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Illinois State University Child Care Center: Policies and Procedures
Last updated Fall 2019

FAMILY HANDBOOK
For
ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

Web Site: www.childcarecenter.ilstu.edu

Sponsors: ISU Dept. of Family & Consumer Sciences, Student Fee Board, Provost Office
Licensed: Illinois Department of Children & Family Services

Welcome to the ISU Child Care Center

Please read this FAMILY HANDBOOK before your child's first day. It's meant to inform you of our policies and to answer likely questions. **Please keep it handy for future reference.** And always feel free to contact the Director with additional questions.

We hope your family encounters meaningful and enjoyable experiences while at the University. *The child care center staff will care for and educate your child to the best of our ability whether you are student pursuing an education or an ISU faculty/staff member pursuing a career.* Our goal is for your family to experience success and maintain peace of mind. We hope to be the stage where your child creates wonderful childhood memories to be cherished. So welcome to the ISU Child Care Center!

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Contents Index

Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy (Child), 20
Activities: Daily Classroom Schedule of, 9
Arrival and Departure Routines, 11
Attendance Schedule: Arranging and Making Changes, 15
Bathroom Supplies for Child Care (And Naptime Supplies), 11
Before Your Child's First Day: Things to do, 5
Bill payment: Collection, place of payment (See Collection of Fees by Due Dates), 16
Billing Policies, Billing Rates, 15 Billing Mistakes: Reporting, 17 Subsidies, 16
Bills: Overdue policy & penalty fee, 16 Bill Due Dates: Alternate Due Date Requests, 17
Birthday Celebrations at Child Care, 21
Candy, home toys, money at school, (See Treasures for Home, But Not for School), 12
Cell phone policy, 10
Center Locations and Hours of Operation, 5
Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy, 20
Closing Center for Emergencies, (i.e. weather), 21
Clothing for Child Care, 12
Confidentiality of Records, 22 Conditions for Release of Confidential Records, 22
Computers, Use in classroom, (See use of Media as Teaching Tools), 9
Curriculum, Classroom Philosophy, 8
Custody issues, (See Before Your Child's First Day,) 5, (See Non-custodial Policy), 10
Departure Procedure Changes: Alternate Authorized Pick-up Person, 11
Dietary Special Requests, 10
Discipline Policy and Child Guidance Procedures, 13
Dismissal and Disenrollment Procedures, (See Withdrawal and Enrollment Dismissal), 22
Dressing Children for Outdoor Weather to Ensure Health, 20
Emergency Center Closings, 21
Emergency Contact Procedures & Form, 18
Emergency Message: Reaching Staff by Phone, 13
Emergency Treatment Waiver & Securing Emergency Care, 18
Evacuation from campus emergencies, 18
Family Involvement (See Open Door Policy & Parent Involvement), 6
Family-Center Partnership & Parent Communication Strategies, 6
Files and Records: 22, 23
Food Service (and Nutrition Program), foods parents can bring, 10
Goals of ISU Child Care Center, 7
Handwashing, (See Health, Medication & Safety Policies), 18
Health, Medication & Safety Policies, 18
Holding Fee for Non-consecutive Semester Enrollment, 16
Holidays & Vacations: Parents pay for. (See Billing Policy), 21
Holidays and Vacation Days Observed, 21
Hours of Operation (and Center Locations), 5
Ill Children: Staff Response for Care & Release from Center, 19
Illness and Symptoms that Prevent Child Attendance, 19
Illness Exclusion Policy & Procedure, 19
Insurance Requirements, For children and field trip drivers, 18

Late Child Pick-Up from Center Policy, Fees & Payment Procedure, 17
 Location of Center (and Hours of Operation), 5
 Materials Fee, 16
 Medicine Administered at Child Care, 20
 Media as Teaching Tools, 9
 Messages for Staff, 13
 Mission Statement: Purpose and Services, 5
 Morning Good-byes (See Separation Anxiety: Handling Morning Good-byes), 12
 Movies, (See Media as Teaching Tools), 9
 Naptime and Bathroom Supplies for Child Care, 11
 Non-Custodial Parent Policy & Participation, 10
 Nutrition: (See Food Service & Nutrition Program), foods parents can bring, 10
 Open Door Policy, 6
 Outdoor Play: dressing for and policy statement, 20
 Overdue Bill Policy & Late Payment Penalty Fees, 16
 Parent Communication Strategies, 6
 Parking for Arrival and Departure, (and handling parking tickets) 10
 Pesticide applications, 20
 Philosophy: Service, 6 Philosophy: Classroom Curriculum, 8
 Phone numbers of staff, 13
 Program Objectives: Classroom, 7
 Releasing Child from Center, Addressed on pages 11, 17, 18, 19
 Records: Children's, Confidentiality of , 23 Conditions for Release, 23
 Registration Fee, 15
 Scheduling: Child Attendance, 15
 Scheduling: Daily Schedule of Classroom Activities, 9
 School-agers use of wheel-toys from home, 12
 Servie Philosophy, 6
 Separation Anxiety: Handling Morning Good-byes, 12
 Social networking posting policy, 21
 Special Needs and Children with Disabilities, 22
 Sponsors of ISU Child Care Center, 5
 Staff Phone Numbers and Voice Mail, 13
 Staff Structure, Qualifications, Responsibilities & Supervision, 14
 Subsidies, child care DHS bill partial bill payment, (See Billing Policies), 16
 Toys and Items not to bring to school, (See Treasures for Home, But Not for School), 12
 Treasures for Home, But Not For School, 12
 Treats: Birthday treats, acceptable and unacceptable, 21
 Vacation Days Observed by Center closure (See Holidays & Vacations), 15
 Vacations & Holidays: Parents pay for, (See Billing Policy), 15
 Verification Form for Family Handbook for Orientation & Information, 2
 Withdrawal and Enrollment Dismissal Procedures, 21, 22
 Wheel-toys from home for school-agers, 12

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY CHILD CARE CENTER

Center Location and Hours of Operation

The ISU Child Care Center is located in Turner Hall, room 163, and is open year round with a few weekly closures. The Center is open Monday – Friday from 7:30 am – 5:00 pm. The Center is closed any time the University is closed for holidays, as well as the week of Thanksgiving, 2 weeks between fall & spring semester, the week of spring break and 1 week in August for professional development. For up to date Center closures, please be sure to visit the ISU Child Care Center website.

The *Director's office* is in 163 D Turner Hall. To avoid disrupting classroom activities, parents should arrive by 9 a.m. Naptime arrival or departure (1-2:30 p.m.) disrupts children's sleep.

