Florida through the Department of Children and Families. Annual unannounced inspections of the center are conducted by the Department of Children and Families to ensure all state standards, policies and procedures are met.

NAEYC Accreditation

The program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The program has voluntarily undergone an assessment procedure that gauges how well the program meets NAEYC requirements for a quality early childhood program. The major indicator of quality of early childhood programs is the quality of the interaction between teachers and children. The physical environment, curriculum, health and safety, and administration are other areas assessed, first by staff and then by a NAEYC validator. The validator visits the center for verification/endorsement of the information reported in the self-study. If fully endorsed, the program achieves accreditation status for 5 years. The FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program is guided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct and Commitment Statement can be found online at

http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical_conduct (NAEYC 6B.2)

General Operation Policies and Procedures

ADA Accommodations

Our program provides an inclusive learning environment for all children, regardless of ability, where each child has equal opportunity to meet their developmental and learning goals to reach their fullest potential. Our goal is to provide all who participate in the program with engaging and meaningful opportunities that create a sense of belonging.

A multidisciplinary team will work with families to reasonably adapt our program to address the needs of children or families requesting an accommodation. This consist of modifications to protocols and practices, to include but not limited to:

- toys,
- equipment,
- environments,
- lesson plans and activities,
- administering preventative medical procedures (glucose testing, etc.),
- providing access to the center for evaluations and follow-up conferences, and
- appropriate auxiliary aids and services needed for effective communication with children or adults with disabilities.

There may be situations in which the program is limited in the type of reasonable accommodation that can be provided, such as providing additional staffing, providing additional cost-based services beyond those required, or modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of the program. Upon receipt of a reasonable accommodation request, we will work with the child and their family in an interactive process to determine what is feasible and reasonable on a case-by-case basis.

Accommodation Request Process

1. Submit a request in writing to the Associate Director using the **FSU Childcare – Reasonable Accommodation Request** form.
2. The Associate Director will acknowledge receipt and assign to the Early Intervention Specialist, who will serve as the point-of-contact and will determine what supporting documentation is needed.
3. The Early Intervention Specialist will lead the multidisciplinary team in the review of the request, to include the family where appropriate.
4. Recommendations by the multidisciplinary team will be reviewed by the Executive Director, who will make a final determination. The determination will be provided in writing.

Additional Disability Related Resources for Families:

- Child Care Resources and Referrals (CCR&R)
<https://www.childcareaware.org/resources/ccrr-search-form/>
- Child Find
<http://www.fdlrs.org/departments/child-find>
- Early Learning Coalition of Big Bend
<https://www.elcbigbend.org/Parents/Do-You-Have-A-Concern-About-Your-Child>
- Early Steps
<http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/childrens-health/early-steps/index.html>
- Warm Line Network
<http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/coalitions/coalition-resources/inclusion-warm-line-network>
- Leon County Schools
<https://www.leonschools.net/domain/205>

Absences and Tardies

By enrolling your child in the FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program you are agreeing to pay the monthly tuition fee for as long as your child is enrolled, irrespective of the actual number of hours your child uses the service. **No refunds, prorates or credit is given to accommodate individual family vacations, changes in family schedules, or absences due to illness or injury.**

We request that every family inform the program if their child will be absent for the day and of any known upcoming absences and/or tardies. Due to the high incident of hot car deaths, for any child that has not arrived by their usual time the teacher or administrator will contact the family to inquire of their absence. This is a state regulation.

If your child's participation is, in any part, assisted financially by Federal or State of Florida funds, absences must be documented (excused) in writing and turned in to the program

Should the child not attend for a period exceeding one month without communication, enrollment will be cancelled. Tuition fees are assessed until enrollment is cancelled via the completion of the Withdrawal Notice form.

Anti-Bias Policy

We encourage and support cultural diversity, gender equality, non-violence, and peaceful conflict resolution throughout every aspect of our programs. Our goal is to teach children to resist the bias that inundates much of today's popular culture. We believe that children can be empowered to reject negative stereotypes of race, gender, religion and physical capabilities with the help of their family and teachers. We ask for your support and your feedback to help us ensure that we are living up to our highest standards.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Arrival and departures are an important part of your child's day and building your relationship with your child's teacher. Plan your arrival and departure times to allow adequate time to check in with your child's teacher on your child's day, and to discuss any concerns, and/or progress towards developmental milestones/learning goals. (NAEYC 10D.7)

In order to facilitate the family-teacher interaction, staff, other than the child's teacher, are not allowed to escort children to or from the classroom.

It is important that anyone dropping off or picking up a child at the center adhere to the following procedures as it ensures their health and safety.

1. Each child is to be signed in/out and along with the time of arrival/departure. **This is a state law requirement.**
2. Children are to be accompanied to and from the classroom or playground during drop off and pick up.
3. Children are to walk while in the center for their safety and the safety of others.
4. Keep goodbyes short and sweet, no more than 5 minutes.
5. If you arrive or depart during times when the teacher(s) are engaged with the group or other children and need to speak with the teacher, write a note for them or contact them later in the day when the children are napping.
6. Greeting your child's teacher(s) when you arrive or depart lets them know when your child is present and gives you an opportunity to discuss any changes in eating or sleeping patterns or any other news about the home that might help them understand your child.
7. To support your child's burgeoning sense of daily, predictable, and secure routines and the learning experiences that are planned for your child and the other children, please plan to arrive in time to help your child settle into the classroom before the first activities, i.e., before 9:00 A.M.
8. In the afternoon, plan your day to arrive in time to collect your child's belongings, speak to your child's teacher about your child's day and time to "take leave" before the center closes.
9. Children are not to exit the center without their designated pick-up person.
10. When exiting the center, please hold your child's hand for their safety.

Attendance Policy

It is very important that the families of the children enrolled in the program understand the attendance policies and their responsibilities related to those policies. Failure to adhere to policies could result in unanticipated or extra fees on your behalf. The program must be informed if your child will be out for a period exceeding one month. Should the child not attend for a period exceeding one month without communication with the program, enrollment will be cancelled.

Babysitting

The teachers in our program are professionals or are in training to become professionals. As such, we expect all teachers, observers, interns and other student participants in our program to abide by the Code of Ethical Conduct as set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which reads "We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain or enter into relationship with family members that might impair our effectiveness in working with children".

However, we understand that there are times when families may need care outside of the program's operating

hours. Teachers may not babysit during hours the program is providing care for children. Any requests to babysit during non-operation hours is an agreement between the family and the teacher including expectations, day, hours and rate of pay. As this is a private agreement, the program is not liable for any incident occurring while a teacher is babysitting or for disagreements regarding services and pay.

- FSU Childcare Faculty/USPS/A & P employees are not eligible to baby sit.
- An FSU Childcare/FSU teacher who accepts a baby-sitting job does so as an independent contractor and not as an employee of FSU Childcare/FSU.
- FSU Childcare/FSU cannot be held responsible or be held liable for actions or incidents that occur when an employee is engaged in work outside their employment with FSU Childcare/FSU.

Classroom Placement

Children currently enrolled in the program will receive first priority in moving to an older age group when spaces become available. Age, alone, however does not always determine classroom placement. Transitions typically occur at the beginning of each semester. The developmental level of the child, availability of space, overall group needs, and the assessment of the professional staff determine changes in classroom placement. Each decision is made on a case-by-case basis. Changes in classrooms may be made at other times of the year if professional staff and family feel that the move is in the best interest of the child. Infants and Crawlers remain with the same teaching team from 6 weeks-12 months (NAEYC 10B.23). If at any time you would like to discuss your child's classroom placement, please feel free to contact us.

Clothing

Comfortable, sturdy clothes that are easily taken off are the best choices for participating in the program. Sturdy, close-toed shoes that are easily removed are the best choices for safe play. For safety's sake, children should wear shoes that are closed both on the toe and heel as well as fit snugly without binding the feet. Since children are active learners, "dressy" clothes are likely to get soiled or damaged, so it is best to not wear them to school. Children should always have clothing appropriate for the weather, light clothing in the spring, summer and fall and heavier clothing during the short winter season. All children should have an extra set of seasonal clothing including socks and underwear. All clothing should be marked with your child's name.

Families as Partners

It is only through a strong partnership between families and teachers that we can maintain the quality early learning environment for your child. You are your child's first teacher and know your child best. Family participation is welcome in the classroom. If you are unsure about how you might contribute, talk with your child's teacher or program administrators. They will be more than happy to share ideas and ways to make your contribution.

Families are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher as often as needed to raise any concerns, to contribute to decisions about their child's goals and plans as well as to share any other information that may affect the development or well-being of their child. It is expected that families and teachers will work collaboratively and in a mutually supportive fashion to ensure that the child is able to take full advantage of the services offered.

Family meetings are held once a year at minimum and everyone is encouraged to attend. Meetings are scheduled at convenient times so that as many families as possible can participate.

Occasionally, while volunteering in the classroom, you may have a concern about how something is done or about a particular child's behavior. Rather than intervene yourself, discuss your concern with the teacher or program administrators who will find the most appropriate solution.

Field Trips

The learning environment in our program extends beyond the classroom walls and playground to the special resources in the larger FSU learning community. The field trips are planned in advance and family permission is obtained to allow their child to attend the trip. Families are informed where the children are going, what they will be doing and when they will return through the regular methods of newsletters, take-home folders, and bulletin boards—inside and outside—according to the program’s usual methods of communication. The children are closely supervised at all times. There are always staff members available in the center that know where the children are at all times. Families are always invited to participate in the field trips. When field trips are planned that use a mode of transportation other than walking, permission is always obtained from the family for each individual activity before the children are allowed to participate.

Grievance Procedure (NAEYC 10B.20)

We have a multi-step process to assist in resolving any problem or concern.

1. If the problem is with an individual, talk it through with that person directly as soon as is practical.
2. If the problem is not resolved with the person directly, then discuss it with your child’s teacher, if appropriate.
3. If the problem is not resolved with the child’s teacher, then discuss it with the Faculty Pod Leader, if appropriate.
4. If the problem remains unresolved, talk with the Faculty & Academic Coordinator.
5. If the problem still is unresolved, prepare a written complaint and submit to the Associate Director who will respond within 30 days.

Guests

Children who are not currently enrolled such as siblings or alumni are welcome to visit for short periods of time (defined as no more than 1 hour) in the company of their family.

Holiday and Birthdays

We are very fortunate to have a very diverse group of families who come from many parts of the world to study at FSU and enroll their children in our program. As part of our multicultural and anti-bias curriculum, we like to include holidays celebrated by children of various religious and ethnic groups without overemphasizing any one of them. Occasionally, we make up our own celebrations such as Pajama Day or Silly Day. Since young children can easily be over-stimulated and our program follows developmentally appropriate practice, we keep all our celebrations “low key”. Young children do not always understand holidays the same way adults do, and some can be really scary, such as Halloween.

Our philosophy is to prevent adding additional holiday stress and the over activity that often accompanies parties for young children. We believe that the most important holiday traditions are those that take place within the child’s own family and should be family traditions, not program traditions. One way to ensure this specialness is by keeping the school celebrations calm and more in keeping with a normal schedule. We do strongly encourage families to share their traditions and customs with the classrooms as they enrich the learning environment and build community. If you would like to share your family holiday traditions or holiday customs with family photos, songs or books, talk with your child’s teacher.

We are happy to celebrate birthdays and encourage families who might like to send or bring treats to keep it simple---cookies or cupcakes, **commercially prepared in factory-sealed containers**— for the birthday child to share with classmates. More elaborate parties with gifts, favors etc. are best held at home. As feelings can be easily hurt, we ask that families not distribute invitations, treats or other special recognitions unless there is an

invitation or treat for everyone.

