



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Parent Handbook

September 2019

4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20016-8015

<http://www.american.edu/hr/cdc>

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Welcome

Welcome to the American University Child Development Center (CDC). We are glad that you are a part of the CDC family and hope this will be an exciting and rewarding experience for you and your child.

We are here to provide a high-quality education and care for your children. The CDC staff provides a warm, supportive environment and responds to the needs and interests of each child. The CDC provides rich experiences for growth and development through total involvement in play. In this environment, children begin to develop to their fullest potential and learn to seek and enjoy the process of learning. We encourage your participation as our partners in your child's growth and learning experience at the CDC. Parents are always welcome at the Center to share/present an activity to a group, or simply to visit.

Please make yourself familiar with this handbook. It will provide you with information about the Center's philosophy and goals, programs, and operating policies and procedures. If you have questions, feel free to ask a teacher or the Director for clarification. We believe that communication between parents and staff is essential for the well-being of our children and for the smooth operation of the center.

CDC Contact Information

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Calendar 2019 – 2020

Holidays

September 2	Monday	Labor Day
November 28 – 29	Thursday – Friday	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 23 – January 1	Monday – Wednesday	Winter Break
January 20	Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
May 25	Monday	Memorial Day
July 3	Friday	Independence Day

Parent Meetings

September 11 (Parents only)	Wednesday	Back to School Night 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
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Pot Luck Suppers (for the Entire Family)

October 4*	Friday	5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
June 5*	Friday	5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Parent/Teacher Conferences (Center Closed)

(Child Care is only available during your scheduled meeting time)

November 15*	Friday	Fall Conference
May 15*	Friday	Spring Conference

In addition, parents or teachers may request a conference at any time should one be deemed necessary.

Staff Development Days (Center Closed)

~3 days for staff training and professional development	TBA	Various days for Early Childhood Conference (parents will be given one notice one month in advance)
August 17 – 21, 2020 (prior to start of AU classes)	Monday – Friday	Cleaning, maintenance, staff training, and orientation for new children

Spring and Summer at CDC

May 5, 2020*	Tuesday	School pictures
June 15 – August 14, 2020	Summer Program	No enrollment necessary; operating hours remain the same. Programming changes to include summer activities.

Tuition

Monthly tuition is due the first business day of each month.

*These dates are tentative and can change during the school year. You will be notified if any changes are necessary.

Section I: Program Content

History

The Child Development Center opened September 25, 1978. The program began with nine children, under the prerogative of the Student Confederation which served as the prime source of funding. The hours of operation were 9:00am to 3:00pm, eight months yearly. The Center has grown to include 30 full-time children who are served from 8:00am to 6:00pm for twelve months a year. In 1979, the CDC became a department in the Division of Student Life and in 1993 it was moved to the Office of Human Resources.

Mission

The Child Development Center's mission is:

- to offer a developmentally appropriate educational program for children ages 2½ to 6 years;
- to support the family unit through on-campus child care for the University community of students, faculty, and staff;
- to support the University undergraduate and graduate programs by providing on-campus observation and laboratory supplements to classroom participation;
- to provide an educational experience for university students interested in young children and parenting; and,
- to facilitate continued and increased enrollment of adult students in University graduate, undergraduate, and Continuing Education programs.

Philosophy

The American University Child Development Center is dedicated to providing an exemplary early childhood program. We believe in fostering the growth and development of the whole child in the interrelated areas of development: cognitive, physical, social, and emotional.

The CDC provides a learning environment that is rich in opportunities for active engagement and exploration. It is warmly supportive, safe, and stimulating. The professional staff interacts with each child to help him or her build relationships, extend play, and support problem solving. Teachers at the CDC understand and respect the uniqueness of each child in terms of their needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles.

Goals

The CDC is an educational program at an institution of higher learning. The general goals for the children are listed in the following areas:

- **Self-Esteem & Independence** – encouraging each child's pride in individual characteristics, families, experiences, and accomplishments and each child's responsibility for personal care, actions, and words.
- **Discovery & Exploration** – fostering a positive attitude toward learning through questioning, observing, creating, manipulating and experimenting with varied materials related to diverse themes.

- **Physical Capabilities** – providing children opportunities to develop small and large motor skills, locomotion and coordination through a variety of materials and activities.
- **Artistic Expression and Appreciation** – cultivating each child’s ability to express ideas and emotions through language, art, music, movement, and drama.
- **Social Interaction & Cooperation** – promoting children’s social skills for diverse adult and peer relations, including listening, expressive language, turn-taking, following directions, rules and routines, group participation, care for shared materials, and conflict resolution.
- **Emotions** – cultivating the development of positive affective states and dispositions, fostering an increased self-awareness and acceptance of each child’s emotional states and encouraging appropriate expression of these emotions.

Curriculum

At CDC we implement the Creative Curriculum® developed by Teaching Strategies, Inc. This curriculum program identifies goals in all areas of development:

- **Social:** To help children feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are a part of the group.
- **Emotional:** To help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control, and have a positive attitude toward life.
- **Cognitive:** To help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.
- **Physical:** To help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

This curriculum identifies the knowledge, skills, and concepts important for preschool children to acquire in each content area: literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts and technology.

Each classroom is organized into ten interest areas offering multiple opportunities for children to explore, discover, and learn. The interest areas provide a setting for children to learn academics and apply skills.

- Blocks
- Dramatic Play
- Toys and games
- Art
- Library
- Discovery
- Sand and Water
- Music and Movement
- Cooking
- Computers

The outdoor learning environment is an equally important interest area in our program.