Sponsors of ISU Child Care Center

The Center is partially funded & sponsored by the following Illinois State University entities: Student Fee Board, Family & Consumer Sciences Dept. (FCS), & the Provost Office.

Mission Statement: Purpose & Services

ISU Child Care Center provides high quality, developmental child care services for ISU students, faculty and staffs' children aged 3-6 years. The Center serves as a working illustration of early childhood best practices for all ISU students, the community, and the early childhood profession. The Center operates as a lab site for practicum students and volunteers in the ISU Family and Consumer Sciences Department as well as other campus departments. The Center may be used as a research site by qualifying individuals, groups or agencies.

Before Your Child's First Day: Things to do

- Read this handbook. Send in your child care registration fee payment, copy of child's birth certificate and other provided forms, such as Emergency Treatment Waiver, and Family Handbook Verification Form.
- Return your child's completed medical form including: *immunizations, negative TB test result and lead screening results.*
- Bring your child in for a visit before the first day of attendance. Feel free to schedule more than one visit. This will help ensure a smooth transition the first day you drop your child off for a full day of attendance.
- Organize supplies for child care (and LABEL them with your child's name): a *toothbrush, small pillow & blanket* for nap, *extra set of seasonal clothes* for cubbie, *sturdy play shoes, diapering ointment* (if needed) and *sunscreen.*
- Bring a photo of your family to tape inside your child's cubbie.
- Update enrollment application, phone numbers, emergency forms & financial statement, if needed.
- Divorced, legally separated or never wed parents must *submit documentaton of legal custody decisions by child's first day of enrollment.*

Families and The Center: It's a Partnership

We've been on campus since 1971, so we've long known teamwork between staff and family members is critical when nurturing children. Over the years, we've found each family has its own special charm. We're looking forward to experiencing yours.

Throughout our partnership we encourage you to confer with the Director and Team Teachers about your child's development. We may be able to give you tips on handling separation anxiety and your child's adjustment to our program. And you will be able to give us tips on the best ways to nurture your child's overall growth and development! That two-way communication is the foundation of a successful family-center partnership.

Parent Communication Strategies

We work hard to maintain open and frequent communication between parents and Center staff. Here's how we do it. We provide adequate staffing so teachers and parents can share *daily greetings and dialogue*. We send home and post on our web site monthly *newsletters*, hold twice/yearly *parent conferences*, conduct *parent-teacher group meetings* when parent interest requests it, inform parents of upcoming *community events*, and invite parents to participate in *special family events* (like watching the homecoming parade together!). We also request advisory input from parents when new policies are considered. And should you be in a hurry, we provide a *message tablet* at the sign-in area where you can leave messages for staff. Our weekly *menus* will be posted nearby and on our web site. So you can keep up on your child's Center experiences we prominently display: *daily activity highlight sheets, children's projects, and photos of children's project work and play activities*.

Open Door Policy & Family Involvement

We have an *open door policy* for parents; you're welcome anytime! Please feel free to participate in classroom activities, whether it be storytime, meal times, outdoor play or field trips. If you want to share your talents in the classroom, GREAT! Just let us know. But if you prefer to quietly observe from our two-way windows, well that's fine, too! (Schedule time in the observation areas with the director.)

Our Center is blessed with children and families from many walks of life, cultures, and countries. If you have a cultural celebration or unique recipe you're willing to share with the children, please contact one of the Teachers. Children love to learn about how other families live, they also feel a special pride when their parent(s) become involved in their "Center life."

Service Philosophy

The Child Care Center staff believe children and parents are to be respected and treated with courtesy, dignity, patience and compassion. While in our care each child is nurtured physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually. Our well-educated teachers and caregivers regard early childhood experiences with the respect and commitment they deserve. The staff work to share this attitude with parents.

We believe children who feel loved, can love others. We believe children who are guided with patience and gentleness learn to trust. Children who have the opportunity to make some of their own decisions develop self-confidence and a sense of responsibility. We're committed to working with parents so this becomes a reality for children at home and school.

We believe children learn most naturally and effectively when engaged in developmentally appropriate activities that are responsive to their interests and experience. Children in an enriched environment learn about the world's diversity. When allowed meaningful interactions with peers and adults, children explore and develop their unique talents; talents that benefit society as a whole.

Throughout the whole learning process, we believe parents are children's first teachers. Therefore, we work to support parents in their efforts to guide children's development.

Goals of Illinois State University Child Care Center

ISU Child Care Center is a service to ISU student's who are parents. With the intention of developing the "total" child, the staff have identified the following goals:

1. To provide high quality, developmental child care to children 3-10 years of age.
2. To nurture self esteem through successful experiences with children and caring adults.
3. To encourage a wholesome attitude and acceptance toward one's body.
4. To guide children in identifying, accepting and expressing feelings of self and others.
5. To facilitate emotional and social development so children may learn to:
 - A. accept diversity in terms of gender, race, culture, age, economics and ability.
 - B. function independently as well as part of a group.
 - C. develop effective communication skills.
6. To encourage sound practices related to safety, health, and nutrition.
7. To stimulate intellectual development by:
 - A. encouraging creativity, curiosity and a sense of wonder.
 - B. teaching problem solving skills.
 - C. offering activities in art, science, social studies, math, movement, language arts, music, dramatic play, woodworking and nutrition.
 - D. offering developmentally appropriate activities where children learn by doing.
8. To encourage physical development by:
 - A. providing large and small motor activities.
 - B. encouraging self-help skills.
9. To foster a respect for proper treatment and storage of play materials.
10. To support children's parents by:
 - A. referring to community services, i.e. parent education & health programs
 - B. providing parent education literature through a lending library.
 - C. encouraging classroom parent participation through an open door policy.
 - D. including parents in special events and parent-child programs.
 - E. communicating through a variety of ways, including, but not limited to: parent conferences, parent-teacher group meetings, daily dialogue, newsletters, curriculum documentation and photos, and parent handbook.

Program Objectives: Classroom

On a daily basis your child will engage in playful interactions with peers and trained teachers. He/she will participate in large group activities, such as story telling and music, as well as small group activities that explore the language arts, creative arts and drama, sciencing, math, and cooking. Teachers plan curriculum based on *THE PROJECT APPROACH*. You'll receive curriculum updates daily as well as in meetings and newsletters.

We have plenty of teachers so your child will receive individual attention when necessary. We have 1 teacher for every 5 children.

We have a wide variety of educational materials (generally called toys) so children experience success while developing at their own rate and in their own style. We will provide activities to foster emotional, social, intellectual and physical growth. We stress good self esteem, clear and positive communication, problem solving, decision making, creativity, independence and the ability to work with others.

