PARENT HANDBOOK

2015-2016
Welcome to the Boise State University Children’s Center!

The purpose of this handbook is to provide families a quick reference to the Center’s philosophy, goals, curriculum, policies, and procedures. This handbook reflects our commitment to 1) the growth, development, and needs of young children, 2) the understanding and involvement of families, and 3) the importance of school and home communication.

Children’s Center families reflect our belief in diversity. Families bring varying backgrounds--socio-economic, racial and religious--but a common commitment to ensuring all children’s optimal growth and learning.

The Children’s Center admits and welcomes children from all families, without discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, color, religious beliefs, family configuration or disability which can be reasonably accommodated.

Listed below are the names and titles of the staff at the Children’s Center. We also supplement our program each semester with Student Employees, Interns, and Volunteers. We encourage each and every one of you to visit with us, ask questions, and become involved in your child’s educational development. We are here to serve you and your child.

Boise State University Children’s Center........ 208-426-4404
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Lisa Allred...........................................................................Director
Chris Zacharias .................................................... Assistant Director

Visit our Website (http://childrenscenter.boisestate.edu) for more information on our programs.
MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide quality early childhood learning experiences to the children of the Boise State University community in a warm and nurturing developmentally appropriate environment. This environment will stimulate and encourage growth and a desire to learn through a curriculum that is tailored to meet the needs of every child. We are dedicated to providing and fostering a network of support for the children and their families through education, encouragement and community partnerships. We will collaborate and provide other departments on campus a site for Boise State University students to complete observations and internships, practicum and special projects.

PHILOSOPHY

The Children’s Center provides a warm and nurturing environment for children that will promote each child’s physical, social, emotional, creative and intellectual development. Our philosophy is based on the belief that each child is unique. Because we understand that children are naturally curious, we know they learn best when allowed to explore and work together with adults and peers. As they are involved in meaningful play, they are able to build on what they already know. Classroom activities reflect these needs and foster independence, creativity, a sense of empathy and cooperation. We also know children need knowledgeable, nurturing, consistent teacher/caregivers who understand the stages of child development, respect family needs and promote cultural diversity. The staff is dedicated to building strong partnerships with families to enrich children’s experiences.

PURPOSE

The Children’s Center was established in November 1979 to provide a quality child care program for the children of full and part-time Boise State students, faculty and staff. Our professional staff provides a model educational program for all the families it serves. Students from University Academic school programs and students from the Colleges of Education and Health Sciences are assigned to the Children’s Center for internships, field methods, and volunteer work. We also serve as an observation site for University students fulfilling class requirements.

ACCREDITATION

You have chosen a program for your child that is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC administers the largest and most widely recognized accreditation system for all types of early childhood programs and child care centers. NAEYC, the nation’s largest organization of early childhood educators, created its
accreditation program in 1985 to set professional standards for early childhood education, and to help families identify high-quality child care and early education programs. The Boise State University Children’s Center has been accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children since March 1993.

**What is Accreditation?** Early childhood programs accredited by the NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study and improvement. Each NAEYC-accredited program must meet all 10 of the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related criteria. Programs are accredited by NAEYC for a five-year period. For more information visit [http://rightchoiceforkids.org](http://rightchoiceforkids.org).

**What is a high-quality early childhood program?** High-quality programs provide a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the development of young children. NAEYC-accredited programs show their quality by meeting the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards, which are based on the latest research on the education and development of young children. All NAEYC-accredited programs must:

1. Promote *positive relationships* for all children and adults.
2. Implement a *curriculum* that fosters all areas of children development- cognitive, emotional, language, physical, and social.
3. Use developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and *effective teaching approaches*.
4. Provide *ongoing assessments* of child progress.
5. Promote the *nutrition and health* of children and staff.
6. Employ and support qualified *teaching staff*.
7. Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with *families*.
8. Establish and maintain relationships with and use resources of the *community*.
9. Provide a safe and healthy *physical environment*.
10. Implement strong *program management* policies that results in high-quality service.

**LICENSING**

The Children’s Center is licensed to provide services to children ages 8 weeks- Kindergarten through the City of Boise and State of Idaho. We are required to meet their standards for staffing, discipline, health, safety, curriculum, equipment and materials, nutrition, transportation, records, and reports. This includes annual Health & Safety, Fire, and City inspections as well as an FBI background check on all staff. A copy of our current license is posted in the office. The required ratio of teachers to children in attendance is maintained to give each child the maximum attention and supervision and to meet the standards of an NAEYC accredited program.
CENTER ADMINISTRATION & FUNDING

The Children’s Center operates under the direction of the Division of Student Affairs and the Executive Director of Campus Services. The program is supported with revenue produced primarily from student/parent usage fees, some appropriated University funds, fees collected from all Boise State students, the Federal USDA Child Care Food Program and indirect support from the Division of Student Affairs.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum utilized by the Children’s Center is Creative Curriculum Teaching Strategies Gold, a play-based, developmentally appropriate plan of activities and experiences for children that focuses on the planning around indoor and outdoor interest areas, and clearly defined logical goals and objectives.

For young children, meaningful and long-lasting learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work. This is best accomplished through purposeful play facilitated by highly intentional teaching practices. Creative Curriculum’s comprehensive approaches to curriculum are based on an understanding of the complex social/emotional, physical, and cognitive development of young children and the way children learn. A comprehensive curriculum provides guidance on the many factors that lead to a high-quality program and presents all aspects of teaching young children effectively.

The curriculum rest on a foundation of more than 75 years of scientific research about child development and learning theory that leads to specific instructional strategies based on how young children learn best. Creative Curriculum takes what has been learned from theorists such as Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Howard Gardner, as well as recent research studies about brain, language, literacy, and math development.

When the content of the curriculum is taught with children's developmental stages in mind, children are more likely to be successful learners who feel excited about and challenged by what they are learning.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Our program philosophy is based on the premise that children learn about the world around them through play- active involvement with other children, adults, and materials.

Children need years of experience with real objects and events before they are ready to understand the meaning of symbols such as letters and numbers. Learning takes place as young children touch, manipulate, and experiment, with things and interact with people. The teachers’ role is to create an environment that supports the ideas and experiences of children and invites them to observe, be active, make choices, and experiment. Children spontaneously engage in activities such as block building, painting, or dramatic play, adding pieces of
information to what they already know and thereby generating new understandings. Children learn simple concepts and then use these concepts to grasp more complex ideas— the building blocks of learning.

Because our program is designed to maximize individual development and promote developmentally appropriate practices, our activities focus on the process of learning. Therefore, the emphasis is on the experiences of the children rather than the results of those experiences. For example, painting is more important than what has been painted; building with blocks is more important than what is built. Each child has his or her own set of possibilities and we help those possibilities unfold. Days are filled with planned and spontaneous moments of learning. There is time allowed for active outdoor play, imaginative games, independent discovery, and group activities.

**STAFFING**

Our center is staffed with professional employees of Boise State University and the State of Idaho with varying degrees of education and experiences. Each classroom has a Lead Teacher with an Assistant Teacher. Professional Teachers have either a Bachelor’s or Associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education or a related field or equivalent. Student Aides work various hours as part time workers, or as interns or volunteers. Student aides supplement the staffing and assist the head staff with the implementation of the program. All staff receives training previous to employment as well as on-going training to develop and strengthen their skills. At all times there are staff trained in pediatric CPR and first aid on site. All staff that work directly with children are licensed through the City of Boise. The license includes a fingerprint and an FBI background check.

**CLASSROOM TEACHERS**

Each child is assigned to a classroom with a team of teachers who are responsible for record keeping, developmental assessments and parent conferences. This team of teachers ensures that every child has a “special” person and every parent has a primary contact. The Lead teacher will form a caring, nurturing, and responsive relationship with your child. In the classroom, the Lead teacher will be the “expert” on your child— knowing pertinent information about your child’s individual schedule, developmental abilities, special needs, sleeping habits, and individual interests. This teacher will also evaluate your child’s development and hold parent conferences with you.