At the CDC, play is regarded as a primary process through which learning occurs. As such, it is considered a central component of the CDC program and is reflected in a classroom environment that promotes active play. The CDC classrooms are arranged by activity/interest areas. Each area is designed with specific materials to promote active exploration, self-expression, and collaboration. The teachers interact with children during center time to promote learning and work individually with children throughout the day.

All staff members are responsible for being thoroughly familiar with the CDC philosophy and goals. Full-time classroom staff are responsible for collaborating with their teams to use these goals as a flexible framework for planning learning experiences and interacting with children. The staff develops plans to provide children with a variety of opportunities for learning and to encourage broad exploration. They support children in doing as much for themselves as possible. In addition, they strive to support a variety of social experiences through engaging children in conversation throughout the day and by organizing classroom time and space to balance individual, small group, and large group activities. All staff members serve as coaches as children practice social skills involved in peer interaction, friendship formation, and conflict resolution.

Assessment

We use Teaching Strategies Gold®, an online assessment system, to evaluate children's development and progress. All teaching staff have been trained in the use and implementation of this assessment tool. Teachers follow specific guidelines and expectations for each age group in the areas of physical, social/emotional, language, and cognitive development. Assessment results are shared and discussed with parents during parent-teacher conferences. All information collected is kept in total confidentiality.

Enrichment Classes

We have incorporated Music/Yoga and Soccer classes into our curriculum. These extra-curricular activities will enhance children's learning and development and are both engaging and fun. Music/Yoga is held during regular school hours, from September to June and is mandatory. Soccer is optional and offered during the Fall and Spring season.

Parents are responsible for these additional fees and are paid directly to the instructors.

Hours of Operation

The Center operates from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, year-round. Please check CDC's annual calendar for the current school year holiday and closing schedule.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule of the Child Development Center includes:

- a sequenced time structure allowing for active and quiet experiences, large group and small group
- activities, free choice time to play alone or with friends, as well as indoor and outdoor playtimes

- learning in ten areas, including library, dramatic play, science, blocks, carpentry, art, math and table games, cooking, sand/water, and outdoor play

Each day, the program includes both teacher-led and child-initiated activities; a balance of quiet and active experiences; and, group and individual experiences. The choice of activities and materials varies according to the child's interest and monthly themes. In general, free choice time (in the daily schedules below) consists of blocks of time for children to pursue play in the classroom activity areas. Special projects are noted on the monthly calendar posted in each classroom.

The Orange Room children are 2½ to 4 years old and the Green Room children are 3½ to 5½ years old. In the Green Room, children are divided into two separate groups for small group time – a teacher-directed activity period that expands on theme concepts and includes informal discussions, group games, and small group projects such as cooking, science and cooperative art projects.

The day is carefully structured, although the schedule is flexible to meet the needs of the group and individual children. The standard structure of the day is:

Orange Room

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival of Children
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Free Play / Interest Areas
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Snack
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Clean-up / Toileting
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Circle Time
10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Small Group Activities
11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	Outdoor Play
11:50 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Bathroom, Music & Movement
12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch / Clean-up / Toileting
1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Nap / Rest Time
3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Wake Up / Story Time
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Snack
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Outdoor Play
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Free Choice Time in Green Room / Departure

Green Room

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival of Children/Free Play in Orange Room
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Free Choice / Interest Areas
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Snack
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Outdoor Play
11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Small Group Time
11:15 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.	Projects and Free Play
11:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Clean-up / Toileting
12:00 p.m.– 12:15 p.m.	Circle / Story Time
12:15 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Lunch / Clean-up
12:45 p.m.– 1:15 p.m.	Bathroom, Books
1:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Nap / Quiet Time
3:15 p.m.– 3:30 p.m.	Wake up / Group Time
3:30 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.	Snack
4:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.	Outdoor Play
5:00 p.m.– 6:00 p.m.	Free Choice Time in Green Room / Departure

Nap/Rest Time

After an active and engaged morning, most children sleep for 1½ to 2 hours. Children nap on sheet-covered cots with a warm blanket. Children who wake up early remain on their cots and read books or engage in quiet activities. Non-sleepers rest for one hour and are then given quiet activities. Children may bring a “cuddly” from home for nap.

Outdoor Policy

Children go outside twice every day, an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon, as weather permits. Children need fresh air and movement for their general well-being and healthy development. We believe that when children are well enough to attend school, they are also well enough to play outdoors.

In extreme cold weather, children will remain inside when the wind chill (air temperature + wind speed) is 20°F or below. In extreme hot weather during the summer months, CDC will follow the recommendations of the National Weather Service during “code orange” and “code red” air quality situations. If the heat index (air temperature + relative humidity) reaches 100°F or above, the children will remain inside.

When outside play is not possible, children have ample opportunities for large motor activities in our extra room, the “Large Muscle Room.”

Field Trips

Classes will occasionally take walks around campus to explore the many educational and engaging activities, as well as the events American University has to offer. Parents are always welcome to join the children on their walks. Emergency backpacks are brought on every walk. Backpacks contain each child’s emergency contact information and a first aid kit.

Section II: Policies and Procedures

Enrollment

Admission

Children between 2½ and 6 years of age are enrolled, based on the availability of space, the submission of a completed application and the payment of a non-refundable application fee. The Center offers enrollment based on prioritized application categories. These categories are based on affiliation or non-affiliation with American University. The prioritized categories are as follows:

Category 1: AU Students/Siblings of Currently Enrolled CDC Students

- Full-time undergraduates enrolled in degree programs
- Full-time graduates enrolled in degree programs
- We at the CDC strive to promote family togetherness. Therefore, siblings of currently enrolled CDC students are given priority. If a child becomes eligible after their sibling has left the CDC, they will be moved to the appropriate category, based on parent affiliation.