Through interactions with teachers, peers and materials, we hope to facilitate the development of a positive attitude toward life and learning. We nurture a child's acceptance and respect for self and others. By helping kids develop positive self concept, we believe we're providing them with the most valuable tool for creating a fulfilling and productive life.

Curriculum Philosophy for Classroom

The ISU Child Care Center curriculum is planned and created to be developmentally appropriate for the unique needs of young children. The teachers plan a daily schedule and learning activities with four things in mind: (1) developmental stages, need and abilities of all young children, (2) needs of the age group they serve and their abilities (3) needs of the specific, individual children in their care, and (4) the personal experiences and history each individual child brings to the classroom learning experience.

The following beliefs guide curriculum development in the ISU Child Care Center:

1. Children need many sensory, concrete, hands-on learning experiences.
2. Each child has a unique learning style, rate of learning and developmental abilities.
3. Children learn best through playful experiences with peers, adults and materials.
4. The classroom environment and curriculum should nurture curiosity, exploration and investigation.
5. Children need time for independent activity as well as cooperative play and learning.
6. The curriculum should evolve from the needs and interests of the children enrolled.
7. There should be a balance of: active and quiet play; self-directed and teacher-planned experiences; indoor and outdoor play; large and small group play;
8. Activities should address the child's total development: intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.
9. The classroom environment, human interactions and teaching style should encourage problem solving, creativity and independent decision-making.
10. Children learn best when allowed to explore and arrive at answers and understand/construct concepts through their own thinking processes. Trial and error are accepted means of exploration and attempts to make sense of the world.
11. Teachers should guide children's learning by asking well-chosen, open-ended and thought-provoking questions which help children arrive at their own conclusions through their own reasoning.
12. Rote memorization, repeated drill, and verbal feeding of facts in isolation from experiences are ineffective and inappropriate means of teaching young children.
13. Children should be exposed to concepts dealing with art & woodworking, science, math, social studies, music, health, safety, cooking & nutrition, creative movement,

dramatic play and the language arts (including listening, speaking, reading and writing.)

14. Children's development is best assessed by observation, review of anecdotal records of experiences and examples of work & projects. Pen & pencil testing and timed testing are inappropriate means of gauging or tracking knowledge, development or abilities.
15. Curriculum and associated practices should be non-biased in terms of gender, culture, race, age, abilities and economic background.
16. Parent involvement is desirable and necessary to enhance children's learning & development.
17. Because a child's self esteem is very precious, teachers are employed who like, respect and enjoy children, and who delight in the milestones of development that take place in the early years of life.

Daily Schedule of Classroom Activities

The classroom has a daily schedule created to respond to the children's ages, abilities and unique needs. The schedule is posted and copies available. A SAMPLE daily schedule follows.

Sample: Daily Classroom Schedule

7:30 to 9:30 a.m. *Families greeted.* Children put items in cubbies and wash hands. Self-chosen solitary or group play within indoor and outdoor learning centers.

9:30 to 9:50 a.m. *Morning Meeting:* Children and teachers discuss ideas for that day's activities. The discussion usually centers around the current project topic, including activities that already occurred. Ideas for future project activities are also discussed.

9:50 to 11:40 a.m. *Project Work/ Activity Time/ Outdoor Play:* Children and teachers discuss that day's activity ideas. Children explore activities in indoor and outdoor areas and learning centers. These may include: art, sciencing, math, dramatic play, language arts (including listening, speaking, reading and writing activities), creative movement, water/sand/sensory play, woodworking, simple cooking or baking, block play, table games, computer games, outdoor play, visiting experts on project topics & walks to campus sights.

11:40 to 12:00 p.m. *Music* and transition to washing hands for lunch.

12:00 to 12:40 p.m. *Lunch time.* Children eat in small groups to promote conversation.

Groups leisurely review the day's experiences, share stories or discuss topics of interest. A record of the day's experiences will be posted on the daily highlights sheet.

12:40 to 1:00 p.m. *Toileting, handwashing, and toothbrushing.* Transition activities to rest and naptime: story reading (group or individual), play in areas, once a week movie.

1:00 to 2:30 p.m. *Rest & nap time* with calming music. Early risers enjoy quiet play.

2:45 to 3:30 p.m. *Open snack:* Children wash hands and when hungry eat nutritious foods in a relaxed self-serve style.

2:30 to 5:00 p.m. Gradual wake up, toileting, handwashing, snack time, clean up of play areas, self-chosen play indoors and in outdoor play area. At the end of the day children help clean up the center by sorting toys, straightening areas, stacking chairs, etc. Then it's time to----HUG MOM AND DAD HELLO!

Media as Teaching Tools in the Classroom

The Center uses a variety of media as teaching tools, from children's picture books to CD-Roms to movies. Media is screened for content accuracy & developmental appropriateness. Media reflects contemporary diversity, is free of discriminatory bias, and promotes non-violence. Our media reflects children and families in a positive manner, regardless of family structure, age, abilities, cultural or racial background, gender or economic status.

Books are available daily. Movies are used no more than once per week. Other activities are available for children not interested in a movie. Most movies are based on quality children's literature. Other themes include creative movement, science (such as bugs and animals, transportation) and fairy tales. While computers may be used occasionally with children, our program works to limit children's screen time since they often have those experiences at home. Any computer programs/games used with children are carefully screened for developmental appropriateness. There are always alternative activities offered when a computer is available. While we believe media is a flexible, useful tool with children, our program focuses more on active learning with peers rather than a sedentary lifestyle.

Food Service & Nutrition Program

In cooperation with the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program children are offered 2 snacks and a hot lunch each day. Lunches are catered by ISU Campus Dining Food Service. Our nutrition program emphasizes whole grains, fruits, vegetables and proteins, (meat, cheese, fish, beans with rice, etc.). Sugars, white flour and additives are limited. (Meaning, we don't serve chocolate cake, sugar cookies or sugar-filled cereals.)

Please review our posted menu daily. We share our recipes for healthy snacks, too!

Dietary Special Requests

According to the DCFS licensing laws, children may only be served food purchased or prepared by the child care center. However, parents whose child requires a special diet due to medical reasons, allergic reactions, or religious beliefs may provide the Center with special foods intended ONLY for their child. *Request for such permission must be made to the Director in writing.*

Parents who bring food into the Center are responsible for its safety. Food parents bring in must be clearly labeled with complete date, food name, child's full name and intended use (i.e. lunch substitute). Perishable food will not be kept at the Center for more than 48 hours. Outdated foods, or food suspected to be spoiled, will never be served.