Keep in mind, however, that “Lead” does not mean exclusive. Children should not become completely dependent on the presence of one person. The other staff in classroom will also develop a relationship and interact with your child as he/she explores the learning environment.
GOALS FOR CHILDREN

- To provide for each child’s physical health and safety.
- To promote the development of the whole child.
- To help children develop the social skills needed for a healthy group experience.
- To encourage in each child the development of a positive self-concept and emotional health.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND CENTER CLOSINGS

Daily operating hours are from 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. - Monday through Friday. The Children’s Center is open during regularly scheduled class days for the fall and spring (including finals week) semesters and the 13 weeks of summer session. It is also open two weeks before spring semester starts (usually the first two weeks of January). The Center is closed for a few days in August for staff training and development the week before fall semester begins. The program does not operate during official holidays. Please see the calendar for specific dates. In the event of an overabundance of snow, the Children’s Center will only close if the Boise State University campus is closed.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

*7:00 a.m. Classroom Exploration
9 a.m. Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Group Time
10:00 a.m. Learning Centers; Outdoor Play; Large Muscle Activities
12:00 p.m. Group Time
12:15 p.m. Lunch
12:45 p.m. Rest/Quiet Activities
3:15 p.m. Snack
*4:00 p.m. Learning Centers, Outdoor Play
5:30 p.m. Closing Time

Please note that this schedule is only an example of what your child’s daily routine may be. Please check with your child’s teachers for their specific classroom schedule.

* Due to lower attendance at the start and end of the day, children will occasionally join other classrooms upon arrival and dismissal. This gives the children an opportunity to play with friends outside of their assigned classrooms as well as allows the Children’s Center to give parents an opportunity to touch base with a Lead Teacher or Teacher at the start and end of each day.
MEALS

Meals at the Children’s Center are prepared and provided by University Dining Services. The trained chefs ensure that meals are nutritious as well as “child friendly” and diverse in variety to meet USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines.

Family style dining is used during all meals at the Children’s Center. Family style dining means teacher-caregivers and children sit down together to share and enjoy a meal. Adults play an important role in making mealtime a time of relaxation and enjoyment. We help create the atmosphere that makes mealtime a pleasant experience.

By eating together, children learn to socialize and share with others. They develop good eating habits and may be exposed to foods not served in their homes. As they take responsibility for serving themselves and making choices, they develop a sense of self-confidence.

As part of the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Children’s Center provides a nutritious breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack for your child. Meals are served at approximately the following times:

- Breakfast: 9 a.m.
- Lunch: 12:15 p.m.
- Snack: 3:15 p.m.

Children with medical food allergies will need a Medical Statement for Food Substitution Form filled out by the physician’s or doctor’s office. This form allows University Dining Services to supply an acceptable alternative. Non-medical food allergies will be the responsibility of the family to provide, in conjunction with University Dining Services. (The form is up at the front desk if needed). Parents can also write a parent preference letter in regards to food or milk preferences. Please see Administration for these concerns.

Meals are provided only for those children who sit down and are offered food. For this reason, if you pick up your child just before meals or snack are served, we are unable to send any part of the meal home with your child.

Parents are always welcome to join the classroom for mealtime. Please let your child’s classroom teacher know if you will be joining them for a meal so they may notify the kitchen. If food is brought to school (with your teachers permission) for sharing among the children it must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers (per NAEYC accreditation requirements).
In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

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

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

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

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

USDA Child Nutrition Programs recognize the following protected classes: race, color, national origin, sex, age, and disability.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

REST TIME

All children must be offered a time to rest. We make every effort possible to provide an environment that is quiet enough for those who need to nap yet not too restrictive for those who do not. When staffing allows, children who are awake at 2:00 will go outside or to the large motor classroom while children who have fallen asleep continue to nap. Children will be awakened slowly by 3:00 in order to prepare for the PM snack. Each child should bring one small blanket and sheet for rest. For health and sanitary reasons, we ask that you take your
child’s blanket home each week to be laundered. If you wish, you may bring a small pillow or stuffed animal to help your child rest. Please do not bring toys that encourage your children to play during rest time. Teachers will monitor all items brought from home to make sure they are appropriate for naptime. Items brought in by parents will be sent home to be washed on a weekly basis.

Teachers assist children in resting by reading stories, providing soothing music, and rubbing backs. Children are not required to sleep, but are encouraged to rest quietly on their cots during this time.

Please keep in mind that if children are tired, they will fall asleep on their own and we will not wake them or prevent them from sleeping based on the request of the a parent.

CLOTHING, TOYS, AND FOOD

Each child should bring:

- A complete change of clothes (including underwear and socks) labeled with your child’s name. If soiled clothing is sent home, please return a clean extra set for the next day. Be sure to check your child’s extra set of clothing periodically to ensure these items still fit and are appropriate for the weather /season.

All of your child’s learning materials and toys will be supplied by the Children’s Center. Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home (with exception of a small soft toy for rest). We find home toys create disruption in the classroom and can be broken or lost. Toy weapons are not allowed at the Children’s Center. We ask that your child not bring candy, gum or snacks to school. The Children’s Center is a peanut free environment.

PETS AND ANIMALS

Pets and animals are allowed to visit at school only under the following conditions:

- When prior arrangements are made with the classroom teacher; and
- When documentation is available showing that the pet is fully immunized (if the pet should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children; and
- When adults are available to supervise the interactions; and
- When teachers are able to provide protection for allergic children

PARKING

Parents may use the parking lot in front of the Children’s Center to drop off and pick up their children. Although a permit is not required to park in this area, the following rules apply:
• **DO NOT** park in the parking lot for more than 1 hour (60 minutes). This area may NOT be used for all day parking. Any car that is left in this area beyond 60 minutes may be towed.
• Adhere to the “one way” direction of the parking lot drive.
• **DO NOT** leave your car running. This is an illegal and unsafe practice.
• **DO NOT** leave children of any age unattended in the car.

We expect parents to use the safe practice of placing children in a **car seat** in the back seat of your car and buckle them in before you leave. Remember, it’s the law!

**OBSERVATIONS**

The Children’s Center is equipped with “observation” doors and windows in each classroom. These are available to parents so you can observe your children at any time during the day. When you are observing, please keep in mind you are probably just seeing a ‘glimpse’ of a situation, so feel free to talk with your child’s teacher if you have any questions or concerns regarding your observations.

We try to work cooperatively with several departments on campus whose students need to observe children. For this reason, all enrollment packets included a signed media and photography release form. If you have objections to this, please note this in your child’s enrollment packet and talk to your child’s teacher about not including your child in student observations.

Although it is not a regular part of our program, the Children’s Center occasionally participates in research projects. Parents will be informed about research projects as they arise and given the option to have their child participate or note. Participation in research is not required.

**CHILDREN’S PROGRESS & WRITTEN ASSESSMENT PLAN**

The purpose of assessments is for teachers to get to know children well and to be able to plan classroom experiences that meet the needs of the children enrolled. Our school-wide assessment processes are ongoing and structured around:

1) Individual goals for children
2) Developmental areas (physical, social/emotional, cognitive, and language),
3) Content areas (math, science, creative expression, social studies, literacy, health and safety, and technology), and
4) Approach to learning (each child’s individual learning style)

The assessment of children’s progress at the Boise State University Children’s Center is based on observation of activities and concrete experiences within the classroom, and supporting documentation from these observations. Family input to this assessment process is welcomed through daily verbal and written communication. Assessment information is sought formally from families three times during the school year: at the beginning of the school year (through the Child’s Personal and Development History Form, and/or the school update form) and during the time near the two parent-teacher conferences. Through these processes teachers come to understand children’s interests and development, and are better able to make decisions about teaching children individually and as part of a group.

Teachers use a variety of formal and informal assessment instruments, as needed, to assess development and ability within specific areas of development or content. These may include milestone checklists, formal and informal screening tools, as well as anecdotal and photographic observation.

At times the Children’s Center and families find it necessary to learn more about a child’s abilities and development than is available to us through our school-wide assessment processes. Within the University, teachers have access to consultations and observations with colleagues and consulting specialists. When there is need for further screening or evaluation, families are referred to specific agencies, public school resources, or medical facilities for further assessment. The purpose of these referrals is to assist the child in experiencing success in the school setting.

Assessment information for each child is kept in an individual file in the classroom. Those who have access to children’s files, including assessment information, are: the child’s teachers, the Center Administration, colleagues and consulting specialists who are involved with assessment interpretations and decisions, and the child’s parents. If school assessment information is to be shared more broadly, specific permission will be sought from parents before showing it to others professionals.