Category 2: AU Faculty/Staff

- Full-time staff (minimum of 28 hours of employment per week) or faculty status
- Part-time staff (27 or fewer hours of employment per week) or adjunct faculty status

Category 3: AU Alumni

- Graduates of undergraduate and graduate programs

Category 4: Wesley Seminary Affiliates

- Full-time faculty, students, and staff of Wesley Seminary

Category 5: On-Campus Organizations Serving AU

- Full-time employees of on-campus organizations

Category 6: Community

- Members of the community surrounding AU

CDC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sexual orientation, or national origin.

Security Deposit and Required Enrollment Documentation

1. ***In order to finalize the formal admission of their child at the Center***, parents/guardians need to:
 - 1.1. Submit a payroll deduction form OR a security deposit equal to one month's tuition (checks should be made payable to: American University Child Development Center). This deposit will be credited toward the last calendar month of the child's tenure at the CDC, with a written notice of withdrawal submitted to the Center Director at least 30 days prior to the child's withdrawal date

- 1.2. Complete the District of Columbia form entitled "Registration Record for Child Receiving Care Away From Home"
2. **To complete the enrollment of their child**, parents/guardians are required to complete and return the following forms to the Center by their child's start date:
 - 2.1. **Documents Required by the DC Child Care Licensing Division:**
 - 2.1.1. District of Columbia [Child Health Certificate](#)
 - 2.1.2. District of Columbia [Oral Health Assessment Form](#) (for children 3 and up)
 - 2.1.3. District of Columbia [Travel and Activity Authorization](#)
 - 2.1.4. District of Columbia [Authorization for Child's Emergency Medical Treatment](#)
 - 2.2. **Documents Required by the Center** (documents will be provided to parents after child has been accepted for enrollment)
 - 2.2.1. Tuition Agreement
 - 2.2.2. Payroll Deduction Form (for current AU faculty and staff parents)
 - 2.2.3. Developmental Questionnaire
 - 2.2.4. Cultural Questionnaire
 - 2.2.5. Use of Likeness and Research Release
 - 2.2.6. Non-Prescription Sun-Protectant Application Release

Child/Family Orientation

Prior to their start date, children and parents are invited to the Center for an hour Orientation: to visit their classroom, meet their teachers, and interact with classmates.

All children entering the Orange Room for the first time will participate in the following transition schedule:

Day One	9:00am-11:00am	Parents are to remain in the Classroom
Day Two	9:00am-1:00pm	Bring a lunch, pick-up before nap
Day Three	9:00am-3:30pm	Bring a lunch, pick-up after nap
Day Four	9:00am-5:00pm	Full day

Historically, this has proven to be a very successful transition schedule, allowing the children to adjust gradually to their new environment. If you have questions, please speak with the office or full-time teaching staff. Since all children and parents cope differently with the separation process, individual adjustments can be made as needed.

Attendance

The CDC's licensed operating hours are from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. We cannot accept children before 8:00 am. **Parents must sign children in and out of the Center in the books located by the main entrance of each classroom.** The Sign-in/Sign-out books become our official record of attendance in case of an emergency evacuation. Children must be accompanied into and out of the Center by an adult. It is of the utmost importance that an adult let a staff member know that a child has arrived or is leaving. **Please sign your full name; no initials. Children or siblings are not allowed to sign in/out.**

Children must arrive at the center by 9:30 am so that he/she can fully participate in the morning program. In case of special situations such as doctor visits, etc., please let us know by 9:00am when to expect the child. We ask that a late drop-off be no later than 12:00 pm. Most children have a hard time with any transition that must be done while the class is engaged in group time, a project, or in already established informal play groupings. Children develop a sense of security dependent upon a consistent daily routine and parents can help by bringing the child to school each day at the same time.

In addition, we understand that there is an occasional need to take a child out of the program for a short time during the day and then return. The timing of this pull-out should be discussed in detail with the teachers. We cannot accept children back during the nap period of 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

If a child is consistently dropped off late, a meeting will be held with the parents. Continued tardiness could jeopardize the child's enrollment at the CDC.

Please share with us any plans for your child to be away from school for vacations or other special events. The more the teachers know about what the child is experiencing outside of school, the better they can plan for the child while they're at school.

Billing and Fee Collection

Tuition

Tuition agreements are signed by parents at the beginning of each academic year. **Monthly tuition is due on the first business day of each month.** American University employee parents are highly encouraged to meet their financial commitments to the Center by enrolling in payroll deduction. Non-employee parents may make tuition payments by either check or money order. If either of the latter two forms of payment are used, they must be made payable to the "American University Child Development Center" and may be presented at the CDC office. If the tuition payment is more than one week late, a written reminder will be given. If the tuition payment is more than seven days in arrears, a late payment fee of \$35 will be charged. If payments continue to be delinquent, the child will be suspended until the balance is paid in full. Returned checks will result in a penalty fee of \$35.

Tuition is due each month for as long as your child is enrolled at the Center; this includes periods of time in which he/she may not be in attendance or on leave (e.g.; vacations, holidays, illnesses, inclement weather). Tuition is based on 50 operating weeks each year. There is no refund or reduction of fees for planned or unplanned absences or during CDC planned closing weeks (winter break and August cleaning/transition week).

Late Pick-Up Policy

The Center closes promptly at 6:00 pm. If a child has not been picked up by this time, parent will incur the following fees:

- 1 to 5 minutes - \$10
- 5 to 10 minutes - \$20
- 10+ minutes - \$20 plus \$2 per minute over 10 minutes

A "late pick up" form will be completed for all children who are picked up after 6:00 pm. Your arrival time and the total charge will be noted on this form. This form will be placed on your parent board

hook and a copy will be kept in a Late Charge Log in the office. Late fees are due within 48 hours after receipt of notice.