Non-Custodial Parent Policy & Participation

Custodial parents must accompany a non-custodial parent on their first Center visit. *With custodial parent's WRITTEN permission*, non-custodial parents may: observe their child, attend parent-teacher conferences, receive a Center tour, and attend parent activities. Non-custodial parents may not fulfill child visitation rights in the Center. Non-custodial parents must have custodial parent's WRITTEN authorization to take child from Center. Police will be contacted if an *unauthorized* non-custodial person tries to leave with a child; however, staff will not attempt physical restraint. *Parents must alert Director in writing of custody complications.*

Parking for Arrival and Departure

You will receive a guest parking tag for your car's rear-view mirror. This allows you to park in the identified *child care spaces* for 10 minutes. You *must* display the parking tag to

avoid a ticket! *If you have received an undeserved ticket, appeal it at the Parking and Transportation Office on North Main St. within 7 days of receipt of the ticket.* The Director will write a note to Parking if appropriate.

Cell Phone Usage in Center Classrooms Policy

Our classrooms are a cell phone-free environment for all adults, including staff, lab students and parents. We ask parents not to use cell phones at arrival or departure times in order to maximize opportunities for parent-child and staff-parent communication. This allows Staff to share critical daily information about children without the distraction or interruption of cell phones. A parents undivided attention at arrival and departure is also a great way to build children's sense of importance and family attachment.

You are welcome to use your cell phone in Turner hallways, but not once entering our Child Care space. Your cooperation with our cell-phone free policy is GREATLY appreciated by staff and your children.

Arrival & Departure Routines

- 1) Children **MUST** be accompanied into and out of the Center with a parent or authorized guardian over age 18 years. Please hold children's hands and avoid letting them run ahead of you. In Turner there are many shop classrooms with high technology or mechanical devices that could pose a danger to an unaccompanied child. Thanks for helping the Child Care Center be good neighbors with the other departments in our building.
- 2) **Sign your child in DAILY** at the parent sign-in table.
- 3) Make sure a teacher knows your child arrived so he/she can receive a warm welcome.
- 4) Place belongings in child's cubbie, *then have child wash their hands.*
- 5) At departure, sign your child out and provide a signature on the attendance sheet.

We request that only the custodial parent(s) pick up the child at child care. This will prevent possible confusion as to who may pick up the child...consistency helps staff.

- 6) Per DCFS licensing, children *may not* bring food (i.e. breakfast or snack) to the center.
- 7) Please call 438-3770 if your child is sick or if there is an emergency which will prevent attendance OR delay scheduled pick-up of your child.

Departure Procedure Changes: Alternate Authorized Pick-up Person

If someone other than the regular pick-up person is to come for your child, we **MUST** have prior written notification and authorization from the custodial parent. The form for this can be found in the sign-in area. Alternate pick-up persons will be asked to show a driver's license or photo ID. It also helps if we meet the person through you before hand.

Naptime & Bathroom Supplies for Child Care

- 1) Please send a **small, labeled** blanket and pillow for naptime. Cot-size blankets, please; a beach towel is a nice size. Small pillows fit best into the cubbies.
- 2) Please bring a **toothbrush** for your child to use after lunches. (We provide toothpaste.)
- 3) Diapering ointment, if necessary. (Requires a medicine dispensation form we provide.)
- 4) Send **sunscreen, labeled** with your child's full name. Before we can administer sunscreen, you must complete the Center's medical dispensation form.
- 5) A **labeled** hair comb or brush is optional.

Clothing for Child Care

Keep an **extra labeled** set of seasonal clothing in your child's cubbie at all times. This should include underwear, socks, pants/dress, shirt. These clothes will be used in case of bathroom or playtime accidents or emergencies. If your child uses the clothes, please remember to re-stock their cubbie with another extra set the next day.

Please change the extra clothing as the seasons change. If your child is sent home in borrowed clothes from the Center, please return promptly.

Please dress your child in *comfortable "playable" clothes*...we use paint, playdough, sand and water daily, and of course you know, accidents happen. Please dress your child in *easy to fasten and unfasten clothing*. *This is especially important with those beginning in toilet training.*

Please keep a pair of *sturdy shoes*, like tennis shoes, at child care at all times. Sturdy shoes are safest for children's play. Please don't send your child in flimsy, plastic sandals that provide little support. The kids play vigorously outside and often take walks to our lovely quad and its butterfly garden.

Dress children warmly for outdoor winter play, i.e. boots, hats, mittens, snow pants. Plastic-covered mittens are best since they don't allow water to reach kids' fingers.

Treasures for Home, But Not For School

- 1) *No candy, gum, food or money should be brought to school.*
- 2) *No personal toys.* We know it sounds hard-hearted, but we have many toys at school that are made sturdy enough for 20+ pairs of hands eight hours a day...most home toys don't last half as long. "Home" toys also often result in fights over ownership, sharing, trading and bribing for a "best friend."
- 3) Books and cds that are more easily shared are welcome.
- 4) Your child is welcome to bring a "teddy" or special cuddle item or blanket for nap-time.
- 5) Please check your child's cubbie daily for items to be taken home.

Wheel Toys from Home Guidelines: For Summer School-agers Only

Summer only, we offer school-agers (first grade and older) the chance to use their personal wheeled toys in our play yard. With parent permission, children may bring to child care: *roller blades, roller skates, skateboards or scooters*. Your child is **not** required to bring such items to child care. **We have plenty of outside equipment school-agers can use** if you feel uncomfortable sending their wheeled toys to child care.

Following are our "Wheel-Toys from Home" guidelines. They will help your child have fun while also learning valuable safety lessons.

*All items must be clearly **labeled** with your child's full name.

*Children must bring in and use: **elbow, knee, wrist** protection AND a head **helmet** that fits properly and securely. Please bring any other safety gear you deem important.

*Items will be stored in baskets in a closet when not in use.

*Only your child will be allowed to use his/her own personal items.

*Items may be taken home each night or left overnight.

If you have any questions please talk to a teacher.