Through these fluid and ongoing assessment processes we hope to: know children and families individually; communicate with families; effectively plan curriculum; and fully support each child with reaching their goals.

**INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANNING**

When a child’s assessment and referral process results in a specific developmentally-, educationally-, or medically-related diagnosis for a child, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed to address the individual need and its impact the child’s education. If it is developed prior to your child’s enrollment at the Children’s Center we will need a copy for our files to use in reference and planning. If your child receives a diagnosis (from a qualified agency) while enrolled in our program, we will participate in the development of the IEP at the
diagnosing agency or initiate the development of the IEP to benefit the child’s optimal development.

We are able to provide a list of agencies or individuals who provide diagnostic evaluations and services for children with a specific diagnosis. It is the family’s responsibility to arrange diagnostic evaluation and the resulting therapy or remediation.

GUIDANCE

Discipline allows opportunities to teacher. Positive reinforcement and choices that are acceptable support children in developing self-control. Under no circumstances will physical punishment be used on a child.

Our procedures for classroom management are as follows:
1. Ignore minor misbehavior.
2. Go to the child and get down to his/her level when talking over a situation.
3. Try to redirect the child’s behavior.
4. Tell children what they can do instead of “no-don’t”
5. When dealing with prolonged or disruptive behavior:
   - demand an end to the misbehavior and indicate what is appropriate.
   - remind the child of limits and indicate appropriate behavior.
   - remove the child from the situation.
6. Serious behavior problems will be handled by the staff in cooperation with the child’s parent(s).
   - Teachers will conference with parents and maintain ongoing communication.
   - Behavior will be documented.
   - Child may be sent home for a day.
7. The Center administration may request withdrawal of a child from the program if the child’s behavior places the health or safety of him/herself or others at risk. Withdrawal may be with or without notice.

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY CHILDREN’S CENTER GUIDANCE POLICY

1. The behaviors of children shall be addressed by teachers as outlined by the guidance policy of the Boise State University Children’s Center. This would include positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, redirection, and reminders of classroom rules, modifying the classroom environment and / or daily schedule, and providing a supervised quiet time for the child to gain control. Classroom staff shall observe all children and document these observations to help ascertain any patterns or precipitating factors of the problem behavior. At no time shall staff use shaming, the withholding of food, isolation or physical punishment of any kind.

2. When a child exhibits a problem behavior on a continual basis that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the classroom teachers will meet with the Center
Director or Assistant Director to document the problem behavior and ask for further guidance. In addition, teachers will communicate with parents regarding the child’s behavior and progress on a regular basis.

3. If the behavior problem is still not resolved, the Children’s Center teachers shall request a meeting with the child’s parent(s) to discuss the problem behavior. The Children’s Center teachers and parent(s) will collaborate on the development of strategies to resolve the problem behavior. During this process, the classroom teachers will keep the Center’s director / Assistant Director and child’s parent(s) informed of progress in resolving the behavior problem. Classroom teachers will provide information to the parent(s) in written form with copies kept in the child’s file. If a child’s behavior results in injury to another child or staff member, the aggressive child’s parents will be notified as soon as possible and written documentation of the incident will be provided to the parent(s) and placed in the child’s file.

4. If the teachers feel that they need further assistance in resolving the behavior problem, the program may with parental permission, request the assistance of an outside party. If the teacher feels that the problem may be the result of a special need, the program may, with parental permission, refer the child for evaluation. If the parental permission is refused and the problem behavior continues, the continued enrollment of the child will be reconsidered in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6 below.

5. If the result of an outside evaluation suggests the need for accommodations for special needs, the program will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they are not an undue hardship on the program as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

6. If all of the above steps fail to resolve the behavior problem, the program may ask the parent(s) to obtain care for their child at another center. The program will provide the parent(s) with 2 weeks’ notice, except where such notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns, and will try to assist the parent(s) in obtaining alternative care.

7. Written documentation of all of the above steps will be provided to the parent(s) and placed in the child’s file.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

As previously mentioned, the Children’s Center is accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Founded in 1926, NAEYC is the world’s largest organization working on behalf of young children with nearly 90,000 members, a national network of over 300 local, state, and regional Affiliates.

The Children’s Center is also a member of the National Coalition of Campus Children’s Centers (NCCCC), which is a nonprofit educational membership organization. Founded in 1982, NCCCC
supports research and activities affecting college and university early childhood education and service settings, family and work issues, and the field of early childhood education in general. NCCCC expresses this mission through its newsletters, publications, conferences and grants.
ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

1) Signed Tuition Agreement
2) Payment of Registration Fee ($45 per child) and Deposit ($75)
3) Photocopy of Your Child’s Immunization Record
4) Income Verification Form – only for BSU student families
5) ICCP Form – only for those families participating
6) Enrollment Form
7) Physicians Form
8) Email Request
9) Volunteer Interest
10) Sunscreen Permission
11) Parental Consent Form
12) Child’s Personal and Developmental History

DAILY SIGN IN AND OUTS

Children are to be brought directly into the classroom (or playground) and ‘signed in’ on a daily basis. The person responsible for bringing and picking up your child must sign the child into and out of the Children’s Center each day on the classroom sign-in sheet. Only an authorized adult may sign a child in or out. **There is a $2 penalty fee assessed for not signing your child (ren) in and/or out, this includes a signature and the time the child is arriving / leaving the Children’s Center.**

The time of arrival or departure, adult’s signature and whereabouts for the day, should be entered along with any special instructions for that day if necessary. After sign-in, the child should be taken directly to his/her teacher so staff is aware your child has arrived. Each child must be properly signed in by an authorized adult and physically under the supervision of staff before the Children’s Center can assume responsibility for the child’s activities while on the premises.

**Only those authorized adults listed on your registration form will be allowed to remove your child from the Children’s Center.** If you want someone other than an authorized adult to pick up your child, please advise your child’s teacher and the front desk with a signed and dated note, naming the person whom you have given permission to pick up your child. Advise the person picking up your child to stop at the front desk to show acceptable identification/ i.e., photo ID or driver’s license. **Without a note on file and proper identification, we will not release your child.** Parents are responsible for advising others who deliver or pick up your child of the sign in/out procedures.
Children’s coats can be hung on their designated hooks in the cubby area when they arrive, and other items can be put in their cubbies. Please remind (or help) your child to wash his/her hands when entering the classroom.

**LATE PICK-UP**

The Center closes at 5:30 p.m. Your child and the staff become very concerned when you are late. Please telephone if possible to let us know if you will be late. It is extremely important that we have emergency numbers of people who are available to pick up your child if we are unable to locate you. Pickups after 5:30 p.m. will be assessed a **$1.00 PER MINUTE PER CHILD CHARGE.**

In the event a child or children have not been picked up by 6:00 p.m. on any given day, and further that (1) the parent has not contacted the Children’s Center staff as to alternate arrangements and (2) the person, identified by the parent / guardian as the emergency contact and authorized person to pick said child up, cannot be reached and/or refuses to pick said child up from the Children’s Center, it is the Children’s Center’s policy to notify the Child Protection Unit of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare as to the facts involved and to implement that Department’s authority to care for said child or children (Idaho Code Section 16-1601).

**CANCELLATIONS**

Because of financial and planning considerations we will only enroll children on a full semester basis for student families. All other families (Faculty and/or Staff of the University, and Community families) are considered enrolled year round (Fall semester to Fall semester). Once the semester starts, **full payment is expected for the time reserved for your child.** We will only accept full withdrawal from the program with written notice through a written appeal to the Children’s Center. Withdrawal after the start of a session will only be granted for emergency situations such as withdrawal from the University, or for personal reasons such as extended illness or a move. Please refer to **Payment of Fees** for more information. Finals Week (for student families) is included in the contract year and is not subject to cancellation. There are no refunds for absences because of illness, vacation, etc.

**ABSENCES**

Please call the Children’s Center if your child will be out for the day or will miss regularly scheduled times. Since fees are charged for the entire month, there will be no reduction for missed days. (See the section on Payment and Fees).

**CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES**
It is the Children’s Center intent to meet the needs of children, especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation or remarriage. Sharing information about such situations is helpful to staff to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. Rest assured that the strictest confidentiality will be maintained.

Please note: We can only enforce custody matters if we have copies of court orders on file. If parents are in the process of deciding custody and visitation, or if they have a custody agreement, the Children’s Center needs to have a written statement that clearly states:

- Visitation rights of each parent
- Pick-up rights of each
- Which parent signs permission for school outings
- Whether both parents will participate in parent/teacher conferences

As the involvement at school of both parents is important to the emotional growth and attachment of the child, we will gladly schedule either joint or separate conference times for parents, provide a parent box for each, or mail school newsletters and notices to a parent.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Children’s Center respects the privacy of children, families, faculty, and staff. All information, either written or verbal, about children, parents, and families is kept confidential. When necessary to discuss an issue concerning your child with a parent or teacher, we will take care to talk privately outside of the child’s presence or hearing.

If a college student is working in the classroom to fulfill coursework, our expectations are that out of school, in conversations or in written assignments, children’s real names are not to be used.

At times parents make observations about another family’s child through volunteer opportunities in the classroom or on an outing. We ask that, if you have observations about something happening in the classroom, that you direct your comments or questions to the staff at the Children’s Center. We value and respect all families, and want to maintain a school environment that follows the highest standards of communication and confidentiality.

CHILD ABUSE

Idaho Code, Section 16-1619 requires all child care personnel to report any indication of child abuse. We are obligated by law to inform the Child Protection Offices of the Department of Health & Welfare within twenty-four (24) hours of any conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in physical injury to a child. Persons who act upon reasonable cause in reporting child abuse are protected from any liability by Idaho Code, Section 16-1620.
WITHDRAWAL AND ENROLLMENT DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

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 given notice and asked to find alternative child care services for their child. In a rare circumstance in which a parent or guardian is deemed verbally, physically hostile or abusive to Children’s Center staff or children; during the one week notice period, the Children’s Center reserves the right to take measures to maintain a harmonious and safe center environment. Such measures may include calling for Boise State University police presence during a child’s drop off or pick up during the one-week period.

Failure of a parent / guardian to abide by Children’s Center policies and procedures may result in being asked to find alternative child care. Disregard of Children’s Center policies and procedures may include but are not limited to, the following circumstances:

- Failure to pay tuition on time.
- Refusing to accompany a child into the building.
- Child is picked up late (after 5:30 pm) more than 3 times in any semester.
- On more than 3 occasions within any 30 day period, child shows obvious symptoms of illness including but not limited to fever, vomiting or diarrhea when brought to the center or parent / guardian fails to pick up child within 60 minutes from the Children’s Center when notified that the child is ill.
- Endangering the well-being and safety of children by leaving medicine in a child’s cubbie. Failure to submit or update immunizations by the due date. Failure to submit updated medical records (such as allergy information).
- Hostile disrespect or harassment to a Children’s Center employee.
- Arriving or departing with a child under the influence of substances leaving the parent / guardian incapable of safely caring for a child.
- Any cases of suspected child neglect or abuse, or adult abuse, (verbal or physical – including hostile voice mail, faxes or e-mail communications) will be reported to the appropriate officials.

If your child is not yet ready for a group experience or his/her needs are not being met in the group setting, we may ask you to withdraw your child after a confidential conference. We do not believe a child should remain in the program unless he/she can benefit from the experience.

BABY SITTING POLICY
It is important that the Children’s Center maintain a professional environment for providing child care for the children. Separateness of home and Center child care is a component of the professional environment. If staff is involved in care of a child both at the Children’s Center and in the child’s home there are risks of emotional involvement which can also affect other staff, parents and children in the Children’s Center.

While we do not want to hamper warmth and caring on the part of our staff, we need to maintain our ability to provide care in an uncomplicated environment. Therefore, our enrolled families are prohibited from hiring any staff as out-of-center care providers for their children. This includes center staff transporting children to and from the Children’s Center. Families who violate these rules will be subject to dismissal.

The Children’s Center adheres to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct which states: “We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness in working with children” (April 2005).

ITEMS BROUGHT FROM HOME

Our Center maintains a generous supply of material, toys, and equipment for the children to use. Therefore, children are asked to keep toys and other personal items at home. This helps us to avoid hurt feelings if an item is lost or broken. If it helps your child to take a toy or special item with them when they leave the house each day, leaving it in the car is a safe and secure place where your child can have it later. If a child brings a toy into the center, the teacher has the discretion to bring it to the office area for the parent to pick up at the end of the day, or it will be put in their cubby and they will be unable to play with it. We strongly discourage this practice because we find that once one child starts bringing a toy, then it gives permission for all children to bring in toys and miscellaneous objects. Please be respectful of this policy and help your child to understand that their toys belong at home. In addition, please do not bring food, gum, candy, or money to the Center. Please help your child to understand these rules.

HOT & COLD WEATHER/AIR QUALITY POLICY

Children shall play outdoors daily when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk. Outdoor play for infants and toddlers may include buggy trips; however other opportunities will be offered for large motor play outdoors as well.

During cold weather children spend a shorter amount of time outside and are monitored closely. During warmer weather children are encouraged to get plenty of water to replenish body fluids; the amount of time outside is reduced and children wait to go outside until late in the day or early morning when the sun is less intense. Weather that poses a significant health risk shall include temperatures below 25 degrees F or above 95 degrees F. Specific temperature guidelines are posted in each classroom.
Air quality conditions that pose a significant health risk shall be identified by announcements from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and Boise State University. Such air quality conditions shall require that children with respiratory health problems such as asthma shall not play outdoors when local health authorities announce that the air quality is approaching unhealthy levels.

SUNSCREEN POLICY

Parents/Guardians are responsible for sun screening their children prior to coming to school. Permission from families is needed to have sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher reapplied as needed.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are a fact of life today. We hope that under most circumstances parents are able to finish cell phone conversations prior to entering the building. The transition for children between school and family time is one that we hope has your full attention—for reasons of safety, so you can reconnect to your child after a time of separation, and so that, at the end of the day, you can be available to see and hear of your child’s experience during the school day. If you carry a cell phone into the building, please turn it off or place the ringer on vibrate. If you need your phone in the Center and receive a phone call while in a classroom, please go to the Family Room or outdoors to talk.

HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

At the Boise State University Children’s Center, holidays and celebrations are viewed as an important part of many lives. The goal of the Children’s Center is to find a balanced approach to holidays without exaggerating the experience or ignoring it. Curriculum is not holiday driven. Any holiday experience will need to be meaningful to the children, developmentally appropriate, and foster understanding and respect for one another. The Center will strive to recognize individual’s similarities and celebrate individual’s differences. Some examples may be to group holiday celebrations according to the seasons and look for parallels across cultures, set holiday activities in the context of people’s daily lives and beliefs, and connecting them to specific children, families, and staff. The Children’s Center welcomes families to share their special traditions with the center. Staff will also listen carefully and respond to children’s comments, questions, and feelings about holidays. Each classroom teacher will formulate more specific policies and procedures for holiday related activities and will share them with the parents of the class as each holiday season arises.
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Sharing your family’s special occasions and celebration days is an important part of life at the Children’s Center and can be very meaningful for your child. A child’s birthday is a special occasion for the family and the classroom community. We invite you to join your child at school during his or her special birthday celebration. Please check with your child’s teachers for specific guidelines and classroom traditions. The Center asks that birthday “treats” however, be reserved for family and friends at home. If food is brought to school (with your teachers permission) for sharing among the children, it must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers (per NAEYC accreditation requirements).

When planning for birthday parties outside of school, please only distribute invitations at the Children’s Center if you are inviting all of the children in your child’s class. The feelings of an excluded child can easily be hurt in the excitement of discovering invitations in the cubbies!

The staff will also be made aware of families’ who may not celebrate birthdays. Arrangements will be made by the teacher to accommodate the needs of these families. We are confident that together we can create many memorable and special celebrations for the children that are appropriate to the classroom setting.

CLOTHING

Clothing that children wear to the center should be comfortable, easy to put on a remove, easy to care for, and labeled with your child’s name. Please send your child in ‘play’ clothes. We offer art activities, water, sand, and outdoor play, so children need to wear clothing that allows them to move about freely and get dirty.