Late pick-ups exceeding three times in a given contracted period may result in other penalties or actions, including suspension or termination of services. Closing staff members have their own schedules to adhere to, so your cooperation is appreciated.

If a child has not been picked up by 6:00pm, the child's parents/guardians will be called. If the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contact listed on the child's DC Registration Record will be called.

Additional Fees

Parents are responsible for enrichment classes during the school year.

Child Safety & Security

CDC's licensed closing time is 6:00pm. Parents and authorized pick up persons should arrive at the Center at least 10 minutes before this time to allow for a smooth departure.

All authorized pick up persons must be at least 18 years of age or older. No child will be released to a person not on the parents' emergency pick-up list without a written note authorizing the pick-up and signed by a parent or guardian. The parent must inform a teacher or the Director of any alternative pick-up plans. In an emergency, a parent may call the CDC and arrange for a pick-up by someone not previously approved. If possible, a permission note should be emailed or faxed. The parent should describe the person and his/her relationship to the child. This person will be asked for picture identification at pick-up time. Please let any authorized person(s) know we will be asking for identification until the staff becomes familiar with them. It is also advised that the child be made aware that someone other than their parent or guardian will be picking them up.

The staff will not release a child to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or in an altered mental state which may pose a threat to the safety and well-being of the child. If a parent or approved pick up person in an altered state or condition attempts to remove a child from the CDC, AU Campus Police will be notified.

Parental Issues

In difficult situations such as separation, divorce, or child abuse, CDC must have copies of any applicable court documents. Please keep the CDC staff well-informed of any changes to custody agreements or living situations. We encourage divorced/separated parents to establish routines for the reliable exchange and sharing of school information while your child is here at CDC.

All CDC staff members are required by law to report suspected evidence of child abuse and neglect to Child Protective Services.

Car Seats

DC Law requires that children under 8 years of age must be properly seated in an installed infant, convertible (toddler) or booster child seat, according to the manufacturer's instructions. Booster seats must be used with both lap and shoulder belts. All children leaving the CDC in a vehicle must be properly restrained in an age/weight appropriate restraint system.

Access Cards

All CDC families must use access cards to enter the CDC building. This policy is a security measure which must be followed at all times. Parents with American University issued ID cards may use this card to enter the building. Unaffiliated parents will be issued a guest access card. Please keep your card readily accessible when dropping off or picking up your child. We are issued a limited number of guest access cards so it is important to keep track of the cards you are given.

Security Cameras

In order to enhance the safety of our children and to provide a more secure environment for the CDC community at large, the center has installed security cameras both inside and outside the center. These cameras provide a 24/7, video only, monitoring of the center premises. As part of the university-wide security system, this service is managed and maintained by AU's Department of Public Safety (DPS).

Parking

Parents may park their cars in the area in front of the Center for drop-off and pick-up. Since the parking space is limited, we ask that you limit the drop-off/pick-up time to 15 minutes. If you plan to stay in the

Center longer than 15 minutes, please check with CDC staff for advice on parking on or around campus. Parking permits are distributed to all families at the beginning of each year. Please remember to display your pass which identifies you as having the right to short-term parking in the CDC loading zone. University parking regulations are enforced by the University security. Please observe the University traffic and parking regulations at all times, to avoid traffic/parking tickets.

Outdoor Safety

Safety is very important when taking children outside of the Center. Precautions must be taken and procedures established and followed. Routine procedures include:

- Counting the number of children before going outside, counting again when they arrive on the playground. The same is true prior to returning to the Center; children must be counted before leaving the playground and after returning to the classroom.
- Ensuring the gate on the fence is closed and locked during the hours when children are not outside.
- Ensuring minimum licensing ratios between children and teachers are maintained at all times.

Accidents

The staff makes every effort to ensure the safety of the children in our care, but accidents do inevitably occur. All accidents and injuries must be reported immediately to the director. The staff member witness to or involved in the incident is required to complete and sign an accident/incident report on the day of the occurrence. The report must be signed by the director, and then placed on the child's parent board hook to be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the office. Two copies of the signed report will be made: one to be kept in the office and one to be sent home. In

case of a serious injury, parents will be notified immediately to come to the Center to assess their child and determine if advanced medical attention is required.

All permanent CDC staff members are trained in CPR/First Aid and emergency procedures. CDC staff will provide first aid for minor scrapes and bruises (i.e.: apply ice, wash with soap and water, and apply a bandage). In cases of a more serious injury, the parents or emergency contact will be called to the Center to make a decision about medical treatment. If a child needs emergency treatment, the Center staff will call Public Safety and 911 for assistance. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the person(s) listed and approved as Emergency Contact(s) will be called. The child's doctor may also be notified. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and remain with him/her until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

If parents have any religious beliefs which may affect medical treatment, the Center must have instructions in writing at the time of enrollment.

Child Neglect/Abuse

The professional staff of the CDC is mandated by the District of Columbia to report evidence or suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Child and Family Services Agency.

Section III: Health and Safety Policies

Licensing

The Child Development Center is licensed by the government of the District of Columbia, Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). This license is renewed through inspection each year.

Health Insurance

Children cannot be enrolled if they are not covered under a family health insurance policy.

The Center is covered under the University's liability/accident insurance policy. The policy only covers accidents in the case of staff negligence.

Health Certificates

All children must have fully completed District of Columbia Child Health Certificates on file in order to be accepted into the program. After enrollment, children must complete a yearly physical examination and immunization updates. You are responsible for regularly updating your child's health files to reflect new immunizations and to keep your child's records current.

The results of this yearly doctor's examination must be recorded on a new Child Health Certificate each year. Copies of this document can be obtained from the office or from the CDC website.