Separation Anxiety: Handling Morning Good-byes

For some children, drop off time in the morning can be stressful. Their behavior may be "clingy" and possibly tearful. To ease the separation, may we suggest:

- 1) Enter with your child and help him/her with putting their belongings in their cubbie. Help your child with arrival handwashing.
- 2) Sign them in and make sure a teacher has seen and greeted your child.
- 3) You might want to talk about your upcoming day or about things your child might do. Tell your child you are coming back and will be thinking of them. Tell them in concrete terms when you will be back, such as after afternoon snack; this tends to help make it more meaningful to them than saying 4 o'clock.
- 4) When you leave, make it "short and sweet." Exchange a hug and kiss and then do leave, the teacher will take over from there. Teachers empathize with the child, ("It's hard to let your Mom/Dad go.") and then help them to become involved in an activity. *We realize it is often harder on the parent than the child to separate; feel free to email or call us after 15 minutes or so to ask how your child is doing.*

Staff Phone Numbers & Voice Mail

Director's Phone number: 438-5026

Team Teachers' Phone Number: 438-3770

Our phones automatically use voice mail when we're out of the office or using the phone. Please leave your name and number; we'll respond as soon as we can. Each year you'll also be given staff email addresses should you prefer using email communication.

Since the teachers are occupied with children most of the day, they usually return messages once naptime is in full swing, between 1:30- 2:30 p.m. However, from 2:30-5 p.m. Teachers are with the kids, so their messages won't be checked until Center closing.

The Child Care Center does not employ a secretary or office receptionist. (Which helps keep rates low.) But this also means the Director's voice mail will pick up when she's out of the office. The Director returns messages as soon as possible, rarely later than 24 hours.

Emergency Messages: Reaching Staff by Phone

Should you experience an EMERGENCY and not reach a staff person by phone, contact the ISU Family and Consumer Sciences office (FCS) at 438-2517 and ask for a Center staff person. If the emergency occurs over the noon hour, the FCS office may be closed, so contact ISU Police at 438-8631 and ask them to notify a Center staff person to call you right away.

Discipline Policy & Child Guidance Procedures

Our goal is to help children develop positive self esteem and self control. Style of discipline can impede or facilitate that goal. We believe positive discipline gives the best long-term results. Therefore all center staff are trained in positive child guidance techniques.

Because it's our livelihood, and we've had lots of experience with many different children, the Director and Teachers have a wealth of ideas about guiding and disciplining children. *Please ask for discipline ideas, books, or handouts. We're also glad to refer you to community resources that help parents master positive discipline and parenting skills.*

Discipline Measures We Won't Use

If inappropriate behaviors arise, we DO NOT use physical punishment such as spanking. Nor do we namecall, demean or withhold food. We feel these methods destroy the development of a trusting, supportive relationship. They also model inappropriate behavior leading children to believe it's o.k. to hit if you are an adult.

Our Discipline Practices: How We Manage Children's Behavior

- 1) Teachers plan the schedule and activities, and arrange the classroom environment to PREVENT behavior problems when possible.
- 2) We tell children what they CAN do. Clear expectations are communicated...and yes, repeated often. We design the classroom environment so it gives children cues on appropriate behavior. (For instance, toy bins are easily reached and labeled.)
- 3) We recognize children's appropriate behavior with specific encouragement/praise. Example: "Thanks for picking up the blocks. Cooperation really helps!" or "You used your words when you were frustrated."
- 4) Staff and children learn to manage feelings through appropriate verbal or non-verbal expression. Teachers are role models for using positive methods of communicating.
- 5) Teachers guide children in learning positive conflict resolution skills. Children are coached to learn how to negotiate, share, trade, cooperate, creatively problem solve and compromise.
- 6) We firmly--but calmly--state limits or rules that protect children, materials and the classroom living/learning environment. Children are made aware of reasons for limits and rules. They are also involved in creating reasonable classroom rules.
- 7) Children are told of limits and consequences for inappropriate behavior. We enforce limits and consequences CONSISTENTLY in a straight-forward, no nonsense manner.
- 8) Natural and logical consequences are enforced that are appropriate to a child's understanding and abilities. For instance, a child is taught how to clean up their own spilled milk. A child would help a teacher repair a torn book. Sometimes a child will, for a short time, lose the privilege of using a toy if they have abused it or disregarded rules.
- 9) If a child is disruptive to the environment or harmful to others, he/she may be separated from the group, usually to a chair away from the activity. After gaining self control and talking to a teacher, the child may "start fresh."
- 10) If a child's behavior becomes too challenging, teachers may request a conference with parents so they can shed light on the child's behavior and co-plan discipline measures. *If a child's behavior greatly interferes with or impedes smooth and peaceful classroom operation, or puts him/herself or others at risk of unacceptable bodily or emotional harm, staff will discuss with the child's parent(s) recommendations for outside assessment, and-- if necessary, dismissal and alternate placement options.*

Staff Structure, Qualifications, Responsibilities and Supervision

Continuous inservice training is expected of all employees. Director and Team Teachers are First Aid and CPR/AED certified and trained in preventing the spread of contagious disease through universal precautions. All staff are state mandated reporters for suspected child neglect or abuse and are trained in identifying signs of neglect and abuse.

The **Director** is responsible for overall Center operation, including management and staff supervision. The Director also teaches one college course per semester for the Family and Consumer Sciences Department, which places practicum students in the Center.

The Director must hold a Master's Degree, have experience teaching young children, and hold a Food Service Sanitation Certificate. The position is supervised by the Chair of the Family and Consumer Sciences Department, Mail Code 5060, 163 Turner Hall, Ph. 309-438-2517.

The **Team Teachers** are responsible for classroom management, including daily schedule, curriculum and developmental assessments. They must hold a Bachelor's Degree in

child development or early childhood education. Prior experience teaching with young children is required. Head Teachers are supervised by the Center Director.

The Teacher Aides must be at least 18 years old and an ISU student. They assist Head Teachers & Director in classroom activities or as needed. They are supervised by the Director.

Attendance Schedule: Arranging child's daily attendance

Attendance schedule is arranged semesterly based on the parent's request and availability of enrollment slots. A form will be posted at the end of each semester so parents request an attendance schedule for the FOLLOWING semester. See Director with questions.

Attendance Schedule: Making Changes

Please submit a written request to the Director if you wish to make minor changes to your child's attendance schedule during a semester. Significant changes (such as from full time to part time care) are accepted only when registering for the following semester.

Billing Policies

You will be billed once a month. Due dates are identified on bills and posted each semester on the parent bulletin board in the sign-in area and web site. Parents may request one bill for an entire semester by notifying the Director in writing. There is no reduced fee for a second child from the same family.

The Child Care Center is open when ISU classes are held, therefore you will be billed for all days we operate, regardless of your child's attendance. You are billed for days when your child is absent, such as due to illness or vacation. You are billed for days the Center closes for holidays observed by ISU which occur within a semester, i.e. July 4, Labor Day, or Martin Luther King's Birthday. (You DO NOT pay for Thanksgiving or Spring break.)