Late Pick Up Policy

Families are expected to pick up their child **before** closing time. A charge will be assessed **beginning the minute the center closes at 5:30 pm**. Charges are assessed when incurred and applied to the family's account. Families are responsible for all late fees for the entire period that staff must stay with the child. The program will be apprised of families who are consistently late and will then contact the family for a conference to work out a solution. If the child has not been picked up one hour after closing and the family or emergency contacts cannot be located, the FSU Police Department will be contacted for their assistance. This action will be taken only as a last resort.

Lost and Found

Any personal belongings that cannot be identified will be placed in a Lost and Found box located in the reception area. If no one claims any of the items at the end of each semester, they will be discarded or donated to local charities.

Open Door Policy and Child Access

The program understands the value of the parent/guardian and child relationship as the family serves as the child's first teacher and the bonds of a child and their family is crucial to healthy development. It is for this reason that our program maintains an open-door policy for all the families of the children served.

Family members have open access to their children who are enrolled in the program at all times. The only exception is if there is legal documentation on file in the program that forbids access. Families of children enrolled in our programs are **not** required to call prior to arriving or entering the center and may visit unannounced at any time during program's operating hours.

Ongoing communication is essential between families and the program to ensure optimal outcomes for children. This communication can take place via face-to-face conversations, e-mails or telephone calls. Other forms of communication and access include but are not limited to family-teacher logs, family conferences, family message boards or program literature. Conferences can be initiated by the family or by staff of the program.

Families are welcome to visit or use the observation windows for short periods of time. It is important to note that children are still able to see through the observation glass. If the visit or observation is stressful to the child, a conference with the family may be needed to discuss the effects of the visit on the child.

Families are welcome to bring their children to attend the program at times that supports the family. However, families must be aware of the impact of missing certain aspects of the programs. For example, if you bring your child in every day at nap time and pick them up in the afternoon, your child may be missing key curriculum experiences. If you bring your child in after breakfast is served, you will need to feed your child breakfast at home etc. It is important to discuss with your child's teacher your preferred pick up and drop off schedules so that you can fully understand the curricular, developmental, and financial impact that accompanies those decisions. While you are welcome to come and go according to your family's convenience, we want you to be informed as much as possible about the impact of those decisions.

We will make every effort possible to ensure the access of the child to their family at the family's convenience. In order to do this, we ask families to adhere to the following:

- Extended family members must be given written permission to have access to the children on the enrollment/admission materials.
- Non-family members must have written permission to have access to remove the child from the program

on the enrollment/admission materials.

- If the presence of the family member creates a stressful environment, a conference will be held to discuss the impact of the visit and to reach a resolution.
- Sensitivity to the developmental needs of the children and the schedules at pick up, drop off and visits.
- Children dropped off after mealtimes are not eligible for that meal service (please ensure that you feed your child prior to entering the program in these cases).
- If a family member, parent or guardian are to be denied access, there must be legal documentation on file in the program that clearly prohibits access. For example, in some divorce proceedings or protective restraining orders prohibit access.

Photos & Picture Taking

Families may not take pictures (still or video) of children in the program without the express permission of each child's family. Photos and video permission extend to any online or remote learning or events provided by the program. In the event that a child's family requests that photos or videos not be taken of their child, under any circumstance, it is expected that the family's request be honored. Failure to honor requests made by the program, program staff or the child's family may result in the termination of the family contract and dismissal from the program.

From time to time we like to publicize the activities of our program on our web site, the program's social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), program displays, program advertising (newspaper, magazines, etc.), brochures, or other University publications. It helps us share with others the excitement and pride we feel in the children's activities and learning. Families are asked to provide consent for their child to be photographed by program staff with digital camera or videotape recording and to use his/her picture in connection in the exhibition and/or publicizing of FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program. Families may opt to have their child's pictures used in the classroom only.

Religious Practice Policy

As a public university, our program does not provide religious instruction or worship. The criteria and standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children are used as guidelines for selection of all educational materials. This includes but is not limited to the selection of children's books, music or other education materials purchased by or for use in program.

Resources for families

Both the program and teachers provide resources to families on supports available in the community that culturally and linguistically appropriate; sharing and promoting events within the community (NAEYC 8A.1; 8A.2; 8B.3). Resources can also be found on the university and program's website.

Special Events & Visitation (NAEYC 7A.6; 7A.7)

A special feature of our program is the diversity of the families who participate. We invite parents or other family members to share traditions, hobbies, songs or other interests with the children in our programs. So that everyone can enjoy the enrichment activities, talk with the lead teacher in your child's classroom to prearrange your visit. The program regularly plans both formal and informal events for children and their families. These events are designed to help families meet each other and to encourage collaboration between teachers, families and program staff. The program strongly encourages staff and families to work together to plan these events. Examples of events are Fall Festival (October), Dr. Seuss Celebration (March), Musical (June/July), Open houses (Fall, Spring, Summer), Preschool Graduation (July/August), Homecoming Parade (November), Family meetings, etc.

Termination, Suspension, Dismissal and Expulsion (NAEYC 1E.1)

Our program is committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment conducive for learning and growth for all our children. We strive to ensure that all of our children are set up for success regardless of their need or developmental level. Every effort will be made to prevent the expulsion of children or dismissal of the family from the program. The goal of the program's suspension and expulsion policy to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion or other exclusionary measures. We will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) and exhaust other possible interventions in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we may have to dismiss a family or expel a child from our program.

Reasons Termination, Suspension, Dismissal and Expulsion may occur

FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons including, but not limited to:

- Challenging behavior or health condition negatively affecting the learning environment.
- The child's need, which we cannot adequately meet with our current staffing patterns
- Require fundamental alteration of the program
- The child's behavior threatens the health and safety of him/herself, the other children or program staff.
- Non-payment or excessive late payment of fees/tuition
- Failure to adhere to the policies and procedures as outlined in the family handbook
- The parent/guardian or any family member exhibits behavior which is detrimental to the health and well-being of the children and staff in the classroom or negatively interferes with the normal functioning of the classroom or program. This includes, but is not limited to, vulgarity, intimidation, harassment or violation of childcare licensing regulations.

Toilet Training

Children are toilet trained when they are ready to use the toilet on their own within their physiological and emotional time and needing little assistance from adults. A child is truly toilet trained when the child can tell you what they need to do, not what they have already done. When children are ready, staff provide the support and nurturance to help them master this important developmental milestone. Please feel free to talk about your child's toileting needs with your child's teacher.

Toys From Home

Except for sharing a special "treasure" at circle time, we ask that children not bring toys from home to the center. The toys are easily lost or broken. Young children, developmentally, have not reached the stage where sharing is comfortable. So that we may teach children to cooperate and interact positively, please leave toys such as guns or knives that tend to promote aggressive behavior at home. Your child's teacher can recommend toys or treasures that would be appropriate for sharing.

Transportation

The program does not provide transportation to and from the center nor are staff members permitted to provide transportation for children to and from the center.

Transitioning new children into the program

Ensuring a smooth transition for your child is just as important to their education as the skills they learn at school. A successful transition starts before the first day of school. Taking time to help your child prepare for school in an intentional and positive way will reduce both the stress and anxiety you and your child feel. It will provide them with confidence in handling new situations and foster a life-long love of learning.

Below are some ideas to help you along the way. The visits should be limited to short ones. If you feel the visits need to be extended, talk with your child's teacher or program administrator to avoid disrupting classroom activities. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact our office (850-644-7970).

- Before the first day of school
 - Tour the center without your child.
 - Observe how the teachers and children interact with each other.
 - Learn the name(s) of your child's teacher(s) and other staff in the center.
 - Take your child for a visit to the center before the first day of attendance.
 - This gives your child the opportunity to explore his/her classroom and meet the other children, teachers and staff.
 - Take your child to play on the center's playground.
 - This is a good way for your child to interact with the teachers and other children in an informal setting while becoming familiar with school.
 - Talk about it.
 - Talking with your child about his/her new school will help prepare them for a new setting.
 - Be positive and talk about all the exciting things your child will be doing at school-meeting new friends, new toys to play with, new books to read, etc.
 - Discuss the classroom schedule and use your child's teacher's name.
 - If your child expresses fear about going to school, listening to your child will help you come up with ways to alleviate their fears.
 - Many times, just talking about it can help. The more your child knows about his/her school the more comfortable he/she will be when the big day comes.
 - Read books with your child about the first day of school.
 - Pretend.
 - Children learn a lot through their imagination and dramatic play.
 - Set up a pretend classroom.
 - Use stuffed animals and toys as playmates.
 - Dress the part.
 - Take turns letting your child be the teacher and you being the child.
 - Pretend play will provide your child with the verbal and social skills that he/she will use at school. This will also allow you and your child to act out and resolve any fears they may have about going to school. In short, you will be providing your child with important coping skills to deal with new situations (problem solving) that they will encounter now and in the future.
 - Take your child to library story times.
 - Story times at local libraries not only get your child interested in reading but gives your child the opportunity to engage in group activities similar to what he/she will experience in their classroom.
 - Arrange or attend play dates with other children and families.
 - If your child has not had a lot of social interaction with other children or in group settings, consider arranging or joining a play group.
 - These opportunities will allow your child to practice interacting in a group and engaging in new ways to play.
 - Play groups will also give you the opportunity to talk with other families about their experiences, make new friends and get support.
 - Change your child's routines slowly.
 - Avoid changing your child's routine or environment drastically.
 - When your child is starting school for the first-time big changes can create anxiety.

- If your child sleeps in a crib or toddler bed, wait until they are settled at school before switching to a bigger bed.
 - Gradual changes to your child's routine to get them for their new schedule can be beneficial especially if they are used to staying up late or sleeping in.
 - Slowly moving your child's bath, bed and wake up routine to an earlier time will ensure that over a few days or weeks your child will be adjusted to the routine and ready for the first day of school. It will also help you adjust your routine and avoid a mad dash in the mornings.
- The first day of school
 - Make sure that your child has had a good night's sleep and that you give yourself plenty of time in the morning. Rushing your child and your self will only heighten the stress you and your child feel.
 - Feed your child a light breakfast, even if your child will be eating breakfast at school. A well-rested and nourished child will help prevent morning meltdowns.
 - Separation anxiety is a normal part of a child's development. Some tears and/or tantrums can be expected. This typically lasts for only a few minutes before children settle into their new classroom, friends and activities.
 - Start by controlling your own anxiety about the separation. Controlling your own fears and sadness will have a tremendous effect on your child's ability to say goodbye.
 - Remain calm and positive. You want your child to feel that they are safe at their school and that you feel that same way.
 - Remind yourself that you have made the right decision in your school choice.
 - Keep goodbyes short and sweet.
 - Prolonging a goodbye sends the message that you are not confident in your child's new school. This does not mean you should "drop and dash" or sneak out. This can damage your child's trust in you and lead your child to feel that you will sneak away again, causing him/her to be extra clingy at school drop off and other places.
 - Keep a smile on your face and a positive attitude.
 - Reassure your child that you will return at the end of the day.
 - Follow the teacher's lead.
 - Once you have said goodbye, leave.
 - Avoid the temptation to linger or return to the classroom. This will only prolong your child's adjustment period.
 - Parents/guardians are always welcome to call to see how their child is doing at any point in the day, as well as, to use the observation windows.
 - Your child's teacher will contact you if he/she feels that your child is not transitioning well.
 - Picking up your child on time or even early will reinforce that you will return.
 - Always show your child you are excited to see him/her again.
 - Tell your child that you missed him/her, and you can't wait to hear about their day.
 - Ask about their friends and what they did that day.
 - Arriving early will give you the opportunity to let your child show you their classroom and introduce you to their new friends. It will also give you more time to talk with your child's teacher.