During cooler weather, it is necessary for each child to dress appropriately. Children will go outdoors daily unless it is raining, or the wind chill is below 25 degrees. Boots, mittens, a heavy coat, snow pants, and a hat are necessary for winter play.

Small children often do not recognize their own clothing. In order to eliminate confusion, it is requested that all clothing be clearly labeled with your child’s name.

Every child needs to have an extra set of labeled clothing, including pants, shirts, underpants, and socks. Please check periodically to make sure they are seasonally appropriate and also to be sure your child has not outgrown the clothing. It is also important to replace items once they are used.
OUTDOOR PLAY AND FIELD TRIPS

All children in attendance at the Children’s Center will be taken outdoors for play on a daily basis. Please send the appropriate outdoor clothing with your child each day. Children go outside everyday unless it is raining, extremely cold or extremely hot. All children will be expected to go outside. We adhere to the philosophy that children need fresh air and outdoor activity to maintain healthy bodies. Staying indoors can and does generate and regenerate illness. A physician’s written excuse will be accepted if your child needs to remain indoors for a limited period of time.

Field Trips are important occasional experiences for children. They are planned when they fit with curriculum. They are typically planned in order for children to have a real experience with an event, a situation, a place, or an expert around a topic of study. It is one of several ways we provide for the content part of the curriculum; they may involve the entire class or a small group.

Field trips are also a way to connect children to the routines of the school day (shopping for foods before a cooking project), to our immediate community (neighbors, the Boise State University campus, the library), or to natural processes (season changes). Field trips are ways teachers observe and research life outside the school walls with children in order to enrich children’s experiences in the classroom.

Teachers follow safety procedures when they are away from the building – they post signs for families to remind them of upcoming trips and let them know where they are; bring emergency contact information; carry first aid kits; and make necessary accommodations to meet the needs of all of the children in the group.

RED PAINT IN THE HAIR??!!

Red paint in the hair? Blue paint on the jeans? Sand in the shoes? Hardened glue on the favorite shirt? White socks that look brown? Sleeves a little bit damp?

Your child probably . .

• Worked with a friend
• Solved a problem
• Created a masterpiece
• Learned a new skill
• Had a great time
• Developed new language
Your child probably didn’t...

• Feel lonely
• Become bored
• Do worksheets that are too easy
• Do repetitive “babyish” tasks
• Do “sit down” work that isn’t appropriate for their age group

You probably. . .

• Paid good money for the clothes
• Will have trouble getting the red paint out
• Are wondering if your caregiver isn’t paying close enough attention to your child

Your caregiver probably. . .

• Spent time planning a challenging activity for the children
• Was aware of your child’s needs and interests
• Encouraged the children to try new things
• Made smocks available for the children
• Was worried you might be concerned

Try to remember your favorite activity when you were four-years-old. Was it outdoors, playing water or mud, dress-up clothes? Young children really learn when they are actively involved in play – not when someone is talking to them. There is a difference between —messy and —lack of supervision. The caregiver made sure your child was fed, warm, took a nap, washed hands, and planned messy fun things to do because that is how young children learn! Send your child to school in clothes that can get dirty! Keep extra old clothes at school for times when the child gets really wet or messy. If you need to go somewhere that evening, bring the dressier clothes when picking up, and allow time to change. Keep calm. Remember in a few years the teenagers will use the shampoo, mirrors and all the towels! Young children need time to be kids. If you have concerns, talk to your child’s teacher about active play!

*Taken from the YMCA/CRS Newsletter, Summer 1996*

GOODBYES

Separation can be stressful for parents as well as children. We are here to help in this sometimes difficult, but very common, developmental process. It is not unusual for children to experience separation anxiety at some point in their child care experience. If your child is having trouble saying good-bye, rest assured that he/she is being left in good hands. When it is time for you to leave, it is easier on the child if your good-bye is loving, firm and final.

When you leave your child, please don’t “sneak out”. Say goodbye and make sure to stay positive during the process. When it’s time for you to leave the classroom, after you say your good-byes, make the departure definite. Lingering can make a child unsure of what is expected.
of him/her. It is helpful when parents develop a routine (leave after reading a book together, washing hands, greeting the teacher, etc.). Consistency is the key. Over time your child will become accustomed to this routine and learn that you always come back when you say you will (after snack, outdoor play, nap, etc.). Together, we will work through this important developmental process. Please note that anxiety for children can occur throughout the year during their early childhood years as a child goes through various stages of development.

Phone calls can be transferred to the classroom, and we encourage you to call and check on how your child is doing throughout the day. Our phone number is 426-4404.

VISITATION

You are welcome to observe the program and visit your child at any time. We also welcome and encourage parents to volunteer in all areas of the program. If you have a special talent or interest to share with the children, please let your child’s teacher know.

SPECIAL NEEDS & SERVICES

We pride ourselves on serving a diverse group of children with differing abilities within our center, thus creating a rich learning environment. We will, however, look at the individual situation of every special needs child whose family might desire our services. We will consult with appropriate resource personnel to determine our ability to provide the services required for each child. The resource team may consist of the Center Director and Assistant Director, classroom teachers, and other registered, licensed and/or resource personnel as indicated by the child’s special needs.

We will not exclude a child based on a disability. However, we reserve the right to consult with other professionals to determine the extent of the child’s needs. Reasonable adaptations and changes will be made to accommodate a child with disabilities or special needs while ensuring an undue burden (expense or significant difficulty) is not placed on the program.

Parents are expected to make arrangements for children who require specialized staff or consultants to help them fully participate in the program. All arrangements need to be discussed with staff and approved by the Director. Parents are financially responsible for any additional services. Any support staff that enter the program will be expected to work cooperatively with the Children’s Center staff and follow all policies and procedures (including City of Boise licensing). Support staff that are not qualified or trained as early childhood teachers will spend limited time in the classroom.

It is expected that the parents of a special needs child will provide our staff with appropriate information to assist us in providing the best possible care for their child (i.e. IEP). When a child has a diagnosed need, the staff needs to be fully informed so we can provide the best possible care for him/her and continue to work on his/her goals.
It may be appropriate for a child to spend time in a classroom prior to enrollment to determine if their needs can be met by our staff. It will then be up to the center staff to determine the appropriateness of a child’s placement in our program.
PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Whether you are new to the Children’s Center or have been enrolled for a while, we welcome you to spend time with us. Visiting will help both you and your child feel comfortable and connected. We have an open door policy - families are always welcome to participate in classroom activities, field trips or join us during mealtimes. The teaching staff can help you in choosing an activity and making suggestions. In addition to classroom opportunities for involvement, all of our family members are invited to join the Children's Center Advisory Board for family participation at a program-wide level.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We value our relationship and communication with parents, as we serve as partners in the care of your children. We encourage you to let us know anything that might help us in our work with your child – a move, developmental or medical needs, the birth of a baby, divorce or separation, death in the family, a new pet, etc. All are examples of information that can be helpful to us.

Teachers will share information with you about your child’s day on a regular basis. Although we want you to be aware of certain situations and behaviors your child may be exhibiting at the center, we don’t expect you to ‘fix’ it or to punish your child. We will handle the situations that arise, but just want parents to be aware of what we are doing in the classroom as it pertains to your child.

Information about your child’s daily activities, upcoming events in the classroom, fieldtrips, and newsletters can be accessed through the Children’s Center Website. Please read the information on the website so you can remain informed about your child’s classroom. Important information regarding center policies and procedures, enrollment, and upcoming events are always on the website.

PARENT COMMITTEE

The Parent Committee acts as an important link between the Children’s Center and the families to help coordinate a range of family and Center activities. Activities that the Committee participates in includes: fundraisers, classroom representative, hospitality at family events, Teacher Appreciation Week, and also helps promote a sense of community within the Children’s Center. The Parent Committee works alongside various Children’s Center committees which are comprised of teachers and either the Center Director or Assistant Director.
ADVISORY BOARD

The purpose of the Children’s Center Advisory Board is to cooperatively recommend and advise the Children’s Center Director, Executive Director of Campus Services and the Vice President for Student Affairs in the establishment of policies and priorities for the operation of the Children’s Center as it relates to the mission. The board is comprised of individuals from the following areas:

- Faculty members from the College of Education, and at-large members appointed by the Faculty Senate; Professional Staff Senate; Association of Classified Employees.
- One representative appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- Two representative student parents from the Center.
- Two University Student representatives appointed by the ASBSU President.
- One community representative from an NAEYC accredited program.

