



University School for Young Children

Family Handbook

College of Education, Health and Human Studies
Southeast Missouri State University

Revised August, 2018

The University School for Young Children:



Educating the
University's youngest
students through play
and exploration

Welcome to the University

School for Young Children!

We are excited to welcome you to our University School for Young Children family. We look forward to getting to know you and your child in the coming years. At our center we believe when children explore and grow in a safe and nurturing environment with caring, responsive adults, they are able to learn about their world and create friendships. Teachers, children, and families alike all strive to learn and grow together in our caring, supportive community. We are passionate about our work with learners of all ages and look forward to working with you and your family.

This Family Handbook should serve as a guide to our program and its policies. While we have attempted to address most common questions, it is unlikely that every question has been answered in these limited pages. It is our goal to make our families feel comfortable and supported so please come and talk with us if you have questions or concerns. We look forward to serving you in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Katie Lorenz

Katie Lorenz, MA
Site Director
University School for Young Children

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**University School for Young Children
2089 Bessie St
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
573-290-5135 telephone
573-290-5124 fax**

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF DIRECTORY

Site Director	Katie Lorenz, MA kmlorenz@semo.edu
Associate Director / Toddler Teacher	Katie Stricker, BS kstricker@semo.edu
Assistant Director / Infant Teacher	Kimberly Rueseler, BS krueseler@semo.edu
Operations Supervisor	Joy Burnette jmburnette@semo.edu
Center Supervisor	Dean Diana Rogers-Adkinson drogersadkinson@semo.edu 573-651-2408

Program Overview

Mission

The University School for Young Children maintains an academic center for the training and education of students in early childhood education, child development and psychology for professional careers and to conduct a nationally accredited early childhood education center open to the university and to the community. In addition the Center supports child care services for student-parents which is a proven method for retention of students at universities.

Philosophy

At the University School for Young Children we believe in creating an environment that promotes active, experiential learning and reflection for learners of all ages. We support positive development by providing stimulating learning environments with rich opportunities for growth and discovery. Our philosophy is grounded in knowledge and theory in child development, early childhood education, and developmentally appropriate practice. We respect all individuals and support the unique abilities and perspectives each bring to our work with young children and families. We value families and the community and appreciate the multiple contexts that impact development and growth.

Program Goals and Objectives

At the University School for Young Children we understand children develop at their own rates and that every child is an individual. With this understanding, the goals and objectives of our program are

- To provide children an environment that says, "You are a competent learner."
- To provide an environment that nurtures all aspects of learning that will serve children throughout a lifetime, including curiosity, creativity, persistence, the tendency to ask questions, and the desire to seek solutions to problems.
- To provide children a safe place to express their feelings and to teach them their feelings are important.
- To provide children opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding through investigation and discovery.

- To provide children opportunities to practice skills that present the optimal level of challenge at the right time.
- To provide children an opportunity to establish meaningful relationships with peers and adults, and to model a healthy learning community.
- To provide children opportunities to practice social skills and develop a strong sense of self that builds confidence and guides them as they interact with others, while creating competence and a caring attitude toward others.

Curriculum

We believe that children are competent and full of rich potential. We believe our trust in children's eagerness to learn and their abilities to do so best equips us to guide them as they seek knowledge and understanding. At the University School for Young Children, we focus on four types of learning:

1. Knowledge and understanding
2. Skills
3. Dispositions or approaches to learning
4. Feelings (Katz)

We recognize children need to develop an understanding of basic concepts and facts (knowledge), as well as develop skills necessary for physical growth, reading, math, and other areas. However, they must also develop approaches to learning, such as asking questions, being persistent in tasks, and using problem-solving skills in order to be successful over a lifetime. In addition, we must focus on feelings to help children develop a strong sense of self that builds confidence, competence, and a caring attitude toward others.

At the University School for Young Children we follow the Creative Curriculum in all classrooms. The curriculum provides us opportunities to establish self-esteem & self confidence in the children allowing them to enjoy and expand on their own educational journeys. Our classrooms are designed to be safe, nurturing places for all children while they explore the world around them. The Creative Curriculum allows for adaptations and modifications to be made in the classroom. Daily experiences are provided to meet the needs of all children.

In order for the child to fall in love with learning, we believe the child must be in control of their learning experiences. The ability to move from painting to dramatic play, gives the child control over what they are choosing to experience while still being in a structured setting.

The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers focuses on providing responsive care while incorporating objectives that enable teachers to focus on what matters most for very young children. It outlines what children learn during the first three years, the experiences that provide children opportunities to achieve these learning goals, and what teachers and parents can do to help children reach these goals.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is comprehensive and addresses all areas of development: social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. It also includes all subject-matter areas: literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health and safety, creative expression and technology. Teachers find out what children know and can do through ongoing assessment: observing, conversing, and discussing with families. This information serves as a starting point for determining new concepts to be learned. Teachers use a range of instructional approaches, from child-initiated play to teacher directed instruction. They offer children opportunities to investigate the world around them and to learn through purposeful play. On the basis of assessment information, they build on what children already know and teach them important concepts and skills in an intentional way during large-group, small-group, and individual instruction. (www.teachingstrategies.com)

Missouri State Licensing

The University School for Young Children is a licensed childcare center with the state of Missouri. We comply with all state licensing guidelines and procedures. Our license is posted outside the Operations Supervisor's office and a copy of the Missouri Licensing regulations can be viewed in the Director's office.