- Ups and downs
 - Each child adjusts to a new setting in different ways and at a different pace. However, being consistent is an important part of this adjustment period.
 - During this time keep your child's routine simple and consistent.
 - Spend extra alone time with your child during this time to reconnect and talk about their day and feelings.
 - Be sure to read the menus, lessons and activities each day. This provides you with the opportunity to talk with your child about what they did and prepare them for the next day.
 - Resist the urge to remove your child from school because of drop off tears or if you feel their adjustment is taking too long.
 - Keep an open line of communication with your child's teacher. Teachers have experienced these transitions numerous times and can be a valuable resource for you and your child.
 - Remember that there will be good days and days that are a bit rougher during this time and that Mondays or days following a break may seem like a setback.
 - It is important not to over-react. Throughout their lives your child will be faced with challenges like these and need to learn how to adjust to different environments and situations. Your job is to help them through it in a positive way.

University Holidays and Closings

The program is open when FSU classes are in session (i.e., we operate on the academic calendar. The center observes and is closed on legal holidays (Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, Christmas and New Year's Day). To learn the specific dates these holidays and breaks occur you can visit the registrar's web site at <http://registrar.fsu.edu/>

In general, the center is closed during Fall, Spring, and Summer breaks. There are times during May, August and December breaks that extended care is offered at an additional cost and require pre-registration. Although professional staff are in the center during semester breaks, the center is not open to care for children. The program uses semester breaks for training, planning and deep cleaning that is not able to be done while children are attending the center.

Withdrawal Procedures

A thirty-day written notice must be given to avoid incurring tuition fees past the date you plan to withdraw your child. The notice is to be submitted online at <http://childcare.fsu.edu/For-Parents>. Submitting the online form is considered signed. Other notifications such as verbal communication with a staff member or emails to staff members will not be considered valid notices.

Once a withdrawal form has been submitted, changes to an earlier date will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may affect tuition charges. **Failure to give the required 30-day notice will result in monetary charges for a full month's tuition irrespective of whether the child attends or not.** This allows the program and families adequate time to prepare for the child's departure from the program and new families adequate time to enroll.

Communication between the Program and Families

Good communication between families and the program is essential to maintain the vitality and the level of service that it is our intention to offer. There are many avenues for maintaining this connection:

1. One-on-one conversations with teachers/administrators at daily arrivals and departures.
2. Telephone conversations with teachers/administrators at mutually convenient times.

3. Conference appointments at mutually convenient times with teachers/administrators to ensure plenty of time to talk over matters of interest or concern.
4. E-mail conversations when time constraints limit direct conversations.
5. Written notes/letters

Bulletin Boards

The center's reception area has a bulletin board where menus are posted, parenting tips are displayed or other items of interest. The classroom bulletin boards are also a place to find information about what is going on in your child's class as well as where children's artwork is displayed. Check them frequently to stay in tune with the happenings in the program.

Communicating with Teachers

The best times to communicate with your child's teacher is during drop off and pick up. Each classroom is equipped with a telephone. Families are encouraged to call their child's classroom anytime to check in on how their child is doing or to relay a message to the teacher. Calls during naptime are discouraged as it disrupts children who are resting. There may be times that the teacher is unable to answer your call as they are engaged with the children, on the playground, or generally busy. Families may also email their child's teacher. Teacher's do not have immediate access to their emails while working but will respond once they are able to check their emails. If your message is urgent, please contact the front desk, our staff will be happy to pass on a message or get the information for you and return your call.

Official Notices

Changes in policies and procedures and official notices are communicated via email. **Each family is responsible for its contents as well as for notifying the program if the information is not received or the e-mail address is incorrect.**

Surveys to Assess Programs

Formal assessments are done each year, typically the first week in April. All families receive a program assessment survey via e-mail. This is one way you tell us how we are doing. We invite your candid feedback and use it to help us get better at what we do. Each family receives an exit survey when their participation comes to a close. This survey is accessible after the withdrawal notice is submitted. Both surveys ask similar questions, one gives us data on a specific date every year and the other gives us feedback all year long. We welcome your feedback at any time.

Take Home Folders/Cubbies

Each classroom has a designated place for families to check every day for any communications about the day's activities. A good time to check this "special communication place" is when you are picking up your child at the end of the day. This way you will not miss any important communication.

Website

Our website contains a wealth of information about the program, including contact information, program specific forms, monthly tuition rates and fees, eligibility, monthly menus, FAQs, Important program dates as well as a list of resources for families.

Curriculum

Essential Characteristics

Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

Our program follows research-based best practices/ developmentally appropriate practices that provide the foundation for NAEYC standards for accreditation. For young children research tells us that they learn best by

“doing” or through play. Play is their “textbook”.

Our teachers create intentional, planned, play-based environments that facilitate all areas of development while at the same time allowing enough flexibility to respond to each child’s individual needs. Teachers change classroom materials and equipment to accommodate the individual needs of the child. (NAEYC 2A.3). Our teachers provide a wide variety of “hands on” experiences that encourage children to be active learners, to lead, to follow, to solve their conflicts, to listen, to appreciate differences, to count, to reason, to create, and to use their muscles. Essential to the uniqueness and diversity of our program, teachers use the curriculum, including lesson plans, teaching methods and activities, that are reflective of, adapted/modified to include the family’s knowledge of their children, represent the values, beliefs, languages and experiences of the children and families that participate in the program. (NAEYC 2A.6; 2A.7; 7A.3; 7A.4;7A.5)

Our teachers teach by close observation and attunement to each child’s unique talents and abilities such that the planning for optimal learning opportunities is maximized for each child. Emphasis is placed on the process (the doing) rather than the product. The purpose is to help each child reach their highest potential intellectually, socially, physically and emotionally as well as nurture a genuine life-long love of learning.

Teachers and administrators strive to create a learning environment that is safe, predictable, and supportive where the limits and expectations are clear and consistent. Understanding that children learn from the adults in their environment, teachers and administrators model the behavior we teach, that is, we respond respectfully and kindly through words that express our thoughts, feelings and needs. We model cooperation and compassion while at the same time holding the expectations high knowing that children will work toward those expectations.

Curriculum and assessments go hand in hand. Teachers set curriculum goals and objectives that can be used in the ongoing assessment of each child’s progress. Assessments are used in developing curriculum goals and objectives that encourage the continued learning and development of the whole child. (NAEYC 2A.8)

Each day is filled with opportunities for both active involvement and quiet reflection. Children are encouraged to make choices throughout the day’s activities. Among the many choices are science exploration, math games, manipulatives (i.e., blocks, Legos, puzzles), art, language —expressive and receptive— cooking, and reading. When the children gather together as a group in circle time, they may sing songs, dance, discuss the weather, discuss letters in the alphabet etc. You will see the children on the playground encouraged to engage actively in the outdoor classroom with sand, with ride-on toys or on the slide. These various learning activities foster, encourage and support key content areas such as literacy skills, mathematics, science, the arts, health etc. For infants and toddlers, the materials and equipment are used to encourage and maximize exploration, sensory learning, motor learning, experimentation and discovery.

Though teachers plan the day, week, or month’s theme with specific learning goals in mind and use Creative Curriculum as a base structure, they are encouraged to be flexible in order to capitalize on serendipitous events that provide opportunities to maximize each child’s learning. An example might be a particularly delightful spring day that calls everyone to be out of doors, attuned to the re-awakening of flowers, trees, or butterflies. Teachers are also encouraged to supplement their planning with other high-quality curriculums.

Our curriculum is designed to include components of educating families, and where appropriate children, on eco-healthy practices such as recycling, washing fruits and vegetables before eating, using non-toxic toys and art supplies, monitoring outdoor air quality, and using least toxic and fragrance-free cleaning products. (NAEYC 2L.11)

Character Education Curriculum

As it is our goal to facilitate children's development in all areas, we include a character education component in our curriculum. The overall goal of this component of our curriculum is to provide instruction and promote the development of common/universal socially acceptable character traits as well as to build classroom community. The traits we emphasize are love, empathy, gentleness, respect, visualization/relaxation, self-control, friendship, conflict resolution, kindness, responsibility, cooperation, diversity awareness including acceptance, appreciation, celebration, and compassion. These traits are whole units from the Kindness Curriculum: *Introducing Young Children to Loving Values* by Judith Anne Rice which is the curriculum selection chosen from the state-mandated pre-approved list. The major goals are to facilitate independence, promote the identification of feelings/emotions, appropriate ways of expression of feelings/emotions, promote empathy, cooperation, caring and peace, self-control, bonding, attachment and friendship. In addition to the Kindness Curriculum, we integrate and supplement with *Rebound and Recovery*, *The Peaceful Classroom*, *Skill Streaming for Early Childhood*, *I Love You Rituals*, *Can Do Kids*, and *The Cooperation Booklet*.

The character education component is not a religious or faith-based program but rather a non-biased and integrated way to help children think about and practice common courtesies and social skills. It is important to note that no religious or faith concepts may be taught by state-funded programs.

In our program, attention is focused on specific character traits and social skills that are integrated/embedded throughout the themes, daily activities and children's play in the overall curriculum. In other words, there is not a "Character Education Time", as such, but rather the concepts are introduced and reinforced in developmentally appropriate ways through hands on, active and meaningful ways that young children understand and relate to as they participate in circle time in outside play, through daily routines and conversations. Teachable moments are not always predictable, so teachers are encouraged to seize any opportunities in the course of a day to emphasize or teach a character trait or a social skill.

Schedules

The daily schedule consists of large and small group activities structured group activities, outside play, multiple learning centers, family style meals and snacks, and time for rest. Each day provides enriching opportunities, in and out of the classroom, for social, cognitive, physical and emotional development in a safe, nurturing and supportive environment. Children have opportunities to talk with and listen to adults, talk and listen to other children, to hear stories, to listen to music, to exercise, to cook, to do art activities, and to sing. Special projects are planned such cooking projects, special guests etc. The primary goal of the program is to help each child feel secure, to become "school-ready" to help them learn how to get along in a group and participate in the classroom community, while embracing and celebrating their unique individuality and to develop their unique talents and abilities.

Typical Daily Schedules

- Greeting/Arrival: Families escort their child to their classroom and to their teacher.
- Small Group Activities/Choice Time: After arrival, children choose from a variety of centers and play areas in their classroom.
- Large Group Time: Children meet with their teachers who have planned a variety of activities such as music, movement, weather and other skill building activities to focus on the specific developmental needs of the group. Outdoor Activities: Twice each day children go outside except in extreme weather conditions. The children choose from a variety of activities including climbing, outdoor dramatic play, riding toys, sliding and other large motor games.
- Departures: families pick up their children from their classrooms and talk with their teachers about the day's activities.

Curriculum, Community & Special Guests

Teaching staff maintain a working knowledge of local community and resources and incorporate these organizations into their curriculum and learning experiences for the children. Special guests are invited into the classroom to share their specialized knowledge, skills and talents in order to enhance the learning experience. The program values community participation in the education of the children. Throughout the year the program partners with various groups, close neighbors and community organizations to co-sponsor and participate in cultural events that enrich the experience of child and families enrolled in the program, and interests and needs in the community. (NAEYC 8B.1; 8B.2; 8B.4, 8B.5, 8B.6)

Food and Nutrition

Our program is committed to the nutritional health of all children enrolled in the center. This includes supporting children with medical dietary restrictions (allergies, etc.) as well as respecting the religious (halal, kosher, etc.) and cultural (vegetarian, pork and beef restrictions, etc.) dietary practices of the family.

While we try to be sensitive to our families' dietary practices in our meal service, it is not always possible to meet all needs. Licensing, accreditation and federal food program requirements place restrictions and standards on our program that must be followed. In order to meet our families' needs and the various requirements by state, federal and accrediting entities, the program adheres to the following meal and food guidelines. Tuition includes food provided by the program (breakfast, lunch and snacks, formula, baby food) each day. The program does not provide an alternate menu. Tuition is not adjusted to accommodate special food requests or restrictions. Any substitutions to the program's menu must be provided by the family as an equivalent alternate.