Annual oral health assessments are also required for all children 3-years old or older.

Immunization

Prior to enrollment, your child must obtain all age-appropriate immunizations and tests as required by the District of Columbia. After admission to the Center, you are responsible for regularly updating your child's health files to reflect new immunizations and to keep the records current. If parents are not in compliance, the child will be suspended until complete health/immunization documentation is provided. Immunization requirements are determined and enforced by the DC Department of Health (DC/DOH). The requirement of an up-to-date immunization record for each child is strictly enforced by the DC-DOH through their database system. Any missing immunization will cause the rejection of CDC's annual DC license renewal.

If there is no proper documentation from your child's physician excusing your child from any required vaccination/immunization, your child will be suspended until updated records are provided.

Illness

We understand that children occasionally get sick and that your child's illness is understandably a matter of great concern. If your child exhibits the symptoms stated below prior to scheduled attendance at the Center, your child should be kept at home until the symptoms of illness have been absent for 24 hours.

A child should be kept at home if any of the following conditions exist:

- fever of 100o or higher (oral temperature within the last 24 hours) o nausea or vomiting within 24 hours
- persistent cough
- sore throat or swollen glands o eyes inflamed or swollen
- body rash
- diarrhea within 24 hours
- bad cold (runny nose with greenish nasal discharge)
- head lice
- a contagious illness (such as streptococcus, conjunctivitis, coxsackie virus, etc.) o other symptoms of communicable disease (ex: whooping cough)
- not well enough to participate in Center activities, including outdoor activities

If a child develops any of these symptoms while at the Center, a parent will be called to pick up their child immediately. **The child needs to be picked up within an hour of notification.** The sick child will be isolated and provided a comfortable space in the Director's office while waiting for a family member to arrive. **The child may not be re-admitted to the Center until 24 hours after symptoms dissipate without the aid of medication.**

If your child has been exposed to a communicable/contagious disease, please notify Center staff immediately. This will allow us to take the appropriate steps to limit the risk of infection in other children and promptly notify parents. **If your child has been infected with a highly contagious disease, he or she may not return to CDC unless a doctor's note stating that the child is free from communicable illness is provided.**

Every morning the children will be casually but thoroughly checked by a staff member as they arrive. If the staff member determines that the child is too ill to remain at the Center, the situation will be discussed with the parent, who might be asked not to leave the child at the Center.

Please call the Center by 9:30 am if your child will not be in attendance due to illness.

Medication Administration

Only medication prescribed by the child's doctor can be administered by CDC staff. This includes "over the counter" medications. All medication must be in its original container and labeled by the pharmacy with complete identification and administration information. "Over the counter" medication must be accompanied by a doctor's complete written orders. This documentation can be in the form of either a signed note on letterhead from the doctor giving full instructions for administration OR a CDC Medication Administration Permission form completed and signed by the doctor and parent. This information can be faxed if necessary. Each medication must be labeled with the child's name, drug name, dosage schedule, and expiration date. Medicine will not be administered if it is beyond the expiration date or if it has been prescribed to an individual other than the child. A first dosage of medicine will never be given at school because of the possibility of an allergic reaction.

In addition to the doctor's orders, parents must complete and sign a Medical Administration Form which includes the child's name, the date and time of administration, as well as the required dosage. Forms are available in each classroom. The medication will be administered by the professional staff and documentation of administration will be kept in a Medication Log.

Allergies

It is very important that parents and CDC staff work together on all health issues, especially allergies which might impact a child's participation and well-being at school. We ask that you give us complete, specific information about your child's allergies so we can respond appropriately and be full partners in helping manage health issues, ensuring your child's school experience is as typical as possible. This information is requested during the enrollment process and is placed in our emergency book.

Due to an unusual increase in the number of children nationwide, and at CDC, who are allergic to peanut products, we have removed peanut butter from our snack menu. Until further notice, we have asked parents to avoid sending peanut products for lunches. If you are concerned about potential or diagnosed peanut or tree nut allergies, please speak with the teachers, so we can make an appropriate plan to ensure that your child does not come into contact with these products in any way.

Snacks and Lunch

Snacks

The CDC provides two nutritious snacks each day. Snacks are served at 9:30 am and 3:30 pm. The snack menu includes fresh fruits and vegetables, crackers and cheese, whole wheat breads and cereals, bagels and cream cheese, English muffins, and waffles or pancakes. We serve no peanut butter or peanut products. Our snack menu is posted on the Teacher board and on the refrigerator. Because cooking is a special part of our curriculum, the children often make their snacks. Milk and water is served with every snack.

Lunch

Parents provide all lunches for their children. A nutritious lunch is essential for growing children. We encourage you to pack a lunch which includes good, nutritious foods from at least 3 food groups. We refer to these foods as "growing foods" or "vitamin foods." If you choose to pack a lunch with commercially prepared items, we suggest that you read the labels carefully to assess how nutritious the food is. We can warm up food in the microwave if you choose to send cooked foods; however, we cannot prepare lunch foods. We discourage frozen entrees because they must be heated to a high temperature and then cooled before eating. This usually requires too much time and the child can often be too frustrated to wait. We cannot serve multiple lunches from large cans or large portions of cooked foods. Please send one day's portion each day.

We include good nutrition and eating habits as part of our curriculum. At lunch time, each child will be encouraged to eat the most nutritious food in his/her lunch first.

If you would like some ideas for lunches, the teachers or Director can offer some suggestions or provide other resources.

Since we do not have refrigerator space for lunch boxes, please include a frozen cold pack in your child's lunch box each day lunch items need to be kept cold.

Please refer to the section on allergies for information about peanut products.