National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation

The University School for Young Children 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 is the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators. Our program has voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, invited external professional review to verify compliance with the Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs, and has been found to be in substantial compliance with the Criteria. The Criteria and other NAEYC information can be found at www.naeyc.org/accreditation

Commitments

We are committed to the core values, ideals, and principles of the field, as stated in the *NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct*, and to the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria.

We are committed to serving the children and families of our program to the best of our abilities. We strive to ensure we are a strong support system for the families of our program.

Business and Financial Issues

Enrollment Policy

Enrollment at the University School for Young Children is open to all University affiliates as well as the community. Families may contact the center or complete an online application by visiting our website at www.semo.edu/usyc to be considered for admission to the center. Once a family has applied, the Director will call to schedule a tour of the facility. Upon tour of the facility and a request for admission, the application will be dated for potential enrollment and placed on the waiting list for the corresponding age group. The waiting list is updated continually. It is the responsibility of the family to ensure the Center has current contact information and to respond to phone messages and letters regarding openings.

Priority for enrollment of children at the University School for Young Children is determined by the following means, in this order:

1. Children who are currently enrolled will move up to the succeeding classroom when they are of age, are developmentally ready, and a spot is available.
2. Children of University School for Young Children teaching staff.
3. Siblings of currently enrolled children.
4. Children of current Southeast students, Faculty, and Staff.
5. Children of community members, according to their dated request for admission.

NOTE: Openings at the University School for Young Children are **by age group**, as the Center is required to maintain balance and comply with licensing and accreditation standards. As such, the wait for a particular age group may be longer or shorter than another age group, based on the enrollment numbers for each group.

Registration Fee

Upon notification of a child's acceptance into the program, a non-refundable \$25 registration fee will be assessed. This fee is included in the first month's bill.

Portfolio

Teachers document the children throughout their time at the center. This documentation includes a portfolio of your child's progress, which contains photographs, developmental milestones, videos, favorites and samples of your child's work. This may be in a hard copy or digital form. Portfolios are used to assess the children's development and to ensure they are progressing as they should. The portfolio moves with the child as they move through the infant and toddler rooms and will be given to you when they move to the two-year-old classroom. You will then receive a portfolio as they exit from the two-year-old classroom and also the preschool room.

Fee Schedule and Payment Procedure

Upon enrollment, families will be required to sign a tuition and financial agreement. This agreement states the start date of the child and the account to be charged.

The fees for the University School for Young Children are based on fall, spring and summer sessions. Children are enrolled for a fall, spring or summer session and families are charged for the entire session at the time of enrollment. There will be no refunds for unforeseen closures that the USYC may experience.

The fee is determined by the group in which the child is placed at the beginning of the session and the fee schedule of the program. Fall session is August 1 through December 31. Spring session is January 1 through May 31. Summer session is June 1 through July 31.

Families may make arrangements to pay fall/spring/summer session fees in installments or in one payment. The payment schedule will be arranged with the school at the time of enrollment and may be changed at the beginning of a new session.

A child must be enrolled on a continuous basis to hold a space. Children who are absent for part of a session must pay for the entire session to maintain enrollment. In addition, a child who does not enroll for summer session is considered withdrawn and will be placed at the end of the waiting list for future enrollment. This child will not be assured a space for fall and will only be offered an opening if space is available.

If a child is enrolled for a session and does not attend the first three days of that session and no payment has been made beyond the enrollment fee, the school will consider this a notice of withdrawal. It is therefore very important that parents make the first payment on time if the child will not be in attendance the first week. If a child is withdrawn because of non-attendance/non-payment, the parent will be charged one full installment.

The University requires that families be current in all University accounts in order for children to attend the University School for Young Children. If parents have unsettled accounts with the University, the Center is notified that the child may no longer attend the program until the account is settled. It is important families ensure billing information with the University is accurate in order to maintain their account. Checks are to be made payable to Southeast Missouri State University.

Please be aware the Center does not always receive advance notice when accounts are past due and we must follow University policy regarding late payments. We are periodically sent lists of people with instructions that they may not use University services until their accounts are settled. This is especially difficult when we are expected to turn children away from their school. If you are not being billed or think there might be a problem with your account, please contact the Operations Supervisor or Student Financial Services immediately so we can help resolve the problem before we receive such a notice.

Records

A complete set of paperwork must be on record for children to begin attendance at the University School for Young Children. Parents or guardians are responsible for updating information as needed. Forms to be completed include:

- Child Enrollment Form
- Classroom packet
- CACFP Enrollment Form & Income Eligibility Form
- Emergency Contact Form
- Birth and Development Form
- Child Medical Examination Report
- Agreements Form
- Parent's Specialized Instructions for Infants and Toddlers (if applicable)
- Safe Sleep for Infants
- Allergy & Food Restriction Form (if applicable)

- First Aid Form
- Acknowledgement of receiving Family Handbook
- Acknowledgement of Understanding of Late Fee Policy

Withdrawing from the Program

In order to withdraw, families must provide the Site Director of the school a two-week written notice of their intentions. Fees must be paid to the end of the month of withdrawal. Failure to give notice will result in fees being assessed for the time period involved, even if the child is not in attendance. Families withdrawing their child during the last four weeks of a semester will be expected to pay for the entire session, since it is unlikely we would be able to fill a slot at that time. Failure to pay for services will result in a hold on use of University services.