Food from Home

Food brought from home for sharing among the children **must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.**

Due to licensing and USDA requirements foods and milk sent from home may not be stored in the USDA refrigerators and cannot be reheated. The program does not have additional cold storage for foods or microwaves for heating food. Meals and foods sent from home will be stored in the child's cubby until the scheduled mealtime.

Meals provided from home for all ages must adhere to the following guidelines.

- Meet the USDA guidelines for nutritionally sound and well-balanced meals. (See chart below)
- Match the food/meal, as closely as possible, on the daily menu. In order to prevent distraction during meals times, it is in the child's best interest for families to send food and meals that match what is being served by the program.
- Be provided consistently every day
- Fresh fruit must be peeled, seeds removed and cut to appropriate size.
- Be sent in an insulated food/lunch box, labeled with the child's full name.
- Be separated and labeled into breakfast, lunch and snack for easy identification by staff. Each meal should be labeled with child's full name, meal name, and date
- Be kept at the appropriate hot and cold temperatures until served.
 - Cold foods must be kept and maintained at a temperature of 41 degrees (F). Cold foods should be sent with a cold pack or in a cold food thermos.
 - Hot foods are to be thoroughly cooked and maintain a temperature of 135 degrees (F). Hot foods should be sent in a hot food thermos.

- Cut to age-appropriate size to prevent choking hazard. If a food item is considered unsafe, it will be sent home. The child will be served the missing component/equivalent from our menu.
 - Infants starting baby food= pureed
 - 1 to 2 years old= ¼ inch
 - 2 to 3 years old= ½ inch
 - 3-4 years old=manageable size
- Plastic or polystyrene (Styrofoam) containers, plates, bags, cups or wraps are not to be used in the microwave for any reason when preparing or heating foods. (NAEYC 5A.9)
- Staff must discard any foods that have an expired date. (NAEYC 5B.4)

In the event that a component or complete meal is not sent from home, the program reserves the right to serve the component/equivalent or meal from our menu, with the exception of documented medical and allergy restrictions.

Leftover food/milk

Leftover food/milk will be sent home to give families an idea of the amount/type of food the child has eaten during the day. For your child's safety, it is recommended that you do not allow your child to eat any leftover food that is sent home unless it is prepackaged and does not require refrigeration or heating.

Food-Related Activities & Special Occasion Food Consumption

The program provides food-related activities such as curriculum related cooking activities, gardening, center-wide and classroom celebrations. Families are asked to provide permission for their child to participate in food related activities and special occasions wherein food is consumed. This permission includes advising the program of food allergies, dietary restrictions and items that the child may not eat or handle.

Food restrictions

- Medical (Allergies, etc.)
 - Occasionally, if a child has a very limited range of tolerated foods, special arrangements may be made for meals to be provided from home. The program must have a physician's note on file in order to accommodate any special arrangements.
 - Allergy Information & Consent to Post
 - In compliance with health & safety regulations, families are required to notify the program of their child's allergies and food preferences. This information must be in writing, as well as a consent to post the information for all staff to see it in an effort to protect the child's health and culture. If the request is for medical reasons, the program is required to have medical documentation in the child's file.
- Religious and cultural food practices
 - Please advise the center of any non-food allergies and/or cultural food practices you want your child to follow in school (such as no pork).
 - Kosher/Halal

The program does not serve pork or pork products. When possible, the program tries to purchase foods that are kosher/halal. In cases where we cannot meet strict kosher/halal requirements, the family must send an alternate/equivalent that can be served to the child at the meal.
 - Vegetarian/Vegan/Pescatarian, etc.

Children with these restrictions will not be served meat or meat products, however the family must send an approved protein alternate/equivalent that can be served to the child at the meal.

- Nuts/Nut butters
The program does not serve nuts or nut butters. The program is not designated as a nut free facility as we cannot guarantee that all foods used and prepared for meals are nut free. Families are asked to not send nuts or nut products to the center.
- Choking Risk
Due to the high risk of choking, the following foods are not served and may not be sent from home.
 - Whole Grapes
 - Popcorn
 - Hot dogs
 - Whole Blueberries
- Special Needs
 - For all infants as well as for children with disabilities who have special feeding needs, staff keep a daily log documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes and provides that information to the family. (NAEYC 5B.5)
 - For children with special health care needs, food allergies or other special nutritional needs, the child's health care provider must provide the center with a written individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with the family and any other specialists involved in the child's health care.
 - For children with food allergies, posting the information about the allergy in public areas must have the written consent of the family.
- Sweets
As the program promotes healthy eating practices, the following foods are not served and may not be sent from home.
 - Chips (including veggie straws, veggie chips)
 - Sweetened cereal
 - Snack bars, cereal bars
 - Gummy snacks
 - Jell-O
 - Sweet desserts (candies, cakes, cookies, etc.)
 - Juices, soda, carbonated beverages

Breastfeeding and Breast Milk

For mothers who are breastfeeding, a private space is provided in the Center. For mothers who bring expressed milk, the milk must be in a ready-to-feed sanitary container labeled with the infant's name and date milk was expressed. (NAEYC 5B.6). Expressed milk is stored in the refrigerator and used within 48 hours or 24 hours if previously frozen. Expressed milk is gently mixed (not shaken) before feeding. Any formula or human milk not consumed or refrigerated within one hour must be discarded. (NAEYC 5B.7)

Meals and menus

Breakfast and snack are prepared in the center daily. Lunch is catered and delivered to the center daily. Breakfast and snack are reviewed by our nutrition staff and lunch has been reviewed by a dietician to meet the program's USDA CCFP nutritional requirements. The center's cooks portion out the catered food for each classroom. Fresh Fruits and vegetables delivered or served by the program are washed prior to cutting, serving, and eating. (NAEYC 5B.8)

Menus are posted on the bulletin board in the reception area and online. Individual copies of the menus are available for families at the front desk. While the program provides healthy, nutritious and balanced meals that include whole grains, limited sugars, fresh fruits and fresh vegetables, gluten-free or organic foods are not provided.

USDA Child Care Food Program (NAEYC 10D.3)

The center participates in the federal Child Care Food Program (CCFP). Participation ensures that the meals provided meet or exceed the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards for good nutrition in children. The menus follow the United States Department of Agriculture guidelines for well-balanced and nutritious meals. Participation in this program allows the program to receive reimbursements for a portion of the cost of food. The food application, filled out during the enrollment process, helps determine how much the program is reimbursed.

USDA Meal Patterns

These are the minimum USDA serving size recommendations for Preschool children.

Component	Breakfast		Lunch		Snack	
	1-2 yrs	3-5 yrs	1-2 yrs	3-5 yrs	1-2 yrs	3-5 yrs
Milk	½ cup (4 oz.) Whole milk	¾ cup (6 oz.) Fat-free (skim)	½ cup (4 oz.) Whole milk	¾ cup (6 oz.) Fat-free (skim)	Water is served	
Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Vegetables	¼ cup	½ cup	¼ cup Optional: a second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch	½ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Grains	½ oz. equivalent		½ oz. equivalent		½ oz. equivalent	
Proteins	½ oz. equivalent		1 oz. equivalent	1 ½ oz. equivalent		

Reference: F.A.C. 65C-22.005(1)(c); NAEYC Standard 5.B.02; <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-day-care-centers>

FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program as Teaching and Research site

As part of our mission to support the academic and professional success of student, faculty and staff at the university, our program provides opportunities to extend the academic classroom. We offer student participants (volunteers, interns, practicum and observing students at the university), through close supervision, a hands-on experience in actual classroom settings. Our program also participates in extensions of current knowledge about early childhood education through collaboration and cooperation with various FSU academic departments and their various research projects. Research completed in the program requires researchers to provide IRB permission and participating family consent forms.

Guiding Children's Behavior

Biting

Especially in young children, biting is common. Though our teachers use best practices to prevent biting, children occasionally do bite each other. When it happens, the area where the child was bitten is immediately washed with antiseptic soap and water. Both children, the child who was bitten and the child who did the biting are then given care. An accident/incident form is filled out and the family of the child who was bitten is given a copy. The name of the child who did the biting will be given only to the family of that child so that they can work with the staff to eliminate the behavior. An accident/incident form is completed and given to the family of the child who did the biting. The teacher will work with the family to help them form a plan to reduce any future re-occurrences. If intervention by the teachers in cooperation with the family does not bring resolution and the problem continues, the administrators will be asked to help plan additional interventions. Only after all options have been exhausted will a child who bites be asked to withdraw from participation.

Challenging Behavior & Behavior Management (NAEYC 1E.1; 3B.2)

Occasionally there will be a child whose behavior is excessively disruptive to the classroom environment or who is harmful to themselves or others. If a child becomes a threat to his/her own safety, other children's safety or staff safety, a teacher will gently hold the child until the child is able to gain control and feel safe and calm again. If a child has frequent episodes in which he or she is a threat to others' safety a conference with the family will be held to work together to plan an intervention that will prevent/eliminate the negative behavior. If the behavior persists and the program is unable to meet the child's needs, the program will follow its termination, Suspension, dismissal policy and procedure. A request for withdrawal/dismissal will be the last option after all other options have been exhausted.

Our program adheres to the philosophy of Conscious Discipline as described by Dr. Becky Bailey. It is a comprehensive classroom management program with a social-emotional curriculum that guides teachers in understanding the significance of relationships and how to enhance them to promote a healthy and positive learning environment. The "Safe Place" is integral to this philosophy.

Several aspects of our program serve to support positive behavior management including the structure and arrangements of classrooms, daily schedules, routines and other planned learning activities. All staff members are expected to support, guide, and nurture children at all times as they learn to use language to communicate their needs, gain control of their bodies, persisting when frustrated, play cooperatively with peers and learn to take turns. Teachers who are experienced perceive the possibility of potential problems before they happen and often redirect the child before their behavior becomes unacceptable.

1. Prevention

- a. Develop a working knowledge of children's developmental level and communication skills
- b. Provide close supervision and observation in order to prevent the challenging behavior before it occurs.
- c. Provide limits in a calm, respectful and consistent manner which permits the child to grow in self-control and self-esteem.
- d. Assist children in learning to identify and label their emotions as well as how to express those emotions in a healthy and positive way.
- e. Respond to a child's challenging behavior in a manner that preserves the safety of the child and other children in the classroom
- f. Assist children in developing skills to enable them to resolve conflict in a safe and effective manner.
- g. Assist children in developing decision-making skills.
- h. Assist children in learning how to describe problems, assess their own actions, verbalize alternative actions and consider the perspective of others. Children are guided and supported as they learn to accept the natural consequences of their actions.
- i. Provide a Safe Place in the classroom. The Safe Place is always available for children to choose to gain control. The Safe Place is completely voluntary and is not to be used as a "time out" space. At the same time staff shall observe all children and document any atypical behavior to detect any patterns in the sequence of events, activities and interactions or other contextual factors.

2. Intervention

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.