Unused days of child care CAN NOT be accumulated and used for additional care. Meaning, if your child misses a day, it can not be made up another day that is not regularly scheduled for your child.

If qualified, parents are responsible for arranging subsidies and associated paperwork through IL Dept. of Human Services. (DHS) Parents are liable for amounts DHS doesn't pay.

Billing Rates

Current rates are maintained on the program web site. Billing rate is determined semesterly by parent's ISU course credit load or ISU faculty/staff employment status. ISU students taking less 4 credit hours pay the same rate as ISU faculty/staff. Whenever rates change, parents will be notified in writing and the web site updated.

Materials Fee

A materials fee (per child) is charged once at the beginning of each semester and is posted on the web site.

Holding Fee for Non-consecutive Enrollment

During the summer months only (Mid May – Mid August), families may pay a holding fee to hold their child's enrollment. Children must be gone from the program for at least 4

consecutive weeks and up to a maximum of the entire summer. Families must notify the Director no later than the Friday before spring break that they intend to use the holding fee during the summer. Holding fees are nonrefundable if a child disenrolls in the program. For questions regarding the Holding Fee policy, please contact the Director.

Subsidized Child Care Fees

Parents who qualify for child care subsidies are responsible for initiating and managing subsidizing agencies' paperwork to determine extent and duration of subsidy eligibility. Should a parent prove qualified for a subsidy, parents are responsible for arranging subsidy child care payments through Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS).

All parents will be responsible for payment of incurred child care bills by posted due dates UNTIL the Child Care Center Director is officially notified *IN WRITING* that DHS/CCRRN—or other subsidy agency-- has approved their funding, included dates and rates covered.

Child care clients are responsible for payment, by posted due dates, for any portion of ISU Child Care Center fees the subsidizing agency will not cover.

The child care does NOT process any retro-active reimbursements for child care payments made prior to the date the Center RECEIVED the subsidizing approval letter. Parents may contact the involved subsidy agency's caseworker regarding reimbursement for fees paid prior to the Center being formally notified of subsidy approval.

Parents are encouraged to maintain copies of all subsidy paperwork they turn in to their subsidizing agency.

Collection of Bills and Fees by Due Dates

Monthly bills, based on a weekly fee, will be placed in your parent-staff communication file at the parent sign in area. Payments, made by personal or cashier's check only, can be placed in the payment collection box on the sign-in area by the due date. The Center will deposit payments at Cashiers. A stamped copy of payment receipt will be placed in parent files. Maintaining them for tax credit purposes is recommended.

Overdue Bill Policy & Late Payment Penalty Fees

Parents who pay bills after the due date will be charged \$10.00 for each week or part of a week a bill is overdue.

At the end of each month, your bill from that month *must* be paid. (Example: September bills must be paid by October 1.) If the previous month's bill is not paid, one week notice will be sent to you stating your child's enrollment status will be discontinued.

Unpaid child care bills are turned into Student Accounts as a delinquency to prevent or cancel class registration. Unpaid bills will also be turned into a collection agency.

Bill Due Dates: Alternate Due Date Requests

If, *due to reasonable and acceptable circumstances*, a parent can not pay the bill in full by the billing due date, the **Director** MUST be notified in writing *before the initial due date comes to pass*. The Director must be given a **written alternate payment plan** subject to Director APPROVAL. (The director is not obligated to grant approval.) The submitted *alternate payment plan must ensure the bill will be paid off by the first day of the following month*. The alternate plan must include an immediate partial payment.

If due to EXTREME circumstances, the remainder of the outstanding bill **can not** be paid by the first day of the next month, a longer term alternate payment plan, with specified due dates-- must be developed and submitted to the *director, IN WRITING. The alternate payment plan and due dates may cover no more than a month's time and is subject to DIRECTOR APPROVAL.* (The director is not obligated to approve.)

*If a DIRECTOR APPROVED alternate bill payment plan is not abided by, the overdue bill penalty fee will be calculated based on the **original due date** of the billing period. Failure to abide by an alternate payment plan can be reason for child disenrollment.*

Billing Mistakes: Reporting

If you find a discrepancy or mistake in your bill, please submit it to the **Director** and *in writing* explain the discrepancy. Adjustments, if deemed appropriate, will be made.

Late Child Pick-up from Center Policy

We strictly abide by posted Center closing time. If you don't come for your child by our posted closing time, you will receive a penalty bill. *If a parent hasn't arrived by closing time, staff will attempt to contact Emergency Contact individuals the parent listed on the child's enrollment application. Those Emergency Contacts, who are authorized for child release, will be asked to come to the Center to assume responsibility and physical custody of the child.*

After ONE HOUR if no one on the emergency list is reached or a custodial parent(s) hasn't arrived to pick up a child, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) will be contacted. At that point DCFS will determine if the child should be brought to their agency or a crisis nursery. The University Police will be contacted to transport a child if needed.

Leaving a child after closing time may result in losing your child's enrollment space. If a child is disenrolled, one week's notice will be provided.

Late Child Pick-Up Penalty Fees and Payment Procedure

To avoid unnecessary frustration for staff and your child, please arrive promptly by our closing time. Our teachers have personal responsibilities to meet and their own families who need them.

Late fees will be assessed as follows:

- A \$25 fee will be assessed for pickups between the times of 5:31 pm – 5:45 pm (or 5:01 pm – 5:15 pm during alternate closing times).
- Pickups after 5:45 (or 5:15 during alternate closing times) will be assessed an additional \$2 per minute charge for each minute you are late.
- Payments for late fees **MUST** be paid within one week of the late pickup time. If payment is not received by the due date on the bill, care will be terminated for your child on the day after payment was due.
- Families who pick up late twice during a semester will be given a one week notice of termination of care after the second late pickup.

Your total late fee will be determined by the ISU Child Care Center Director upon receiving a late fee notice by the closing teacher. Your late fee bill will be placed in your child's folder at the Parent table and must be paid by the due date showing on the bill. You may drop payment off in the Director's file on the Parent table (check/money order only) **or** payment may be made at Cashiers Office in the Student Accounts Building.

If your penalty fee receipt isn't presented to Center staff within the next day, you will not be allowed to leave your child at the Center until you do present proof of payment.