Diapering and Toilet Training

We follow a diapering procedure which allows the child to feel safe, respected, and cared about. During the changing process, all health and safety guidelines and procedures recommended by the DC Health Department and the NAEYC are followed. The full diapering procedure is posted near the changing area. Parents must provide disposable diapers and wipes for a child in diapers or in the process of toilet learning. Diaper creams may also be brought in the event of rash or irritation. Make sure you have a Diaper Cream and Ointment Release form on file and up to date (they are good for one year). Please check your child's supplies often. Most children need a good supply of extra underpants and clothing, especially while they are being toilet trained. Please refrain from dressing your child in overalls, T-shirts with snaps (onesies), belts, tights, etc. Parents and staff should decide together when the child is ready to begin toilet training. Consult with the staff to develop a plan that will be both consistent and manageable.

Sunscreen

We ask that you apply sunscreen for your child before you come to school in the morning. We can apply sunscreen products ONLY with a signed permission form on record (good for one year). If you have a signed permission on record and provided your child's preferred sunscreen product, we will re-apply in the afternoon as needed. Sunscreen will only be applied during the summer and swimming season (June-September).

Section IV: Parent Involvement

A special aspect of the CDC is the fact that we are located near the parent's work/study site. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents to join us for lunch, stop by and say hello, or to play a while during the day. A phone call during the day is always welcome.

Parent Orientation

A Parent Orientation or Back to School Night is scheduled early in the fall semester. Discussion topics include the curriculum, the classroom routine, the role of teachers, the home-to-center transition, and parent obligations. It is essential that parents attend this orientation to gain an understanding of specific Center and classroom operations.

Daily Parent Updates

Each family has a labeled hook on a bulletin board in each classroom. Important notices are given to parents individually on the parent "hooks" in the classroom (e.g.; monthly classroom calendar, accident/incident report, office communications). Parents are asked to check their hook every day. Sometimes quick, last-minute information or reminders will be attached to the page opposite the daily sign-in sheet and/or posted on the entrance of each classroom. Classroom weekly plans, snack menus, emergency plans, are posted on the teacher board.

We also communicate with parents via an emailed weekly newsletter – "This Week @ CDC." It includes information regarding specific events, reminders from the office or teachers, and weekly classroom happenings. Parents are encouraged to read the newsletter to stay up to date on what's going on each week at CDC.

Specific information about the day's program is posted in each classroom to let parents know some of what has happened at school. Group Time details will be posted, in the Green Room, when individual children are quoted on special subjects that are part of the curriculum. Informal communication between parents and staff is always available at pick-up, drop-off, telephone, or by e-mail.

We strive to provide the parent(s) with all pertinent information about their child's day at CDC. In case you need any additional detailed information about your child's daily activities, please let the teachers know.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are held twice a year (November and May) and at the request of either parents or staff. Conferences are informal sharing times designed to provide parents with information on their child's progress and to discuss the best ways to meet the child's needs while in the classroom.

The center is closed for each of the formal conferences. Federal Work Study Students are available at CDC for childcare during the scheduled conference time ONLY.

If there is something unusual happening at home (i.e.; a parent's business trip, an illness, or visiting relatives), please inform the teachers or Director. This can affect the child's routine and their behavior might change. We want to be especially sensitive to each child's needs at such times.

Parent Survey

In the spring of each year, we conduct an annual review of our program. Parents are given a questionnaire to complete. This annual review provides CDC with important feedback from parents about our program. Parent input is essential to help us maintain a high-quality program that meets the needs of our families.

Family Potlucks

Family potluck suppers are held twice a year, early fall and early summer, and have become a special tradition and an opportunity for CDC's families to socialize and, at times, for alumni to meet with old friends.

Family Sharing

Young children need to share their world with their significant adults. We set aside a special time during the month of December for "Family Sharing"; times when a child and his/her family can bring into the classroom activities that are unique to them, their family traditions and cultural identities. This kind of involvement sets a pattern of home-school connection that research has shown to be one of the most important factors in a child's long-term educational success.

To expand children's awareness and appreciation of other's cultural backgrounds, we welcome parents to share special family traditions with their child(ren)'s class.

Negotiating Staff-Parent Differences

The CDC is a department within the University's Office of Human Resources. We encourage all parents to work with us in a collaborative setting to resolve any conflict that might arise with the CDC staff. Parents and teachers are encouraged to keep an open line of communication. In case of differences between staff and parents, the following procedures may be used, as appropriate:

- Meet with teacher(s) to discuss the issue(s)
- Meet with Director to discuss the issue(s)
- As the issue(s) at hand may require, meet with CDC staff/Director and a member of the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program of the Office of Human Resources
- Meet with PAG chair(s) and the Director
- After the options above have been utilized with no resolution, meet with the CDC supervisor, the Director of Employee Benefits in the Office of Human Resources.

Discipline and Pro-Social Behavior

Our philosophy dictates that our first step is to focus on preventing the occurrence of negative behavior through verbal limit-setting, room arrangement, program planning, providing sufficient and appropriate materials, etc. Children are encouraged to approach problems by talking, rather than hitting, biting, pushing, or grabbing toys. In addition, we help children deal with the underlying reason(s) for any negative behavior.

When a child becomes very upset, a teacher will help the child to calm down before discussing the situation. The teacher will let the child know that he/she wants to help. The child might be asked to

take a calming deep breath. On occasion, a child might be asked to sit in a quiet place in the classroom to calm down for a brief time. Generally, the child lets the teacher know when he/she is ready to rejoin the group or to discuss the incident. This is NOT presented as a “time out” to think about the incident or as a form of punishment. It is presented as a time to calm oneself so that he/she can take part in a discussion about the incident and the ensuing feelings, before rejoining the group.