- a. Assess the function of the behavior(s)
- b. Screenings- Complete appropriate screenings and assessments

- c. Documentation- If at any time the child's behavior results in an injury to another child or staff member, the child's family will be notified, and written documentation of the incident will be provided to the family and placed in the child's file.
- d. Conferences- The teacher and/or the Early Intervention Specialist will schedule a conference with the family to discuss screening results, observations and interventions used in the classroom and to seek strategies, with the family's assistance, that can be used at home and school to prevent future behaviors
- e. Referral to Program's Child Support Team
After multiple or extreme instances of intentionally harmful or aggressive behaviors (to self or others) or biting incidences, a referral will be made to the program's Child Support Team.
 - i. A conference will be scheduled to include the appropriate members of the Child Support Team, family members, teachers, and administration
 - ii. A behavior action plan will be developed and/or further evaluation from medical professionals will be referred.
 - 1. The behavior action plan will be followed for 2-3 weeks. Teachers and the Early Intervention Specialist will track and keep record of behaviors.
 - 2. A follow-up meeting to discuss progress will be scheduled after 2-3 weeks of developing the plan.
 - iii. If a referral for outside consultation/evaluation is determined/required:
 - 1. An appointment must be scheduled within one week of the family/teacher/Early Intervention Specialist conference.
 - 2. The appointment date will be communicated with the Early Intervention Specialist for the program.
 - 3. If the outside evaluation indicates a need for accommodations for special needs, the program will utilize the Special Needs Procedures outlined in this handbook
 - 4. If an appointment fails to be scheduled, the program reserves the right to dismiss the family from the program.

3. Termination, Suspension, Dismissal and Expulsion

If the above steps fail to resolve the problem, the program will move to its Termination, Suspension, Dismissal and Expulsion policy outlined in this handbook. If it is determined that alternate placement for their child is recommended, the program will provide a 30-day notice to the family, except where such notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns and assist the family with resources to assist in this process.

Guidance & Discipline Policy (NAEYC 1B.8; 1B.9; 1B.10, 10B.18)

Also see Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedure

The essence of parenting and teaching is to nurture and guide children at each stage of their development such that they reach their individual highest potential or growth in all areas— social, intellectual, physical, emotional—and that they become fully-functioning citizens of the world.

Like adults, children make mistakes. It is through their mistakes that they learn and how we help them learn. Simply, our policy is one that seeks to promote positive behavior using methods appropriate to the age of the child. Redirection, modeling and guidance form the core of the discipline policy, not punishment. For the youngest children who are not yet using language, redirection is the most often used method. As soon as children are able to use language, they are taught to identify their feelings and use language or words to solve conflict or problems. Children then will learn how to control their own behavior and solve their own problems.

Under any circumstances it is never permissible for staff to use physical punishment, psychological abuse or

coercion when disciplining a child. Appropriate use of restraint is permissible for safety reasons.

1. No harsh or physical punishments are used in the center.
2. None of the following may be used in the center
 - a. Physical punishments such as shaking, hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, or pulling of hair, arms or ears; or requiring a child to remain inactive for a long period of time.
 - b. Psychological abuse such as shaming, name calling, ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, cursing at, making threats, frightening a child, ostracism, or withholding affection.
 - c. Coercion such as shoving, pulling, pushing, grasping any body part; forcing a child to sit down, lie down or stay down (except when restraint is necessary to protect the child or others from harm); physically forcing a child to perform an action (such as eating or cleaning up).
3. Food may not be withheld as punishment nor are children punished for accidents related to toileting.
4. Families may not administer physical, psychological or coercive punishment in the center nor on center grounds.
5. Children are encouraged to take naps in only non-punitive and positive ways.

Guidance/Discipline for Infants and Toddlers

The teaching staff engage infants in frequent face-to-face social interaction such as talking, cooing, repeating the sounds the infants make, singing as well as smiling, holding, touching etc. Teachers give infants one-to-one attention when carrying out various routines such as diapering. Teachers also adjust their interactions to the child's level of arousal and immediately respond to any signs of distress such as crying by providing physical comfort and attend to any other needs for care. Teaching staff talk often with children and listen to them with their full attention and respect.

Guidance/Discipline for Toddlers and Pre-School children

Our guidance policy begins with **prevention**. Teachers carefully arrange the physical aspects of the classrooms such that the spatial arrangement, itself, helps children interact appropriately. For example, large open spaces are generally avoided to help children save their large muscle activity, such as running, for the playground. Teachers are careful and attentive observers of the children in their classroom such that they are finely attuned to each child's uniqueness. They are thus prepared to help redirect or divert as dictated by the child's personality, temperament and needs. These are the preventive measures. Then, should inappropriate behaviors manifest themselves, the teachers will first observe whatever is happening. Sometimes, just the act of **close, attentive, quiet observation** is enough to help children gain control. Next in the sequence of assisting children to maintain appropriate behavior is helping children use their language to describe the event such that other options become possible. The third step in the sequence is a more **extended use of language** in a conversation that presents other options. The fourth step again uses **language but is an intervention by the teacher** such as "We walk inside" or "Blocks are for building". The last step, if the event warrants, is **gently holding the child until self-control is attained and a feeling of safety and calm returns**. Physical restraint will not be used unless it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or others. The family will be contacted to pick up the child if all else fails.

Family Concerns About Other Children's Behavior

If you have a concern about a child other than your own, discuss your concern (s) with the child's lead teacher, faculty pod leader or administrators of the program in a private setting.

Supervision Policy

The program adheres to the NAEYC standard for teacher-child ratio that are applicable both indoors and outdoors. For infants up to 12 months, the ratio is 1 teacher to 4 children. For children 12 months to 30 months, the ratio is one teacher to four children. For children 30 months to 60 months the ratio is 1 teacher to 9

children.

Teaching staff supervise by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible. Classroom (indoor) space and the outdoor classroom are designed so that there are no areas where children can hide or be out of sight. Although the classrooms and program are equipped with video cameras, this does not replace the direct supervision of children by sight and sound required at all times for sleeping infants, toddlers and two-year-olds. (NAEYC 3C.10). Infants, toddlers/twos are supervised by sight and sound at all times. Teachers are to be positioned so they can hear and see any sleeping children for whom they are responsible, including when they are engaged with children who are awake. (NAEYC 3C.9; 3C.11). For preschoolers and older children, the teachers supervise primarily by sight and may supervise by sound for short intervals as long as the teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight. (NAEYC 3C.12)

All teaching staff are expected to employ developmentally appropriate guidance and supervision skills. These guidance and supervision skills include awareness, positioning, scanning, redirection, and close supervision.

- **Awareness** requires a knowledge of children, including knowing each child's range of skills, interests, and ability to interact with others and development stage. Knowledge of children helps teachers to monitor and enhance skills that promote children's positive behavior.
- **Positioning** requires being able to see all of the children. Staff position themselves to be aware of the entire classroom and to see as many children as possible. All children are monitored by sight and sound at all times. Rule of thumb, teachers move every five minutes.
- **Scanning** involves regularly glancing around the classroom and playground to see children's involvement and what is happening.
- **Redirection** is a skill used as an aid in preventing undesirable and unsafe behavior. Children are redirected to other areas/activities when undesirable behavior is imminent or occurs. This skill helps ensure the safety of all children.
- **Close Supervision** is required for all children in areas that are near where injury may occur, requires the use of all of the above methods as well being in close proximity to the children. This is especially needed when children are waiting to be picked up due to illness or injury and need to be kept safe and comfortable.

Adapted from "Supervision Skills and Method's, TMCC E.L. Cord Child Care Center, Reno, July 2007

Documenting and monitoring supervision (NAEYC 3C.13)

The program uses several monitoring and documenting practices to ensure the safe supervision of the children.

- Attendance sheets-Children are marked as present when they arrive to the classroom. The attendance sheets are used when conducting regular classroom and playground counts, including when going to or returning from the playroom/playground.
- Meal count sheets-Meal count sheets are completed daily for each meal. These sheets serve as another regular count for monitoring and supervising children throughout the day.
- Regular classroom and playground counts to occur throughout the day.

Health and Safety

The program adheres to the University's determination of campus closings. Access the official FSU Web site <http://alerts.fsu.edu/> or call 644- 4636 for information about closing.

Abuse

Protecting the health and safety of the children in our care is our number one priority. Everyone who cares for children must, by law, report any suspected child abuse.

Florida State University is committed to protecting the well-being of all members of the campus community. Therefore, the University would like to alert you to recent developments in Florida law that impact all of us. On October 1, 2012, Florida's new Protection of Vulnerable Persons Act went into effect. Florida now has the toughest laws in the nation regarding mandatory child abuse reporting obligations.

Under the law, every individual in the state is required to immediately report known or suspected child abuse and child sexual abuse to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services' Abuse Hotline, with the definition of "child" including any person under the age of eighteen. This includes reporting suspected abuse committed by adults who are not the child's legal guardian and by juvenile sexual offenders.

<http://compliance.hr.fsu.edu/index.cfm?page=VulnerablePersonsAct> (NAEYC 6A.10)

Any staff member, that in good faith, reports suspicion of abuse or neglect is immune to reform discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action unless it is proven that the report is/was intended to do harm (NAEYC 10D.5)

Any staff that are found to physically, emotionally, sexually abuse or neglect of any child at any place at any time are subject to immediate dismissal (NAEYC 6A.10)

Allergy Information & Consent to Post

In compliance with health & safety regulations, families are required to notify the program of their child's allergies and food preferences. This information must be in writing, as well as your consent to post the information for all staff to see it in an effort to protect your child's health and culture. If the request is for medical reasons, the program is required to have medical documentation in your child's file. Please advise the program of any food allergies, non-food allergies, and cultural food practices you want your child to follow in school (such as no pork).

Assumption of Risk and Indemnification

The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) acknowledges that he/she is aware of the activities associated at the Center. The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) represents that their child has no physical condition that would prevent him/her from safely participating in these activities.

The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) acknowledges that he/she is aware that the Center does not administer medicines to the children unless there is an authorized medication administration form on file with the center.

The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) acknowledges that he/she is aware that activities at the Center can pose risks and hazards, including the risk of choking, broken limbs, bruising, severe physical injury, other physical hazards, and death, and that there may be risks and hazards that are unknown to Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or child.

The Parent(s)/Guardian(s), for his or herself, for their child, their child's heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, hereby release, waive, relinquish and forever discharge and hold harmless FSU and their respective officers, employees and agents, from any and all claims, demands, damages, actions and causes of action which the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), their child, their child's heirs, executors, and administrators have or may ever have arising out of, by reason of, or in any manner growing out of any injuries, damages or death sustained by the

Parent(s)/Guardian(s), or their child resulting from the child's participation in the Center's Program or related activities.

Further, the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), relinquishes any action or causes of action, aforesaid, which may hereafter arise for the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), and for the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), estate, and agrees that, under no circumstances, will the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), their child, or the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns prosecute, present any claim for personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death against FSU, and their respective officers, employees and agents. It is the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) intention by this instrument to exempt and relieve FSU from any liability for personal injury, property damage or death arising out of their child's participation in the Center's Program at FSU. The scope of this release includes, but is not limited to, damages, losses, or injuries encountered in connection with transportation, food, emergency medical care or concerns (physical or emotion), entertainment, photographs, and physical injury of any kind.

The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) further expressly agrees that this provision is intended to be as broad and as inclusive as the laws of the State of Florida will allow, and that, if any portion thereof is held to be invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding the invalid portion, continue in full force and effect. The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) acknowledges the risks involved in undertaking any activity is relative to their child's own state of fitness.

Baby Walkers

Due to state regulations our program does not permit the use of baby walkers.

Bicycle Helmets

For activities that include tricycle riding the program will provide the helmets, one for each tricycle.

Cleaning Products (NAEYC 5C.6)

The program selects and uses fragrance free and the least toxic cleaning products in the center. Only program purchased cleaning products are to be used in the center.

Cleaning and Sanitation (NAEYC 5C.5)

The program adheres to NAEYC's recommended cleaning and sanitation schedule. Our teachers and staff adhere to the following sanitizing routines.