FAMILY CONFERENCES

Teachers welcome opportunities to talk with parents. Classroom teachers are available to talk informally on a daily basis during drop-off and pick-up. For more detailed conversations teachers are available any time during the year by appointment. Our professional code of ethics requires that all adult conversations about children be held away from children.

In addition to informal talking time, parents and teachers meet in the fall and spring (see Center calendar) to confer about each child’s development and school experience. Conferences provide an opportunity for families and teachers to share perceptions of a child’s well-being, current happenings at home or school, and/or communication regarding home and school child-rearing practices.

AGES & STAGES ASSESSMENT TOOL AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is a reliable and valid screening tool for teachers and parents to help assess the development of young children in their care. Many professionals rely on ASQ as a developmental and social-emotional screening for children from one month to 5.5 years. The ASQ looks at strengths and areas of growth, educates parents about developmental milestones, and incorporates parents’ expert knowledge about their children.

Screening young children is an effective, efficient way for professionals to catch problems and start treatment as early as possible—during the crucial early years when the child’s brain and body are developing so rapidly. Because developmental and social-emotional delays can be subtle and can occur in children who appear to be developing typically, most children who would benefit from early intervention are not identified until after they start school. Even pediatricians, the child health specialists, fail to detect delays more than 70% of the time when they rely on clinical judgment alone.
Research underscores the importance of early intervention:

- Developmental delays, learning disorders, and behavioral and social-emotional problems are estimated to affect 1 in every 6 children.
- Only 20% to 30% of these children are identified as needing help before school begins.
- **Intervention prior to kindergarten has huge academic, social, and economic benefits.** Studies have shown that children who receive early treatment for developmental delays are more likely to graduate from high school, hold jobs, live independently, and avoid teen pregnancy, delinquency, and violent crime, which results in a savings to society of about $30,000 to $100,000 per child.
- If social-emotional problems are identified and addressed early, children are less likely to be placed in special education programs—and later in life, they’re also less likely to experience school failure and unemployment.

The teachers in your child’s classroom will screen your child within the first 8 weeks of enrollment. Thereafter, preschoolers will be screened annually, 2/3’s will be screened at the beginning of fall and spring semester, and the infants and toddlers will be screened at the beginning of every semester. Parents will also be invited to assess their child within their home environment and return the results to the teacher. S/he will then pull all of the information together into a final assessment which will be shared with parents either prior to or during parent conferences.

**PARENT FILES**

Every parent has a parent file or box outside the classroom. Monthly bills, newsletters and other notices will be placed in this file. Please be sure to check it daily.

**PERMANENT FILES**

Files are kept for children who attend our program. These files include the enrollment forms, immunization records, health release, photo/field trip release, student information sheets, as well as informal assessment results and conference notes. Parents may request to read the contents of their child’s file at any time. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or immediate teaching staff thru implied consent. Regulatory authorities such as City of Boise, Central District Health and NAEYC are given access on request. Files will be kept in storage for 7 years after a child leaves our program.

**EMAIL**

Each of our classrooms has an email account that is used for communication such as newsletter, family events, etc. In addition, each staff member also has an individual email account. Face to face communication is always best, but email can be a helpful option on busy days. See your child’s teacher for the email address for their classroom.
PARENT BULLETIN BOARDS

Each classroom has a parent bulletin board. Weekly lesson plans, menus, and other information are posted on the boards. The wipe off board in or outside your child’s classroom will give you a quick overview of what types of activities the children experienced in the day.

There is a bulletin board in the main entryway to give you updates from administration, which will contain information important to parents. We encourage you to check them regularly.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Once a year, parents, staff and other professionals are asked to evaluate how well the program is meeting the needs of children and parents. Evaluation criteria are based upon NAEYC accreditation standards, as well as Children’s Center particular values and goals.

A report of annual evaluation findings is shared with families, staff, and our Advisory Board through compiled report(s) displayed in the school and a written summary published in the newsletter.

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Parents are expected to maintain professional relationships with center staff. Although individual friendships and bonds may develop, parents and staff need to be careful about the appropriateness of the relationship. When a deeper friendship develops between a parent and a staff member, the boundary lines of friend/parent/teacher can become blurred causing miscommunication, confusion and possible breaches of confidentiality.

Confidentiality can be significantly compromised through social networking sites, such as Facebook (posting of pictures, talking about other families, children, or the center). Any communication related to the center needs to go through appropriate channels; Facebook, text messages, personal e-mail, etc., are not considered appropriate ways to communicate. Appropriate forms of communication with staff include – calling the center to talk with staff member; talking at pick-up and drop-off; e-mailing questions or information.

PARENT CONCERNS

As a child care center we are a community of children, parents, and staff all interacting and sharing our lives together. In a community, people work closely together and hopefully interactions are positive, helpful, kind, and understanding. Yet it is to be expected that from time to time, people will experience some conflict, concerns, and difficulties.
We recognize that parenting is one of the most difficult, intense, and rewarding experiences in your life. We want you to share your thoughts, hopes, and dreams for your child. You want what is best for your child, and we know it is your job to advocate and protect your child.

We, as a staff, will make mistakes, create misunderstandings, and occasionally miscommunicate. When these mistakes occur, we want you to tell us. As a staff, it is our goal to offer your family the best child care services possible. In order to meet our goal, we need your input, your suggestions, your questions, and concerns.

When you have a concern please remember....

- Teachers want the parents to feel very satisfied with the care their child is receiving.

- Talk to the teachers directly whenever possible. If you feel comfortable, ask your child’s teacher first about any concern. Teachers prefer that you talk with them directly, but they do understand if you would prefer to talk with the Director.

- Realize that if you have a concern with a teacher, the director will need to investigate and talk with the teacher directly about your concern and deal with the issue in a straightforward manner so the teacher can improve her performance and/or correct any mistakes.

- Be assured that teachers do not hold a grudge against your child or “take it out” on your child after you have expressed a concern. We would not hire anyone at our center who would react in such an inappropriate manner. Actually, after expressing a concern, your child’s teacher will be more conscientious about your issue and try to improve.

- Consider using the “once is OK” rule. With minor issues, allow staff to make a mistake once or twice, but when it becomes a pattern, it is definitely a time to bring it to their attention.

- On the other hand, don’t allow concerns to build up. As concerns occur, share them with the teachers. It is disturbing to find out “later” that a parent had a number of concerns and never expressed them.

- Sometimes we cannot make changes you may request due to other restrictions, but we ALWAYS want to hear your suggestions. We promise to consider them seriously and respond to you in a timely manner.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

We encourage parents to become involved with our program. Although parents are not permitted to work with or assist other children in the classroom without going through the proper hiring/volunteer process, parents are encouraged to talk with their child’s teacher about opportunities to participate in the classroom. Some ways to get involved include: participate in the interviewing process when hiring new staff; read a book to children; share a special interest or talent (music, art, cooking, etc.); serve on the Parent Committee; donate items for dramatic
play; repair broken toys; participate in the Week of the Young Child (April), etc. We realize that our parents are very busy working and/or going to school. We encourage your involvement but also don’t want to overburden you with high expectations, so it’s up to you as to how involved you would like to become with the program.

WHAT WE EXPECT OF PARENTS

• Read the bulletin boards, notices and newsletters that are sent home. Important information is shared with you on a regular basis, but you must make the effort to read it.

• Give your child time to adjust to child care before leaving them here. Parents can help set a positive tone for the rest of the day by taking a few minutes in the morning to greet the teachers and help involve your child in an activity.

• Value staff members and show them common courtesy. Caregivers are more than just babysitters. We employ teachers who have training and education in child development. Show respect for their position as an important part of your child’s development.

• Focus on your child when you pick him/her up. Take time to greet staff and your child and see if there is anything the teacher wishes to communicate before you leave.

• Pay your child care fees on time. We are providing a valuable service and deserve prompt payment. Don’t put the Director in the position of begging you for payment or having to threaten disenrollment.