Emergency Contact Procedures and Forms

By the first day of each semester, parents are required to fill out an emergency form. This form tells us where you are while your child is in our care (such as what classroom on campus you are in). **YOU MUST FILL THE EMERGENCY FORM OUT ON THE FIRST DAY BEFORE YOU LEAVE YOUR CHILD AT THE CENTER.** The form allows us to move swiftly. We will call you at work or get a message to your classroom/office if your child becomes sick or is involved in an accident. *Whenever you have a schedule change, please revise your emergency form.* We recommend you keep a cell phone on vibrate so we can reach you even in meetings or classes.

On your enrollment application, you identified persons who could serve as emergency contacts in the event you can't be reached. Please be sure to update that information as needed so we can contact them in emergencies if attempts to locate you fail.

When a parent or emergency contact person is notified of an emergency, they must **RESPOND IMMEDIATELY** by either calling the Center, coming to the center, or if applicable, meeting the child at a designated hospital or clinic.

Emergency Treatment Waiver & Securing Emergency Care

Be sure to turn in your signed **EMERGENCY TREATMENT WAIVER**. If your child becomes ill or hurt, we will make every effort to find you right away. You will then have the parental option of seeking medical treatment, which we **HIGHLY** recommend. If you can't be found, the Center will secure emergency treatment while trying to find you. Emergency contact persons will be notified and asked to respond if you can not be reached.

Evacuation in Case of Campus Emergency

In the rare event ISU declares a campus emergency requiring evacuation from our premises, children will be evacuated to a pre-arranged location using the best means possible. Please be sure to turn in your Evacuation waiver to expedite this process. Parents will be alerted by text or phone to evacuation and child pick-up location.

Insurance Requirements

Purchase dependent-care insurance. ISU is self-insured. ANY field trip driver must maintain current insurance & hold a driver's license .

Health, Medication and Safety Policies

- 1) Staff medical exams are required every two years, proof of a negative TB test must be included. The Center staff follow the guidelines identified in the Center's "Universal Precautions for Prevention of Infectious Disease." At least one staff member in each classroom is trained in first aid and CPR and AED use. Classrooms are equipped with first aid kits and other safety equipment, such as fire extinguishers.
- 2) Each child must have a medical exam on file that states he/she is free from communicable disease.

- 3) Each child is required to have a NEGATIVE TB test and must be immunized against whooping cough, diphtheria, measles, polio, tetanus, rubella, influenzae B and Hepatitis B. Proof of lead screening is required.
- 4) If your child has allergies, be sure they are included on the enrollment application form AND be sure to tell the teachers verbally (as a reminder).
- 5) Medical re-examination must be submitted every two years.
- 6) Notify the Center immediately of any contagious disease such as chicken pox, measles, strep throat, lice, diarrhea.
- 7) Upon arrival children must wash hands: lather hands & scrub under running water for 15 seconds, use disposable towel for drying hands AND for turning off faucet.

Illness Exclusion Policy and Procedures

Per IL licensing standards, a child MAY NOT BE SENT TO CHILD CARE if illness prevents him/her from comfortably participating in classroom activities OR if illness requires greater care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children. Children may not attend when symptoms of possible contagious disease are evident.

Ill Children: Staff responses for care and release from Center

Children with symptoms listed below in the section titled "**Illness and Symptoms That Prevent Child Attendance**" will be separated from other children and their parent/guardian contacted. Ill children, who don't pose an emergency, must be picked up from the Center within one hour of notification. (Of course, emergencies require even quicker action.)

Children should remain home until the symptom is gone and at least 24 hours has passed. In specific situations a physician may provide written documentation that a child is not contagious and thus allow the child to return with symptoms. An example would be a rash that is diagnosed as an allergic reaction or diarrhea that has been cultured and not found to be caused by bacteria or virus.

Whenever a fever is involved, children MUST be fever-free for a 24 hour period before returning to child care. Please provide children with adequate recuperation time from illness before returning them to day care.

Illness and Symptoms That Prevent Child Attendance

Because we are committed to protecting your child and all others from contagious disease, the following **signs or symptoms of illness will preclude child's classroom attendance:**

- Breathing, rapid or difficult. May return with doctor okay or regular breathing is restored.
- Chicken pox: May return 6 days after rash onset or evidence of dry, crusted lesions.
- Coughing, chronic. May return when health is restored.
- Crying, persistent and uncontrollable. May return when symptom ceases.
- Diarrhea: May return when bowels return to normal.
- Eyes, yellowish: May return with doctor okay or absence of symptom.
- Fever of 100 degrees or more: May return when fever free for 24 hours.
- Foot & mouth disease: May return with doctor okay.
- Hepatitis A: Return requires public health dept. okay.
- Impetigo: May return 24 hours after treatment.
- Irritability, unusual and severe. May return when behavior returns to normal.

- Lethargy, unusual and persistent. May return when behavior returns to normal.
- Lice: May return 24 hours after first treatment.
- Measles: May return 4 days after disappearance of rash.
- Mouth sores: May return when doctor confirms they're not contagious.
- Mumps: May return 9 days after swelling starts.
- Neck, unexplainably stiff: May return when symptom is explained or subsides.
- Nose, chronic runny, discolored fluid: May return when health is restored.
- Pertussis (whooping cough): May return after 5 days of completed antibiotic treatment.
- Pink eye: May return 24 hours after initiation of treatment.
- Pinworm: May return 24 hours after treatment.
- Rash: May return when doctor confirms they are non-contagious,
- Ringworm: May return 24 hours after treatment.
- Rubella: May return 7 days after rash onset.
- Scabies: May return 24 hours after first treatment.
- Skin, yellowish: May return with doctor okay or absence of symptom.
- Sneezing, chronic: May return when health is restored.
- Stools, gray or white. May return when symptom disappears or with doctor's okay.
- Strep throat: May return after fever-free for 24 hours.
- Tuberculosis: May return once doctor gives okay.
- Urine, unusually dark. May return once symptom is diagnosed or disappears.
- Vomiting: May return with 24 hour absence of vomiting.

Medicine Administered at Child Care

We discourage giving medicine to children at the Center. However, if it is absolutely necessary, Center staff will administer medication labeled with your child's FIRST AND LAST name on it and brought in its ORIGINAL container. Before medicine can be given, a **medicine dispensation form MUST** be completed by the parent for each day the medicine is to be administered. (Ask a teacher for a form.) Medicine will be administered per directions on the original container. *Diaper ointments, sunscreen or insect repellents also require a medicine dispensation form signed by the parent. Parents provide such items at their own discretion.*

Never leave medicine in your child's cubby or on the parent sign in table. Please hand to a team teacher for safe, secure storage.