The teachers always focus on what children can learn from a situation, not merely on what has happened. We do not give the child solutions, but coach and encourage them in an age-appropriate process of working out solutions together. These situations present opportunities to teach empathy, respect, responsibility, and negotiating skills. These are important elements in the development of inner control. In some cases, the teacher and parents might decide to work together on a specific behavior management strategy.

During this process, the child is supervised at all times and his or her reactions and needs are monitored. At no time will physical, threatening, disrespectful, or humiliating discipline be used. Dangerous or hurtful behavior will always be stopped before other action is taken.

The CDC teachers serve as role models for the development of pro-social behavior by working cooperatively and offering support/empathy for other adults as well as children. Many activities conducive to social interaction are provided. The children receive positive reinforcement (verbal praise and hugs) for playing and solving problems cooperatively, and for acts of kindness and empathy. Teachers help children develop strategies for achieving social goals such as asking for a turn and negotiating how long before the turn comes. Cooperative play skills are encouraged as teachers take part in play. We do not provide the “quick solution” to a child conflict or play problem. Instead, we support or model the problem-solving process which the children can then learn to use on their own.

Addressing Challenging Behaviors

1. The behaviors of children shall be guided by an approach that includes positive responses for appropriate behavior, redirection, reminders of classroom rules, modifying the classroom environment and/or schedule, and providing a supervised quiet time for the child to gain control. Staff shall observe all children and use appropriate forms for documenting any atypical behavior to help ascertain any patterns regarding events, activities, and interactions, as well as any precipitating contextual factors.
2. When a child exhibits inappropriate behaviors on a continual basis that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the teachers will plan a meeting with the Director to discuss the behaviors and ask for further guidance.
3. If the behavior problem is still not resolved, the staff shall request a meeting with the child's parent(s). At the meeting, staff and parent(s) will collaboratively develop individualized strategies to resolve the problem behavior. During this process, teachers will keep the Director and parents informed of the progress in resolving the behavior problem. If a child's behavior results in an injury to another child or staff member, the child's parents will be notified as soon as possible, and written documentation of the incident will be provided to the parents and placed in the child's file.
4. If the teachers and Director believe that they need further assistance in resolving the behavior problem, the Director may, with parental permission, request the assistance of an outside

resource. If teachers and Director believe that the problem may be the result of a special need, they may request that the parents arrange for a professional evaluation of the child. The goal of this behavior management process is to support the child's inclusion and success. If, however, the parents do not pursue an evaluation within a reasonable time frame and the problem behavior continues, then the continued enrollment of the child will be reconsidered in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6 below.

5. If the results of an outside evaluation suggest the need for accommodations for special needs, the CDC will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they are not an undue hardship on the CDC as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act.
6. If all the above steps fail to resolve the behavior problem, the CDC may ask the parents to find an alternative educational placement for their child. The CDC will provide the parents with a four-week notice, except where such notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns and will try to assist the parents with alternative placement.
7. Written documentation of all the above steps will be provided to the parents and placed in the child's file.

Children Requiring Special Services

For children requiring special services, we try to accommodate children who can be served in a group setting as much as possible, to the best of our abilities. There are some children with special needs that require more one-on-one care than we are able to provide in our group setting. In this situation, the Center may not be the best educational setting to provide for the needs of the individual child.

Children's rights regarding enrollment and termination are protected in accordance with the policies outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). CDC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or religion.

Consultation Services

As needed, CDC's professional staff consults with an AU clinical psychologist who offers support and guidance in the areas of child development and managing children's behavior. If the staff and the psychologist feel that some specialized services might be helpful to a child, the Director will meet with the teacher and parent(s) to discuss a referral. The Director and staff will assist in arranging vision, speech, hearing, or psychological screening for a child if needed. In extreme circumstances or if the results of an outside evaluation suggest that a more appropriate setting is necessary, the child may need to be withdrawn from the program.

Staff Development

The Center's professional staff regularly participate in workshops, take courses, and attend conferences as part of their continual learning process and is also a yearly requirement for DC Licensing renewal. Staff members are responsible for leading training or review sessions for colleagues as well as student helpers. Occasionally, the Center closes for a special conference or training. We will note the general timing of these closed days in the Annual Calendar. As soon as a date becomes certain, parents will be notified. We will always provide at least a 30 days-notice of these scheduled closings.

Student Helpers

The professional staff is assisted by University students who have Federal Work Study (FWS) grants for employment on campus. In addition, the Director will supervise interns completing course requirements in education or psychology. These students are trained by the Director and CDC teachers. The students assist teachers and help implement the daily routine. Their participation in the CDC complements their formal classroom work and creates a close relationship between the children and students. Background checks are completed by the University Human Resource department for all FWS students and interns before they are allowed to join CDC.

Cooperation with University Departments

Since we are a University-based program, we cooperate with other departments of American University to provide a resource for student study, observation, projects, and research. The Director supervises interns from the School of Education and the Department of Psychology. These interns are actively involved in classroom activities and function much like a teaching assistant or supervised student teacher.

Students often come to the Center to do research projects. These can range from observations to one-on-one work with individual children or small groups. All observations must be approved by the Director and are done according to specific and clear guidelines to ensure that observers do not interfere with classroom work and regular, daily routines. A visiting student is never left alone with children.

Parents of CDC children are asked to sign a general release for participation in student observation and projects. Parents will be notified of specific plans for projects as they occur with a description of the project. If the project requires one-on-one interaction, parents' approval is required and the signature of a specific release will be requested.

Section V: Other Pertinent Information

Center Closing

In general, the Center follows the American University administrative calendar for holiday closings throughout the year. In addition to these closings, CDC will be closed on the following days:

- one week near the end of August for planning, cleaning, staff training, and new children orientation (the exact dates of this week will be posted on the CDC calendar); and,
- up to 3 additional days throughout the year for required staff development activities (parents will be given ample notice - at least 30 days - of these closings).