• Be respectful and support center policies. If we ask that you don’t bring in toys, then please don’t allow your child to do this. It is impossible to fully enforce all policies at all times, but know that your disregard for a policy is causing a problem.

• Make sure your children follow center rules. Please don’t allow them to run away from you, climb on furniture, etc. Your child’s safety and well-being is our primary concern.

• Make sure your child is wearing appropriate clothing. Children will get dirty in child care. It is not realistic to send them in good clothing and expect teachers to keep them clean. Make sure clothing is easy to remove if your child is in the process of toilet training (don’t send them in overalls or ‘onsies’).

• Keep a sick child home. The state mandates health regulations to prevent spread of infectious illness. Although it may seem inconvenient at times, these rules also keep your child from being infected by others as well. It is up to you to have a back-up plan for a child who cannot attend.
• Address concerns in a respectful way and to the appropriate person. Do not bad mouth staff to others -- seek to resolve your problem with the appropriate staff member.

• Communicate with teachers about what’s going on at home.

• Make sure children get a good night’s rest so they are ready for their busy day.

• Pick children up before the center closes. Staff need to get home too.

~Based on an article by Stephanie Dunnewind of the Seattle Times.

PARENT RESOURCE LIBRARY

The center maintains a resource library containing various parenting brochures and magazines which are available for you to take. The resources are located by the main entrance of the Center. Feel free to ask out Office Specialist for assistance.
FAMILIES SERVED

Children of Boise State University students and faculty or staff and University of Idaho-Boise students receive priority enrollment to participate in the Children’s Center program. The Children’s Center provides care for children ranging in age from eight weeks through five years of age. To further advance campus and community relations, alumni and community parents may enroll their children if space is available. First priority is given to University students.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Parents interested in enrolling their child(ren) for the first time should obtain an application from the enrollment section of the center’s Web site (http://childrenscenter.boisestate.edu) or directly from the center. Once the application and nonrefundable $45.00 fee (per child) is received, your child(ren) will be placed onto our waiting list or, if availability permits, enrolled into our program. If a child is placed on the waiting list, parents need to call every other month to keep information updated.

With every new semester a student’s schedule will change and so will the children’s schedules. This means there is a possibility to adjust desired days if need be. Anyone needing to make changes to their current care schedule must do so in writing. Forms can be obtained at the front office and must be approved by the Director of the Children’s Center. Please remember, this is a request. There are times we cannot accommodate changes and will hold this request.

ALL children and parents must visit the center and classroom, and meet the teachers and administrative staff prior to their first day. This ensure a proper transition for each child. It is requested that parents attend the Parent Orientation, typically held on the Tuesday prior to the Fall semester.

Due to the fact that we enroll so many students in our program who need to change their schedule each semester, all student parents in our program must re-enroll their child(ren) every semester. Please never assume that just because you have full-time care your enrollment is continuous. If we do not receive an application back from you, we have to assume you will not be returning for the upcoming semester. In the event of you not returning, a withdrawal form must be completed and turned in. Re-enrollment each semester only applies to student parents.

Note: We consider the parent who signs the enrollment forms and with whom we have primary contact as the parent to whom we are accountable. We will not adhere to the requests of a parent with whom we have little contact unless the request is approved by the primary parent.
If we are familiar with both parents and there is a disagreement about emergency contact info, who can pick up your child, permission slips, etc., these issues need to be resolved by both parents (or a court order) in order to maintain child care at the center. We cannot be placed in the middle of parental disputes.

**CHILD CARE OPTIONS**

Parents may select from one of the following options:
- 5 days a week: Monday-Friday
- 3 days a week: Mon./Wed./Fri.
- 2 days a week: Tues./Thurs.

The Children’s Center does not offer half-day or drop-in rates.

**EXTRA CHILD CARE**

Although you may not switch your child care hours on any given day, or switch one day for another, you can have the option of requesting additional hours ("extra care") as needed. These requests will be granted **based on the classroom dynamics at that time, not ratios.** All extra care hours will be charged an additional daily rate. Extra care is NOT intended for families to use on a regular basis. If you find this is the case, we ask that you make a permanent schedule change.

**PERMANENT SCHEDULE CHANGE**

A request for a permanent schedule change may be made at any time during the semester but a 2-week notice is required. We cannot always make changes to accommodate everyone’s schedule but we are willing to try. All schedule changes must be approved by the Director of the Center.

**DAILY FEES**

The Children’s Center strives to make services accessible to families of all backgrounds. The Children’s Center offers a tiered tuition schedule for Boise State University students. Daily tuition for Boise State University students is based on gross monthly income and household size. A minimum of six (6) academic credits is required in order to qualify for the discounted student rate. It is a student’s responsibility to inform the Children’s Center when they are no longer 1) taking 6 academic credits, or 2) enrolled as a BSU student. Tuition rates for students are based on academic credit hours. Thus, changes in academic credit hours will result in changes in tuition rate effective immediately.

**CHILD CARE FEES & PAYMENTS**
The timely receipt of parent fees is extremely vital to our ability to provide a quality program and quality care for your child.

Children’s Center Policies and Procedures are:

1) All fees are payable in advance  
   a) A bill will be placed in each parent’s file or mailbox before the first school day of the month.  
   b) Payments are made in the Children’s Center office. The Children’s Center accepts personal checks, money orders, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover.  
   c) Payment is due by the tenth (10th) of each month.  
      i) Fees not paid by that date will be assessed a $10 late fee.  
      ii) An additional $15 fee will be added to the unpaid balance after the twentieth (20th) of the month.  
      iii) After one (1) month of non-payment an additional $25 fee will be placed on your account and a service indicator will be added to those individuals affiliated with Boise State. A payment agreement will have to be filled out until the balance is paid in full. You need to pay your monthly bill plus additional for any past due monthly.  
         Failure to make payments will result in termination of childcare.  
2) Fees are charged for the entire month regardless of absences due to illness, vacation, etc.  
3) Fees are set in Spring for the upcoming year (June 1 – May 31).  
4) All delinquent Boise State student accounts must be reported to the Vice President for Student Affairs for action. Under BSU POLICY 4102-D, “ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL,” the University has the legal right to cancel a Student’s enrollment for nonpayment of debts, fees, bad checks, etc., after proper notice of intent. Anytime an account is referred to Student Affairs, an additional administrative fee of $25 will be assessed.  
5) Because of the ratio requirements for the infant and toddler rooms, all fees are based on the age group your child is in, not on the exact age of your child.  
6) Returned checks will be assessed an additional $25 fee.  
7) At the time of registration, you will be charged a $45 registration fee for each child in addition to a $75 deposit per family. The registration fee is nonrefundable. In doing so, you are reserving a spot for your child (ren). If you do not need the reserved spot, you must give written notice to the Children’s Center before the stated deadline(s). Please understand that failure to give such notice, dropping the program, or not showing up once the session and/or semester has started will result in assessment of two (2) weeks of tuition and loss of your $75.00 deposit.  
8) IF you bill is not paid in full by the 2nd month of billing, care will end until bill is paid in full.
IDAHO CHILD CARE PROGRAM (ICCP)

The Idaho Child Care Program (ICCP) provides child care subsidies for qualified families. These subsidies are given to families who are working, looking for work, attending training or education programs or need preventative services. Parents pay a percentage of the child care costs, based on the number of children in their home and their monthly income. Parents are required to pay their portion monthly. If you are interested in finding out more, call the Idaho CareLine at 2-1-1.

LATE PICK-UP

The Center closes at 5:30 p.m. Your child and the staff become very concerned when you are late. Please telephone, if possible to let us know if you will be late. It is extremely important that we have emergency numbers of people who are available to pick up your child if we are unable to locate you. Pickups after 5:30 p.m. will be assessed a $1.00 PER MINUTE PER CHILD CHARGE.

NOTIFICATION OF WITHDRAWAL

If you have been accepted into our program and choose to withdraw prior to the beginning of the semester, you MUST notify the office (in writing) by the designated deadline stated in on the Center calendar to receive your $75.00 deposit back. In addition, a 2 week notice, prior to the start of the semester, must be given or your will be billed for the first two weeks of child care based on the schedule on your signed contract.