Dressing Children for Outdoor Weather to Ensure Health

The rule of thumb to follow is: *If a child is too sick to go out, they are too sick for child care.* When children are well enough to attend child care, dress them APPROPRIATELY FOR THE WEATHER. We go out everyday of the year...unless it's a downpour or blizzard. Research shows that FRESH, OUTDOOR AIR--with less density of germs and its moisture-- helps keep children healthy. Send light jackets for spring and early fall. In winter send adequate cover-ups, i.e. hat, mittens (plastic covered is best!), boots, snowsuits, etc.

Pesticide Applications

Occasionally ISU Grounds applies pesticides or herbicides on the child care play yard to kill weeds or harmful pests. In such cases, parents are notified ahead of time of the name of the product to be applied and when it will take place. The Grounds Department of Illinois State

University is responsible for the application. And of course, children will not be present on the play yard during or immediately following application. Contact the Director of ISU Grounds at 438-2035 should you have any questions.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy

The Center's employees are trained to be alert to symptoms of child neglect or abuse. We are legally bound to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline.

If you ever have concerns about your child's welfare or treatment in the Center, you are encouraged to speak with the Director. If you are not satisfied, you may contact the FCS Chair at 438-2517 and/or the Department of Children and Family Services at 828-0022.

Holidays & Vacation Days Observed

The Center closes to observe all (and only) those holidays and vacation days approved for the whole University. We operate when ISU classes are held except for the first 5 weeks of summer session. (For list of paid holidays and vacation days, see Billing Policy.)

Emergency Center Closings

During severe winter weather, we will close if the University does (which is rarely). However, *if weather is severe enough to prevent staff from getting to the Center or if weather is too severe to SAFELY transport children in a car, we will close, EVEN IF THE UNIVERSITY STILL HOLDS CLASSES or operates offices.* View ISU's web page or listen to WJBC radio for child care center closings.

Birthday Celebrations at Child Care

Parents who would like to bring a "celebration treat" for their child's birthday should contact the Teacher. Per DCFS licensing, *homemade treats MAY NOT be brought to the Center as treats or snacks. Treats must be store-bought and packaged by a grocer or bakery. Please make the treat at least semi-nutritious, meaning not too sugar or fat-filled.* We like carrot cake, ice cream, banana bread, etc. You are welcome to come and take pictures while we sing to your child. Full-fledged parties are best organized and held elsewhere after hours.

Social Networking Photo and Personal Identification Posting Policies

There are times when parents (or staff) wish to post photos of a child at play in the Center on a social networking site to share with others. Staff, nor lab students, are **never** given permission to post children or parent photos. Parents may choose to post photos of their **own** child at play in the Center, but to respect the privacy and confidentiality of other enrolled children, parents are not at liberty to post photos of other Child Care Center children on social networking sites, even if those children are photographed during play with their own child. No one is allowed to post identities or personal information regarding staff, children, lab students or parents on any social networking site.

Withdrawal and Enrollment Dismissal Procedures

- 1) A week's **written** notice is required for enrollment withdrawal. Without notice, one week's fee will be charged. One week's notice is required when declining a reserved space, for instance, failing to return for summer session when space was reserved in the spring.

- 2) If a child's behavior indicates he/she is not adjusting to the program; has needs that the program can not fill or accommodate; or is detrimental to the functioning of the class as a whole, staff members will hold consultations with staff, parents and professionals in order to determine if the child would be better served by another program. If it is determined the Center can not serve the child's needs, or if a child significantly disrupts the program for other children, parents will be given one week to find alternate child care.
- 3) If a parent or guardian exhibits behavior which is detrimental to the health and well-being of the children and staff in a classroom or negatively interferes with the normal functioning of the classroom, he or she will be asked to find alternate child care services for their child.
- 4) Failure of a parent to abide by Center policies and procedures may result in being asked to find alternate child care. Disregard of Center policies and procedures might include, but are not limited to, the following circumstances: not paying bills on time, leaving a child past closing time, refusing to accompany child into Center, failure to return requested forms by due date, endangering the well-being and safety of children by leaving medicine in child's cubbie, bringing child in before reserved hours OR leaving child past reserved hours, repeatedly bringing a child in late, failure to submit or update medical forms by due date, hostile disrespect to a Center employee (which includes sexual harassment), arriving or departing with a child while under the influence of substances leaving the parent incapable of safely caring for a child.
- 5) If a parent contests the Director's decision for child disenrollment, the final decision will lie with the Chair of the ISU Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Department. If a parent chooses to contest child disenrollment, they must do so in writing within 5 days of being notified by the Director of child disenrollment. All communication will be documented and maintained on file. An appeal a decision by the FCS Chair must take place within two weeks of the date of the center's written notice of disenrollment. Any decisions made by the Director will be enforced until the FCS Chair either upholds or overrules the Director's disenrollment decision.

Special Needs and Children with Disabilities

The Child Care Center will abide by the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a child with special needs, your enrollment application requested information to help us care for him or her. Please update that information as needed.

Confidentiality of Records

Children's files may be reviewed and accessed by: the Director, child's teachers, custodial parents, legal guardians, public health authorities and authorized legal personnel, such as staff of the Department of Children and Family Services or police or court authorities. Most forms are for licensing requirements and must be kept in a secure location.

Confidential Records: Conditions for Release

Confidential records from a child's file will be released **only** under the following conditions:

- A. Requester is custodial parent or legal guardian.

- B. Requester has a release form with custodial parent or legal guardian's signature giving the Center permission to release records to said individual.
- C. A subpoena demands records.
- D. An IL Dept. of Children & Family Services caseworker requests records.
- E. The requester submits proof he/she claimed child as a dependent on the previous year's 1040 Internal Revenue Services tax form. (Per Family & Education Privacy Act.)

Records maintained for your child's file:

Birth certificate of child (copy only)
 If applicable, court dictated child custody agreement or guardianship designee (foster care)
 Enrollment Application, with authorizations
 Medical Form (New one every 2 years with immunization chart completed)
 Verification Slip for receipt of Family Handbook
 Child Care Food Program Annual Enrollment and Financial Statement
 Emergency Form and Emergency Contacts (New one at beginning of each semester)
 Emergency Treatment Waiver (Used if medical treatment must be secured.)
 Evacuation Transportation Waiver
 Scheduling form, Billing statements and account status
 Medicine Dispensation Forms
 Accident Report Form (Used for ill or injured children.)
 Developmental Profiles (Prepared by teachers once each year.)
 Parent conference note
 Communications from you to the Center or from the Center to you.
 Referral records (i.e. vision or hearing screening, counseling, etc.)
 Signed waivers for field trips, participation in research, emergency care, transport, etc.