These closing days are listed on the CDC calendar that is distributed and posted at the beginning of each academic year. We suggest that you post this calendar prominently in your home for quick reference.

Emergency Closing Policy

When American University is closed due to inclement weather or any other emergency conditions, CDC will be closed. CDC parents who are AU faculty/staff/students are automatically enrolled into the RAVE Alert System and will be notified via e-mails and text messages. For CDC parents who are Non-AU employees can register at the following link: <https://getrave.com/login/auguest>.

You may also consult the American University EMERGENCY INFORMATION LINE, 202-885-1100 or the local news via radio, television, or internet for more information on closings and hours of operation. Whenever the University decides to close early, parents may be called mid-day to pick up their children.

In case of severe storms such as tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes, the Center and American University will follow specific Emergency Plans for each emergency condition.

Emergency Evacuation

CDC conducts monthly fire drills. Emergency evacuation maps are posted near each exit area throughout the center.

In the event of any emergency requiring evacuation, CDC staff and children will be relocated to Letts Hall. If the AU campus must be evacuated, the CDC staff and children will be relocated to the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church on Nebraska Avenue.

A full copy of the CDC emergency plans is available in the Office and each classroom. You may consult these plans for more detailed information.

Completion of the CDC Program

A child completes the CDC program when he/she is old enough to start kindergarten in their home community. Parents are required to confirm, as far in advance as possible, the final date of attendance when their child is ready to leave. This will allow a smooth and happy transition for everyone involved. A minimum of one-month written notice is required from all parents prior to their child's withdrawal. In the unlikely event that it becomes necessary to consider termination because

of special circumstances, the Director, staff, and parents will work together to resolve the situation in a manner that is best for the child and meets all requirements and guidelines of the DC Department of Health, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education Licensing regulations.

Withdrawal of Child

When you need to withdraw your child from the Center, for any reason, a 30-day written notice is required. If a 30-day written notice is not given, you will continue to be billed for one month from the time your written notice is received at CDC, regardless of your child's actual attendance. CDC does not allow temporary withdrawal for any period of time (including summer months).

Temporary Suspension

Should any of the following conditions arise, the Center reserves the right to suspend a child's attendance, until the specified condition is resolved satisfactorily:

- If the child's monthly tuition remains delinquent beyond the 15th of the month, the child will be suspended until the balance is paid in full;
- If the child is picked up late more than 3 times during a contracted period; until a satisfactory pick-up arrangement is made;
- If a child's health/immunization records are not fully updated; until said records are in full compliance with the DC Department of Health requirements.

Termination of Enrollment

The Center reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment in the Center if any of the following conditions arises:

- The Center staff believes that your child's behavior threatens his/her physical/mental health and/or that of other children in the Center;
- The Center is unable to meet the developmental or special needs of a child;
- Parents fail to abide by the written policies and guidelines of CDC in the Parent Handbook and the policy-related written material.

Personal Belongings

All children must have at least one full change of clothing kept at all times in their clothing bin. This includes undergarments, shirt, pants or skirt, socks, shoes, and sweater/sweatshirt. Parents are notified in writing when children have changed clothes during the day. Please remember when wet, soiled clothes are sent home, this supply needs to be replenished. We encourage you to check the extra clothes bin regularly to make sure the clothes are seasonally appropriate.

Please label all articles of clothing. Things can get lost easily and clothing can go to the wrong child.

The CDC is required to keep a supply of clothing for general use. If we must use this clothing for your child, please remember to launder it and to send it back. The CDC clothing is marked as such.

Children enrolled in the summer session need to have a bathing suit and towel. During the summer session, we have water play days.

Except in extremely inclement weather, children go outside. This includes cold, snowy days. Please keep this in mind when dressing your children to keep them warm and dry.

Toys and Other Items from Home

Children may bring a “transition” item to school to help them settle at school and at nap time. These are usually a stuffed animal or other soft toy, or a favorite blanket. The children put these items in their cubby shortly after arrival and then have them on their cots at nap time. These cuddlies are sometimes needed to comfort a child who gets a bump or has hurt feelings.

Children may bring appropriate books and music to school to share with the class.

Please do not bring other toys from home. Children want to show their toys to their friends. However, they rarely are able to happily have other children hold the toy or have a turn playing with it. If the toy is not intended for group play, it often breaks, or pieces are lost. This results in hurt feelings, anger, crying, and in general, a lot of unhappiness and disruption of productive play. Our experience has shown that children accept this rule with little difficulty. They understand that they play with school toys at school and home toys at home. If they find their way into backpacks and become a safety problem, we will put them in a labeled envelope and put it on your “hook” for safekeeping.

Birthdays

If your child has a birthday while he/she is in the Center, we would love to help celebrate this very special occasion. We request the celebration be kept very simple. We suggest a special snack for the afternoon snack time. Many children want cupcakes, cookies, or a cake. Another standard has been pizza lunch for the class. Other suggestions would be muffins or other low sugar treats like frozen fruit bars. We encourage parents and other family members to attend this celebration. Parents must discuss details with the child’s teachers prior to their special day. More elaborate celebrations, including party favors, should be reserved for at-home birthdays.

At-home birthday party invitations may be distributed at the CDC only if ALL the children in the classroom are invited to the child’s home or party site.

Book Donations

When a new child is enrolled in our Center, we ask that this time be remembered by the donation of a picture book. In addition, some parents want to help their child say goodbye by donating an inscribed book. There is a special feeling for each child associated with the sharing of a book. These donations also supplement our CDC children’s library.