- Avoid the use of sprays, air fresheners, chemicals or other deodorizers to control odors. Ventilate, clean and sanitize instead.
- Immediately clean and sanitize any surface that has been contaminated with any body fluids
- Always use gloves when in contact with any potentially infectious body fluids.
- Clean rugs by blotting and spot cleaning with detergent-disinfectant
- Dispose of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie and place in a closed container.
- Wash, by hand, using water and detergent any toy that a child has placed in his or her mouth or is contaminated by body secretion or excretion and then rinse, sanitize and air dry before being used by another child.
- Follow health professional recommendations for any staff member or child who have allergies.
- Pets or other visiting animals must be fully immunized and suitable for contact with children as documented by a veterinarian, animal shelter or Agency providing the visits such as the Tallahassee Museum of Natural History and Science.
- Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals as well as instruct the children on safe behavior when interacting with the animals.
- Reptiles, including turtles, may not be classroom pets because of the risk of salmonella infection.

- Before walking on surfaces that infants use **specifically for play**, adults and children remove, replace or cover with clean foot covering they have worn outside.

Household bleach with water is recommended as an appropriate sanitizer by National Health and Safety Performance Standards. It is effective, economical, convenient, and readily available. The bleach used in the center is for household use, and not for industrial application. Bleach and water solution is non-toxic, safe, and kills most infectious agents.

- For surfaces that have been detergent-cleaned and rinsed in bathrooms, diapering areas, countertop, tables, toys, doorknobs, cabinet handles, phone receivers, hand washing sinks, floors, and surface contaminated by body fluids (minimum contact = 2 minutes): 1/4 cup household bleach + 1 gallon of cool water or 1 tablespoon bleach + 1 quart of cool water
- For submerging of eating utensils that have been detergent-cleaned and rinsed (minimum contact time = 1 minute): 1 tablespoon bleach + 1 gallon of cool water
- Any leftover bleach solution is discarded at the end of the day.
- Any container with a bleach solution is properly labeled i.e., “Bleach Solution”.

Adapted from Caring for Our Children, Appendix I, pages 417- 418.

Communicable Disease Policy (NAEYC 6A.8)

State law does not allow children or staff to remain in a center if the child/staff has a communicable disease or the symptoms of a communicable disease. Families/staff must notify the program administrator within 24 hours if they/child have a suspected or known communicable disease. Families of all the children will be notified about any incidence of communicable diseases in the center, without divulging the child/staff member’s name who contracted the illness. By the usual means of communication, the families/staff will be informed about the nature of illness, its signs, symptoms and other precautionary/prevention/palliative measures that may be taken.

CPR and First Aid (NAEYC 5A.15)

Scratches, minor cuts or insect bites will be treated with soap and water only. Band-aids will be used as necessary. If more serious treatment is needed the family will be notified. All staff are trained in CPR and First Aid.

Diapering

The program provides disposable diapers. For children who are not able to use disposal diapers, the family must provide documentation from their health provider. Each classroom is equipped with its own diaper changing table/pad that is only for the use of that classroom. (NAEYC 5A.18). Everyone hour, minimally, when children are awake, teachers check diapers for wetness or feces **and** when children wake up from nap. (NAEYC 5A.17). The program follows accreditation and state licensing requirements for sanitary disposal of soiled diapers i.e., the soiled diapers are held in a closed container out of the reach of children and the diaper changing area is disinfected after every use.

Doors

Access doors and fire doors are never to be propped open.

Emergency Closings

From time to time (especially during hurricane season June – November), severe weather may prompt University officials to close all operations. The FSU home page at <http://www.fsu.edu/> disseminates emergency information that can be accessed 24 hours. There is usually a special icon added immediately preceding (as in threat of hurricane), during, and immediately after an emergency to give everyone needed information about an emergency situation. Or you may call 644-INFO (644-4636) for updates.

In the case of an emergency that does not involve the entire University but does affect the center, it is at the discretion of the program to contact families to pick up their children (for example, the loss of utilities). In the event the center needs to be evacuated, the program will follow the direction of the FSU Police.

Emergency Preparedness Drills Posted

Written records of emergency preparedness drills are posted in the center. It includes the type of drill, number of children and staff, and time taken are recorded. With the exception of fire drills all are done annually.

Emergency Procedures

In general, all emergencies are coordinated through Florida State University Police who are generally the first responders and coordinate all other emergency operations. There are emergency procedures and equipment in place to ensure the safety and well-being of our children, families and staff.

Evacuation Plans

Each classroom has posted evacuation and emergency procedures.

Family Reunification Destination

In the event that there is an emergency event that requires the complete evacuation of the center, the designated place of Family Reunification is at FSU's Donald Tucker Civic Center.

Fire Procedures

Fire drills are practiced monthly. Each classroom has a posted evacuation route, emergency procedures, smoke detectors. Fire extinguishers are located strategically throughout the center. Our procedures for fire emergency include calling 911, lining up, walking quietly to the designated meeting place, taking roll and entertaining children until the "all clear" signal is given.

Handwashing (NAEYC 5A.19)

Handwashing is the single most effective way of preventing the spread of illnesses. All staff members and children wash their hands:

1. when entering the center
2. after diapering or toileting
3. after handling bodily fluids
4. after playing in water
5. after playing with pets or other animals
6. after playing outdoors
7. before eating or preparing food
8. before and after feeding children
9. when moving from one classroom to another
10. before and after administering medications
11. after handling garbage
12. after cleaning

Heat and Cold

The program uses a [Child Care Weather Watch Chart](#) to determine if it is safe for outdoor play and to ensure that the children wear the appropriate layers of clothing for the type of weather.

Sick Children/Illness Policy (NAEYC 6A.8; 5A.14)

Should your child become ill while at the center, they will be removed from contact with other children and the

staff will call you to take your child home. (NAEYC10B.19). **It is expected that the child will be on his way home within an hour of calling the family or emergency contact.**

If the family cannot be reached, administrators will call the emergency contacts listed on the release form. It is important that emergency contacts are local ones i.e., in Tallahassee or within less than an hour's drive. If you are new to Tallahassee and have not had a chance to make friends or have family nearby, as soon as you do have a local emergency contact, let program know.

It is a good idea to think about and have a plan for care on those days when your child is ill since he or she will not be able to be at the center. Let your child's teacher know if you have noted a change that may indicate the beginning signs of illness so the teacher can be especially watchful that day.

Families will be called if the child:

- has a fever, 100 degrees or above
- has 2 loose stools within the day
- has a rash
- is vomiting
- has pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- has lice
- has any discharge from eyes, ears or nose
- has a persistent cough
- has a sore throat
- has any other sign or symptom of illness

Children may return to the center:

- 24 hours after fever is gone **without the use of fever reducers**
- 24 hours after first medication is administered for strep throat
- 24 hours after insecticidal shampoo has been applied and all lice, lice eggs and egg cases removed for lice.
- Eye(s) completely clear (no discharge) after pink eye
- No discharge, no fever and all sores scabbed over in chicken pox
- Five days after rash in measles
- No fever and 9 days after swelling began with mumps

The program reserves the right to request that any child who appears too ill to participate fully in the program or who may place other children at risk of exposure to illness to remain out of the school until fully recovered. Families may be assessed the costs of one-to-one care for ill children who are ill and who have not picked up their child within one hour of contact.

Immunizations

The program follows DCF and the University's policy on immunizations including exclusions. Every child who participates in our program are required to present and keep current a State of Florida Student Examination Form and Immunization Record on file. Both forms need to be the original forms signed by the physician. Exclusions and reason for the exclusion are documented on the official record of immunization obtained from the staff or child's physician. (NAEYC 5A.13)

Injury at the Center

If your child is injured at the center, an accident report will be completed by your child's teacher and a copy

will be given to you for your signature. A signed copy will then be placed in your child's file. If the injury is serious, appropriate emergency care will be administered, emergency personnel summoned, if needed, and you will be contacted by phone.

Insect Repellent

During certain times of the year mosquitoes can be a problem for outside activities and the children may need insect repellent to reduce the potential for bug bites while having fun and enjoying the playground. Per State Licensing and NAEYC accreditation standards, the application of insect repellent must contain DEET. We will provide insect repellent containing DEET for your child. The insect repellent will be only applied once per day on an as needed basis when recommended by the Florida Public Health authorities due to the high risk of insect-borne disease. Repellent will be applied only on children older than two months.

In order for your child to use insect repellent, you are required to provide consent. The public health authority advises that anyone with known allergies to personal insect repellents should not use these products. Families should check the manufacturer's recommendations before use. If you have any concerns regarding your child's use of insect repellents, you should consider seeking medical advice prior to giving consent. If you have any concerns or questions, feel free to talk with program administrators.

Insurance

Families' insurance is the primary coverage for your child. The program carries accident insurance for accidents that occur on center grounds or while on field trips but should be considered supplemental to the family's insurance policy.

Intruder/Lock Down

The lockdown signal is given. Children will remain indoors. All windows and doors will remain locked. Only the program administrators or a specifically appointed staff member has the permission to open doors. No one will be allowed into the building. If word is given that the intruder is on the facility premises, all children will be gathered to a central location away from the windows and doors and will be kept as quiet as possible. 911 will be called.

Loss of Power

In the event of a localized emergency such as the loss of power, the program administrators are authorized to close the center to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

Maintenance Checks and Inspections (NAEYC 10D.4)

Maintenance checks are conducted monthly to identify any potential health and safety risks as well as general preventive maintenance needs. The inspection includes both the inside of the building as well as the playgrounds. Inspection logs are kept to document any issues noted during the inspection and are used to generate work orders for repairs.

Medical Emergencies

In the rare event of a medical emergency, emergency personnel are summoned through the 911 system. Staff are not allowed to transport children when there is a medical emergency. FSU University Police are typically the first responders in any emergency situation on the University campus and coordinate the assistance of other non-university emergency personnel as needed.

Medication Administration (NAEYC 5A.20, 10B.19).

Children may ONLY receive medication administration from staff members who have received training in administering medicine.

The administering of all medications, both non prescribed (over the counter) and prescribed, must be

accompanied by a physician's note. Staff may administer medication to your child provided the "Authorization for Medication" form has been completed by the family. No medication or medicinal herb can be administered unless this form has been completed.

Prescription and non-prescription medication must be in the original container. Prescription medication must have a label stating the name of the physician, child's name, name of the medication, and medication directions. All prescription and non-prescription medication will be dispensed only according to the written directions on the prescription label or printed manufacturer's label. The dispensing of non-prescription medicines must be accompanied by a physician's note along with the correct dosage. A physician's order with specific medication directions is required for staff to administer as needed medication. Non-prescription medicines should not be placed in your child's backpacks or school bags and brought to the center.

Medication Authorization Forms

In order for the staff to administer medication to your child, you must complete the "Authorization for Medication" form. A form must be completed for each medication and each new series. It is important to indicate the dates when the medication is to start and when it is to finish. If your child receives medication on a regular basis or daily basis for an extended period of time, you will need to complete a Long Form Authorization for Medication.

Medication Storage (NAEYC 5A.21, 10B.19)

All medication MUST be inaccessible to children but readily available to staff and stored in a locked medicine cabinet/box in the center.

Pets

From time to time our program may include animals as part of the curriculum. If your child has any allergies to pets, please indicate those on your enrollment/admission materials and talk with your child's teacher. Families are asked to leave their personal pets at home unless the administration approves of the visit for educational purposes.

Pest Management (NAEYC 9D.4)

The program is committed to using non-toxic pest management both inside and outside of the building and utilizes the principles of Integrated Pest Management Principles (IPM) to eliminate or reduce harmful chemical exposure. The IPM includes:

- (1) Setting Action Thresholds
- (2) Monitoring and Identifying Pests
- (3) Prevention
- (4) Control.

Product Safety (NAEYC 9A.5)

Program administrators receive recall notices from the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Notices are posted on the family bulletin board in reception, classroom boards and in the teachers' lounge.

Release of Child from Center

Your child shall not be released to any person (s) other than the authorized family member, legal caregiver and listed individuals on the enrollment forms. Any person (s) authorized to take a child from the center, other than the child's family or legal caregiver, must present picture I.D. to the staff before a child is released.