If you completely withdraw from our program anytime during the semester or decide to decrease your child’s schedule, a two-week notice is required. You will be charged child care fees for the two weeks of care whether or not your child is in attendance. After a withdrawal, you may submit an application for a future semester but you will NOT receive priority as a currently enrolled family and you will also have to pay another enrollment fee/child. This policy applies to the Summer session, as well as Fall and Spring semesters.
IMMUNIZATIONS

Idaho State Law (Idaho Code 39-1118) requires licensed child care providers to keep immunization records on file of all children. Records must include the name of the child, date of birth, date (month, day, and year of each immunization), and a signature of the health care provider who administered the immunization.

Immunization records must be provided before a child may start attending the Children’s Center. Parents are responsible for providing current documentation each time their child completes a series of shots.

Immunizations help protect all children and staff from severe diseases. Exemptions from any immunization for personal and/or religious beliefs will not be accepted.

HAND WASHING POLICY

It is a policy of the Children’s Center for all staff, families, and children to wash hands on arrival to school and throughout the day. A notice of required hand washing for adults and children is posted by the front entrance. Other required hand washing times are posted in each classroom. Hand washing is taught at the Children’s Center and monitored periodically to ensure accuracy and effectiveness. Staff from Central District Health visits the Children’s Center for additional training. Hand washing is an important activity to be carried out during times of good health and when contagious illnesses are prevalent. If children are not able to independently wash hands, adults are to provide support.

ILLNESS POLICY

Providing a healthy, safe environment for children is an important goal of the Children’s Center. We understand that many of our parents face a real dilemma when a child is ill. We know you do not want to, and in some cases, cannot miss school or work, but when children are brought to school sick, it places all of us at risk.

Please keep your child at home if he or she has been ill during the night or in the morning and has active symptoms as listed below. A child will likewise be sent home from the center when exhibiting the following symptoms:

- Fever (oral temperature of 101 degrees or above) accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (lethargy; uncontrolled coughing, persistent crying; difficulty breathing; wheezing)
• Diarrhea – defined by more watery stools, not associated with changes of diet or medicine, that is not contained by the child’s ability to use the toilet
• Undiagnosed skin rash
• Vomiting (2 or more times within 24 hours)
• Persistent abdominal pain
• Mouth sores with drooling
• Rash with fever or behavior change
• Head lice (In the case of head lice, the child may not return until the hair is nit-free)
• Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
• Chicken Pox, until all sores have dried and crusted
• Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment
• Scabies, until after treatment has been completed
• Any communicable illness

**Your child’s fever needs to be controlled without the use of medication (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) for 24 hours prior to returning to the Children’s Center.**

We ask that you keep these policies in mind when your child is ill. Beyond that we also ask that you assess your child’s state of health in terms of his/her needs. Some children may no longer have symptoms (vomiting, fever, etc.) after 24 hours, but may still not feel well enough to be in a play group environment.

There are some health policies unique to the infant/toddler classrooms. These policies are included in the Infant / Toddler section of this handbook.

If you find your child has an infectious disease, please contact the Children’s Center as soon as possible so we may notify other parents of possible exposure.

If a child becomes ill during the day it is imperative that we have a way to contact parents or someone else authorized to pick up. Be sure to leave a number or location on the sign-in sheet and update phone numbers should they change. When a child is sent home an Ill Child Form will be filled out explaining why the child is being sent home, and the conditions in which they can return.

**PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

In the event your child becomes ill while at the Children’s Center, parents / guardians will be notified first. The Children’s Center will then wait one half hour for a return call confirming the message has been received and someone is on their way to pick up. If the initial message is not returned within the half hour waiting period, authorized emergency contacts will be notified for pick up.
MEDICATION

Prescription medication to be given at school must be in the original container accompanied by written instructions from the physician, prescription number, name of medication, date filled, child’s name, physician’s name, directions and schedule for dosage, route (mouth, topical, etc.), storage requirements (refrigeration, for example), and expiration date.

Administration of prescription medications requires written parental authority on the Medication Consent Log. Consent Logs are completed in the classroom.

Over-the-counter medication may only be administered if we receive a signed note from the physician with the following information: child’s name, name of prescribed medication, explanation of condition requiring medication, date, and dosage. Fever-reducers, such as Tylenol, cannot be administered by our staff (please see Infant/Toddler Handbook for policy within the Looping Program). Also remember that cough drops may not be given at the Center—they are considered a choking hazard.

INSECT REPELLENT

For health reasons, we do not use insect repellent unless the local health department deems it necessary.

MEDICAL CONCERNS

If your child has a known severe or a life threatening medical condition, we must be notified in writing. Families must fill out a Medical Action Plan for our files. Staff must be given verbal and written instruction if there is a need for any special precautions in the classroom. Should your child have non-food allergies, a Medical Action Plan will be completed as well. See Meals for information regarding food allergies.

EMERGENCIES

We make every effort to ensure a safe environment for the children at all times. There is a set of written procedures for emergencies. Emergency plans are posted in the front entrance and are available to families at the front desk. For example, the school has plans for lost or missing children, responses to security threats, utility failures, and natural disasters. These are reviewed, refined, and practiced annually by staff.

The Children’s Center has a system of assigning management responsibilities when the Director is off site. This system includes the Assistant Director, Office Specialist, and when necessary, Teachers. At all times there are staff trained in pediatric CPR and first aid on site.
An emergency evacuation plan is reviewed regularly with staff, and a fire drill is held once a month. In the event of an emergency that would require the evacuation of the building, the children will be taken to the Student Union Building, 1700 University Drive. In the event of an evacuation, parents may call the following phone numbers, (208) 850-6827, or (208) 850-8525.

The Consent for Medical Treatment form you signed as part of the enrollment process, allows the Children’s Center to secure emergency medical treatment for your child should it ever be necessary. Because parents are contacted immediately in the event of an accident, it is extremely important that your class schedule (if applicable) and all telephone numbers are kept up-to-date.

In an extreme emergency, the staff will call 911. We will then call home numbers and / or alternatives numbers (including work and cell phones) in order to contact parents / guardians. For Boise State University students, we will try to locate you through the Vice President for Student Affairs Emergency Locator Service. For this reason, it is important that you note your whereabouts on the sign-in sheet if you will be somewhere other than class.

FIRE DRILLS

In accordance with the City of Boise Child Care regulations, fire drills are conducted once a month. These drills are designed to teach the children about safe practices when exiting the building in the event of a fire.

We ask that parents adhere to our fire drill practices and procedures if they are in the building at the time of the drill i.e. exit the building with your child and wait until the drill has ended before re-entering.

BUILDING SAFETY PROCEDURES

The Boise State University campus, as well as the Children’s Center is an entirely smoke-free facility. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children. Signs are posted at the front entrance notifying all visitors to the building. The Children’s Center is inspected annually by University Risk Management. As part of NAEYC accreditation requirements, the Children’s Center was inspected in 2007 and found to have no traces of lead, radon, or asbestos on the premises.

HAND WASHING

To help control the spread of illness, children are required to wash hands upon arrival at the center and at other times throughout the day. Washing hands is the best way to prevent the spreading of illness. We are happy to provide lotion for children whose hands become dry due to all of the hand washing.
SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AT THE CENTER
Parents are responsible for the safety and well-being of their child(ren) any time in which you are together at the center (Parent Programs, drop-off and pick-up times, etc) but the Children’s Center staff will step in if we feel a child’s behavior is considered unsafe for him/herself or others.

Please do not allow your child to wander or run off anywhere in the center without you (classrooms, large motor room, etc.). There are many potential dangers, so it is imperative that children are always supervised. When entering and exiting the building, your child must remain with you at all times. They should not run ahead to their classroom or run out the front door without you – this is teaching them a very unsafe practice. Children should never be outside of the building without direct adult supervision.

PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP

Children will be released from the center ONLY to authorized persons whose names appear on the application form or on a written note from the parent. (A note should be given to the center staff in advance -- please do not send a note along with the person who is picking up). A telephone call will only suffice in the case of an emergency. Please give the teachers in your child’s classroom (and the office staff) advance notice if someone else is picking up your child.

We consider the parent who signs the enrollment forms and with whom we have primary contact as the parent to whom we are accountable. Parents who are unfamiliar to us will not be allowed to pick up their child unless they are identified on the enrollment.