If someone other than yourself is going to pick up your child, make sure they are on the authorization list for

your child to be released and they bring a picture I.D. to show to the lead teacher. No child will be released to an unauthorized person.

If the family or caregiver cannot be reached, the persons listed on the “authorization for pick up” will be called in case of illness, injury or emergency. It is the families’ responsibility to keep the program current on any changes in authorized pick up and contact information. **Please note that employees of the program may not be listed as persons authorized to pick up children from the program.** If the child has not been picked up one hour after closing and the family or emergency contacts cannot be located, FSU Police Department will be contacted for their assistance

Rilya Wilson Act

The Rilya Wilson Act is a law in the State of Florida that requires childcare centers who care for children ages 3 to school age and who have been placed under protective custody to report any unexcused absences by the end of the business day or on the seventh consecutive excused absence.

Security and Access (NAEYC 10B.19)

For security access to the center and classroom wings is provided via FSU Card or FSU Guest Card to ensure that only those with legitimate need to be in the center are allowed access. Parents/guardians who are not FSU students, faculty or staff, or other individuals authorized to pick up the child will be issued an FSU Guest Card for a fee. Requests for additional Guest cards for authorized individuals who regularly or temporarily pick up a child, are considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests must be made by the Primary account holder on the Card Access form at the front desk. A copy of the authorized individuals picture ID must be attached to the form. The authorized individual must also be listed on the Authorized pick-up form.

For everyone’s Security

- (1) Please do not share your card with others, even those who may infrequently drop off or pick up your Child.
- (2) Report any lost cards immediately.
- (3) Card access will be deleted effective on the child’s withdrawal date.
- (4) Families need to notify the program well in advance, preferably by e-mail, of alternate plans for pick up.
- (5) In an emergency, if the family cannot pick the child up, it is important to notify the program as soon as possible so that alternative plans can be made.

Severe Weather

Hurricanes

The University closes when a hurricane threatens the safety of students and their families.

Severe Thunderstorms

Children will be kept away from windows and doors during thunderstorms. Children will play inside only. Teachers will be on the alert for safety issues such as close lightning strikes that may cause a power outage or fires. If an emergency situation arises, 911 will be called.

Tornadoes

In the event of a tornado, teachers will take all children to the most interior and central part of the center or classroom, away from windows, doors and electrical panels. The children will squat with their hands over the backs of their necks and look at the floor if possible. Attendance will be taken at the safe place. If there is a tornado, 911 will be called.

Sleeping infants

To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death (SIDS), infants under 12 months must be placed on their back to sleep. Other soft items such as pillows, quilts or soft toys are NOT allowed in the crib. (NAEYC 5A.24) Positioners are not to be used unless accompanied by doctor's orders. (NAEYC 5A.22)

The infants' heads must stay uncovered during sleep. When a blanket is used, the infant is placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress and up only as far as the infant's chest. After being placed down to sleep on their backs, infants may then be permitted to sleep in any comfortable position to which they can easily then move to from their backs

Infants that arrive to the center asleep or that fall asleep while in the center in equipment not designed for sleeping such as swings, strollers, highchairs, car seats, etc. will be removed and placed in a crib. (NAEYC 5A.22)

Smoke-Free Zone

The center is designated as Breathe Easy Zones which means that no one may smoke in any center, playground or in any areas near the center (a minimum of 50 feet) such that children, families, staff or other members of the community are exposed to second-hand smoke. The FSU policy regarding smoking can be found at http://deanofstudents.fsu.edu/policypdf/Smoking%20Policy_0910.pdf

Sunscreen (NAEYC 5A.16)

During the spring and summer months, the weather can be very hot and sunny, and the children need sunscreen in order to prevent sunburn. The program provides sunscreen for children, 6 months and up, that provides protection for Ultraviolet Light B (UVB) and Ultraviolet Light A (UVA) with a sun protective factor (SPF) of 45. In order for the program to apply sunscreen on a child, when needed, families must sign a consent form before the sunscreen can be applied.

Supervision

The program adheres to the NAEYC standard for teacher-child ratio (See Appendix). These ratios are applicable both indoors and outdoors. Classroom (indoor) space and the outdoor classroom must be designed so that there are no areas where children can hide or be out of sight. Although the classrooms and program are equipped with video cameras, this does not replace the direct supervision of children by sight and sound required at all times for sleeping infants, toddlers and two-year-olds. (NAEYC 3C.10)

Infants, toddlers/twos are supervised by sight and sound at all times. Teachers are to be positioned so they can hear and see any sleeping children for whom they are responsible, including when they are engaged with children who are awake. (NAEYC 3C.9; 3C.11)

For preschoolers and older children, the teachers supervise primarily by sight and may supervise by sound for short intervals as long as the teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight. (NAEYC 3C.12)

Teaching staff are assigned to specific groups of children for whom they have primary responsibility and supervise by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible. Close supervision is required for all children in areas that are near where injury may occur. This requires the use of all of the above methods as well teachers being in close proximity to the children.

Teaching staff employ developmentally appropriate guidance and supervision practices. These guidance and supervision practices include awareness, positioning, scanning, redirection, and close supervision

1. **Awareness** requires a knowledge of children, including knowing each child's range of skills, interests, and ability to interact with others and developmental stage. Knowledge of children helps teachers to monitor and enhance skills that promote children's positive behavior.
2. **Positioning** requires being able to see all of the children. Staff positions themselves to be aware of the entire classroom and to see as many children as possible.
3. All children are monitored by sight and sound at all times. Rule of thumb, teachers move every five minutes.
4. **Scanning** involves regularly glancing around the classroom and playground to see children's involvement and what is happening.
5. **Redirection** is a skill used as an aid in preventing undesirable and unsafe behavior. Children are redirected to other areas/activities when undesirable behavior is imminent or occurs. This skill helps ensure the safety of all children.

Adapted from "Supervision Skills and Methods, TMCC E.L. Cord Child Care Center, Reno, July 2007

Teeth and Gums (NAEYC 5A.23)

After each feeding, infant's teeth and gums are wiped with a disposable tissue. Children older than one year are provided, at least once a day, an opportunity to brush teeth and gums to remove food and plaque. Toothpaste is not required.

Vehicles (NAEYC 5A.25)

To ensure air quality on the outdoor learning environment (playgrounds), vehicles are not to be allowed to idle in parking areas surrounding the building unless they must do so in extreme temperatures to heat or cool the interior. Children are never to be left alone in vehicles unattended for any reason. Please note that unattended idling vehicles poses a risk for being stolen.

Program Evaluation, Accountability, Strategic Plan for Continuous Improvement

One key to the maintenance of a high-quality program is ensuring that there is a system in place to continuously monitor program effectiveness. FSU Childcare & Early Learning Program has such a system. Data is collected from each group that has an investment in the whole -- children, families, staff, board, faculty and participating FSU students--to determine whether or not we are fulfilling our mission, accomplishing our goals and objectives and, most importantly, assessing whether the children who participate in our program are indeed receiving the highest quality care and learning environment that prepares them for success in life. This information assists the program in planning professional development for staff as well as improving policies, procedures and activities (NAEYC 10F.3, 10F.4).

Several methods of data collection provide feedback/evidence. These methods include cross-sectional, longitudinal surveys, one on one interviews and family meetings. Additional levels of accountability are provided by the oversight of the FSU Advisory Board, FSU University Housing and compliance with University Accountability Policies and Procedures.

Cross-sectional Surveys

The program sends out surveys each year in April to various populations that participate in our program. The Family Satisfaction survey assesses the family's overall satisfaction with the program. The Professional Satisfaction Surveys assesses the overall satisfaction and training needs of program staff. The Faculty Survey assesses the overall satisfaction of academic departments that send students to our center for hands on training

and observation.

Longitudinal Survey

Throughout the year, withdrawing families are asked to complete an exit survey to assess their satisfaction with program during their entire experience.

Interviews

When initiating requests for laboratory experiences for their students, a meeting is scheduled with each faculty member to discuss the new request and to evaluate (if applicable) the experience of their students. The essential question discussed is whether or not our programs provided the experiences that the faculty member intended for the students and in what ways the experiences may be improved or modified. For theses and dissertation research projects, final results are discussed and reviewed.

Content

The emphasis of the data collection efforts focuses on goal achievement with regard to children's learning and progress according to program goals and objectives, quality of care and education, quality of teachers, quality of communication with family, overall policies and procedures, benefits to families, community awareness and community satisfaction.

Results Shared

The results of the surveys are downloaded into FSU Childcare & Early Learning Programs survey data base. The results are shared with families, board, community via email and in the Annual report. (NAEYC 10F.2).

Accountability

This data, along with e-mail comments/concerns and one-on-one conversations from families, board members, community members, are used in annual performance accountability reviews, to plan the next year's work and professional development; in staff meetings; in preparing the Strategic Plan; for annual reports; and other University required accountability measures such as the preparation of annual report to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Strategic Plan (NAEYC 10B.17)

The program creates a 5–10-year strategic plan. This document serves a guiding tool to implement the program's vision and mission, as well as to secure long-term resources that will sustain the program's operations. Information and data gathered through the various methods mentioned above are incorporated into the strategic plan including but limited to implementing the mission and vision, achieving desired child outcomes, maintaining high-quality services to children and families, and assuring adequate funding for future needs. Families, staff, the Advisory Board and stakeholders are an important part of the strategic planning process.

Screening and Assessment

Screening and assessment are an integral part of high-quality early care and education programs. The purpose of the screening and assessments are multiple:

1. To learn about the development, interests and needs of individual children which can then inform appropriate individualized teaching strategies to extend, enhance and guide each child's learning and continued development. (NAEYC 4D.5)
2. To detect early signs of delay in development and/or the need for further assessment, referral or early intervention.

3. To improve curriculum, lesson plan design and teaching practices which contribute to overall program improvements. (NAEYC 2A.8; 4A.2)

The assessment and data obtained are used when developing lesson plans and activities to ensure that activities are developmentally appropriate and individualized, and meet the needs of the children. (NAEYC 4D.6)

Screening and Assessment Instruments

The *Ages and Stages Questionnaire* is the initial screening instrument and is administered within the first three months and every six months thereafter. It is used to learn about the developmental level of each child as well as to detect any early signs of delay or the need for additional assessment and includes a component for family assessment. (NAEYC 4A.1; 4C.3)

The *Learning Accomplishment Profile-3rd Edition (LAP-3)* for preschoolers and the *Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (E-LAP)* for infants and toddlers are administered as a pre and post test in early fall and late spring semesters. They are used to identify the developmental age of each child. (NAEYC 4A.1; 4C.3)

The *Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)* is a social/emotional screening instrument that is used as needed for additional information or planning/problem solving. (NAEYC 4C.3)

Hearing and Speech Screenings (NAEYC 4C.2)

Hearing and speech screenings are provided once per year by the FSU Speech & Hearing Clinic in the School of Communication Science & Disorders.

Vision Screenings (NAEYC 4C.2)

Vision screenings are provided once per year through FocusFirst. In the event that FocusFirst is unable to provide screenings, families are provided with resources for screenings taking place in the community.

Child portfolios

The *portfolio* for each child contains work samples, an academic skills checklist, anecdotal records, photos etc. These items all aid in identifying and demonstrating current developmental levels, progress or learning gains, and areas needing attention. Portfolios assist with ensuring the learning activities and environment is meeting individual children's needs as well as group needs while promoting and supporting continued growth and development.

Depending on the child's developmental level there will be samples of block play, writing samples, drawing/painting samples, three-dimensional art (ex. Play Dough), dramatic play stages, social play stages, cutting skills, gross and fine motor skills and academic concept/knowledge progress.

The assessment process is an ongoing integral cycle that goes hand in hand with the curriculum. The portfolio is an ongoing assessment tool while the other tools are used periodically. The collection of items for the portfolio happens in an integrated daily fashion within the contexts of teaching the children and spending time in the classroom. These strategies are used throughout the daily routine while the children are engaged in play. For example, staff talk and interact with infants to assess and encourage the use of language (smiling, cooing, eye contact). This natural (authentic) type of assessment assists in getting a valid, true picture of the child's progress and development. Portfolios are intended to shape instruction and make informed decisions about program design.

Strategies that are ongoing and used by all teachers in the classroom include:

- Anecdotal records

- Checklists
- Other less formal observation tools
- Collection of work samples
- Photos and recordings (*may not be shared outside center or uploaded on any website*)

Administration of Screening and Assessment Instruments

It is important that those who are conducting assessments and screenings are qualified to do so. Each lead teacher in the program is trained to administer each of the instruments and is responsible for their timely administration. The lead teacher may ask teaching assistants who have been trained to assist with screening. Every staff member in the classroom may conduct observations and keep anecdotal records. **(NAEYC 4A.1)**

Screening and Assessment Results

Families have the most impact on a child's development and life. For this reason, all assessment and screening outcomes will be shared with the family. In addition, we would like you to be fully informed of others that will have access to your child's assessment and screenings. The results will be shared only with parties on a need-to-know basis, or as required by governing criteria.

Those that will have access to screening and assessment results are:

- You (parent or guardian)
- Administrators of the childcare program
- Lead teacher of the child's class
- Assistant teachers in the child's class
- Inspectors/representatives from various governing agencies: Department of Children & Families, Accrediting Agency – NAEYC.
- Occasionally, an outside consultant or referral staff (you will have been notified prior to this)

All of the people mentioned in the above list are major stakeholders in your child's optimal development. All assessment and screening results shared will be done so for the sole purpose of meeting your child's needs and offering optimal programming. Families are informed of the results so that helpful input can be provided to the program and appropriate assistance and development strategies can be discussed. Teachers, teaching assistants, and administrators have access to assessment and screening results in order to make curriculum and programmatic decisions for your child so his/her needs can be optimally met. Representatives from the Department of Children and Families, and accrediting agencies have access to screening and assessments in order to verify that the program is adhering to criteria and standards required by each agency. Occasionally, outside consultants, professors, and referral personnel require access to assist our team in planning and implementing an appropriate program for your child. Also, occasionally, students learning to become educators or development professionals administer assessments and screenings for required coursework. You will be notified of this, and results shared with you. These results will be kept confidential. The results of the screenings and assessments are not used to label a child; rather, the results are used to inform families and staff so that they can make decisions together on how best to meet the child's needs, provide an appropriate program, and ensure school success.

Referrals

Our program staff conducts only initial screenings and curricula-based assessments. After the screening and assessments are completed and family/teacher conferences are held, if further assessment is indicated or any assistance is needed outside the scope of expertise within the program, referrals will be made with the written consent of the family. This ensures that the assessment is conducted appropriately and can provide more information.

Families may choose (and are encouraged) to contact outside agencies/organizations for programs or services directly (i.e., without a referral if the organization does not require one). Staff are encouraged to help families who need assistance with negotiating health, mental health, educational services or other assessments needed for their children. The program maintains lists of resources that can be shared with any family who would like information about organizations that provide early intervention or other kinds of help.

Referral Process

The referral process is outlined below:

- Initial screening and assessment is conducted by the child's teacher.
- If the results of the initial screen indicate an unmet need, a re-screen is conducted by the Early Intervention Specialist.
- Conference held with family to discuss the outcomes of the screening/assessment.
- Simultaneously, teachers and the Early Intervention Specialist review screening and assessment results to make appropriate programming decisions.
- A decision is made to make a referral.
- The family is given the contact information for the appropriate referral agency (usually, this is Early Intervention, Child Find, the Warm-Line, or the Early Learning Coalition)
- The family makes contact with the appropriate agency and a screening is scheduled.
- The outcomes are discussed with the Early Intervention Specialist.
- The Early Intervention Specialist and the family discuss ways the program can assist in meeting the child's needs.

There may be occasions when families may choose to decline referrals. The program reserves the right to discontinue services if referral and outside assistance is essential to the health, safety and well-being of the child or to the other children or staff in the program.

Confidentiality

Information obtained through screenings, assessment and portfolios are confidential information and are shared only with the child's family in a timely manner such that appropriate programming, guidance and support (as well as assistive services and referrals) can be implemented for the benefit of the child. Written consent will be obtained from the family before information is shared with other relevant providers, agencies or programs. Children's records are kept in locked filing cabinets, accessible only to those individuals listed above.

Family/Teacher Conferences

Twice each year, generally in the fall and spring semesters, conferences are scheduled with each child's family to discuss the screenings and assessments as well as the overall progress of their child.

Teachers work with the family to collaborate on which assessments are best for their child with sensitivity to family culture and language. Conferences with families include opportunities for the family to raise questions or concerns about how the assessment methods will meet their child's needs. Following the conference, written summaries are to be provided to the family. (NAEYC 4E.2; 4E.3)

Tuition Rates, Fees and Payment

All fees charged by the program are located on the program's website at <http://childcare.fsu.edu/parents#tuition>. Tuition rates are assessed according to primary account holder's status and the child's classroom assignment. Age of the child does not determine the tuition rate. Rates are charged monthly. It is important to understand

that the **monthly tuition** you pay **is to reserve your child's space** for participation in the program.

Tuition is payable in advance, without demand or billing on or before the **first day of each calendar month**. Tuition is late if not **received** by the 10th of the month. After the tenth day of each month, unpaid tuition fees are delinquent, and an additional late fee will be charged.

Changes in Family Schedule

No refunds, prorates or credit is given to accommodate individual family vacations, changes in family schedules, or absences due to illness or injury. In short, by enrolling your child you are agreeing to the monthly tuition fee for as long as your child is enrolled, irrespective of the actual number of hours you and your child use the service.

Eligibility

- **CIES Students** may receive student rates for two semesters. The program will consider extensions on a case-by-case basis. CIES students are not eligible for the CCAMPIS grant until they are admitted and enrolled in classes at the University.
- **Faculty/Staff** –At least one parent/guardian must be employed as an FSU faculty member, OPS, USPS or A&P staff member, FSU Visiting Scholar/Researcher /Post Doc. Faculty and staff using tuition waivers and enrolled in classes do not receive the student rate.
- **Special student Rate**- Parents/guardians who are enrolled as special students may request, in writing, to receive the student rate. The program will consider requests on a case-by-case basis.
- **State Employees**-State employees using tuition waivers and enrolled in classes do not receive the student rate.
- **Student Rates**

It is important to note this policy is applicable to Fall, Spring and Summer semesters. To be eligible for student rates, one member of the family must be registered and enrolled as a fee paying, degree seeking student at FSU. Students must be registered for a **minimum of 3 hours**. Just registering for a course at FSU does not qualify a parent/guardian to be eligible for the student tuition rate. The parent/guardian **must be degree-seeking. Student statuses are check at the beginning of each semester following Drop/Add.**

Upon request by the program, students must be prepared to provide documentation from the University Registrar that verifies degree-seeking status **and** must be prepared to provide documentation from their academic department that there is reasonable progress toward the attainment of a degree. If documentation is not provided, the Cost of Care tuition rate will automatically be assessed. Cost of Care tuition rates will automatically be assessed until the degree-seeking status is obtained. Tuition is **automatically raised to the Cost of Care rate when a parent/guardian is not enrolled as a degree-seeking student at Florida State University.**

Grad Assistants are considered students and will receive student priority and the student rate.

During any semester, if a student is not enrolled, to receive the student rate during that semester, the student must be enrolled in classes for the preceding and upcoming semester. Requests to take a semester off must be submitted in writing prior to taking the semester off. Failure to request a semester

off or not maintaining consistent enrollment will result in the Cost of Care rate being automatically assessed.

Family Status Grace Period

Graduating student parents/guardians wishing to have their child remain in the program are eligible for a one semester grace period following graduation at the student rate. These requests are to be made prior to semester starting the grace period. Cost of Care rates will be automatically assessed once the parent/guardian is no longer affiliated with the Florida State University. This policy applies to Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.

Financial Hardships

Families who encounter extreme financial hardship or are finding it difficult to pay the monthly tuition fee should contact the Program Coordinator immediately to discuss a payment plan.

Late Charges

Tuition or fees that have not been paid by the tenth of the month will incur a late fee.

Past Due Payments

Unpaid, past due accounts, including any late fees, are placed on the University-wide accounts receivable system as a delinquent account for collection of the full amount due. **This may result in a registration and/or transcript block and/or the child being withdrawn from the program.** Once the child has been withdrawn from the center as a result of failure to pay, entire tuition for the semester tuition must be prepaid to re-enroll a child.

Payments

Financial Aid deductions, payroll deduction, online payment, checks, cash, money order or FSU card payments are accepted. **The program does not accept payments directly. Please do not give or mail payments to the program.**

Your check **must** have your child's name, the primary account holder's name and EMPLID number on the check itself in order for the correct account to be credited. Your cancelled check is your receipt.

Payments can be made in the following ways:

- Financial Aid (Grants, Loans & Scholarships)

For student parents/guardians that receive financial aid of any kind it is important to understand how financial aid is disbursed through your Student Central account. When financial aid is paid out, the funds will first be used to pay off **any outstanding charges** owed on your student account (tuition, childcare charges, food services charges, parking tickets, etc.). Once all outstanding charges are paid in full, any remaining financial aid funds are then disbursed to the student in the form of a financial aid refund. If a student does not wish to have childcare fees deducted from financial aid, it is the student's responsibility to pay those charges prior to financial aid being disbursed.

Students who prefer to have tuition payments deducted from financial aid, must complete the necessary paperwork with the Program Coordinator for the deductions to be made. This must be done **each semester**.

- In person: Cashier's counter in University Housing, 942 Learning Way. The cashier's counter is open from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Monday through Friday. If you pay in person, you will be given a cashier's receipt.
- Mail

- Online
- Payroll Deduction: For families seeking to use payroll deduction, please contact the Program Coordinator in the center.

Primary Account Holder

The Primary Account Holder is the parent/guardian who is held responsible for payment of tuition fees and whose account tuition and fees are applied. Requests to change the primary account holder, must be emailed to the Associate Director.

Prorations

If a child's enrollment or withdrawal date falls in the middle of a month, the tuition is prorated on the basis of 1/22 of the monthly rate. Each month will be considered as 22 days for the purpose of tuition computations.

Registration Fee

A non-refundable registration fee is assessed at the time of registration. Thereafter, the annual registration fee is due September 1. Your financial obligation begins when you accept the enrollment by completing and signing the enrollment/admission agreement. Your signature on the enrollment agreement **obligates you for one month's tuition fees** whether your child attends or not.

Returned Checks

Returned checks incur a service charge. Both the returned check and the service charge will appear on FSU's accounts receivable system. The university will not honor checks for individuals who "have personally tendered a dishonored check".

Sibling Discounts

A 15% discount will be given to the second child and a 25% discount will be given to the third child in a family attending the center.

Special Arrangements for Tuition Payment

Requests to split tuition due to separation or divorce must be accompanied by court orders that detail the split or percentage that is to be charged to each parent/guardian.

Tuition and Fee Increases

Each year the Childcare Advisory Board reviews the tuition fees. Families should expect some level of increase each year to cover the costs of inflation. Any increase in tuition fees is effective September 1 of each year.

Tuition calculation

The tuition is calculated on the basis of 44 weeks of service divided into 12 equal payments. When the tuition is calculated, no charges are made for the days that the University is closed (i.e., Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, Christmas or New Year's Day as well as the Fall, Spring and Summer breaks).