In the event that it is necessary for a child to be withdrawn during the fall, spring or summer session after payment has been made, in full or in part, a refund may be processed. The amount of the refund will be determined by prorating the amount due. **Refunds will not be processed for persons giving notice the last four weeks in any session.**

If a child is dismissed by the Center, no prorated refund will be made for the remainder of the month in which the child is dis-enrolled. However, a refund of prorated fees will be made if the family has paid for the entire fall, spring or summer session.

Termination of Services

Services may be terminated under the following circumstances:

1. Failure to provide the necessary and accurate paperwork may be cause for termination from the program. We are obligated by licensing and accreditation standards to maintain current records on our children in order to provide for their safety. It is essential that we have accurate information about their health history and emergency contacts.
2. Failure to make fee payments in a timely manner. Parents must take the initiative to make special arrangements if experiencing temporary financial difficulties.
3. When a child is unable to adjust to the program, we will work with the parents to find solutions to the problem. In most cases, by working together, we find a satisfactory resolution and the child does well. However, sometimes we determine that our program is not the right fit for the child. In these situations, the Director may request that the parent seek a different type of care for the child, and will give 2 weeks notification of termination.

4. Often, children eligible for kindergarten outgrow the Center's social, cognitive, and physical environment, and the Center will work with the parent to meet the child's needs; if the Director determines that this program cannot provide an appropriate environment for the child, two weeks' notice will be given to terminate enrollment.
5. If a child's behavior is disruptive, the Center will follow the procedures of the Disruptive Behavior Policy. If it is determined that the University School for Young Children is not able to meet the needs of the child, the Director will give the family notice that we must discontinue services. We will provide the family with 2 weeks notice, except in a case where allowing the child to remain in attendance would create a safety concern.
6. Once enrolled in the center you may maintain your child's enrollment if you are no longer a student or faculty/staff; however, the rate will change accordingly.
7. Under emergency or extenuating circumstances the decision of a 2 week notice will not be adhered to and in certain cases immediate dismissal of a child may be required.

Confidentiality

The University School for Young Children adheres to the Family Education Right to Privacy Act. Families have the right to have information regarding their child treated in a confidential manner. Written, informed consent from parents will be required before releasing any information or documentation regarding children attending the Center, except in the case when authorized officials are reviewing files for purposes of licensing or accreditation. The children's personal files are kept secure by the Operation Supervisor. Teaching staff and students are required to sign confidentiality consent forms once employed by the center.

Policy on Legal Disputes

We consider the University School for Young Children to be a place of consistency and safety for the children in our care. In an effort to maintain our neutrality and support for the children, we do not participate in parental disputes. Should either parent, family members guardians, or caregivers bring the school, its records or staff into a legal dispute over custody, that parent runs the risk of jeopardizing their child's enrollment. The University School for Young Children holds the right to discharge a child or children under these circumstances.

Assurance of Non-Discrimination

All eligible children are welcome and no child or family is discriminated against on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, familial status, sexual orientation, political beliefs, or disability. Children are given equal opportunity based upon the enrollment policy. The program adheres to the Americans with Disabilities laws.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Missouri state law requires child care professionals to report suspicion of child abuse and neglect to the Division of Family Services. If a staff member has reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect, the following procedure will be implemented by teachers and staff members to report the suspected abuse or neglect. These same policies are followed in the event that a teacher is suspected of child abuse and neglect. **Absolute confidentiality is required concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.**

1. Teachers must notify the director immediately.
2. A written report and documentation will be submitted to the director with an account of the incident.
The report will include date, time, names of individuals involved, the child's name, age, address of parent(s), along with the nature and extent of the injuries, abuse or neglect.
3. The director and the reporting teachers will observe the child and or teacher to determine whether a formal report to DFS is merited.
4. The director notifies University officials, and counsel may be consulted when necessary.
5. The director, administrative team and teacher will be responsible for making the report. Missouri law mandates that any persons suspecting child abuse or neglect must report the incident. The toll free number is 1-800-392-3738.

Updating Contact Information

It is very important that the Center office have up-to-date contact information for all children and families. Please notify the Center if you have a change of address, phone number, or any other information. The Center will ask you to fill out an updated contact information packet quarterly to ensure all information is accurate.

Program Services

Ages Served

The University School for Young Children accepts children from the ages of six-weeks through 8 years of age. A wait-list is currently in effect at the center.

Program Calendar

The University School for Young Children provides year round care that follows the University calendar, which is published each May and updated on the website at that time. The USYC opens 30 minutes prior to the campus community and closes 30 minutes after.

Hours of Operation

The University School for Young Children operates from 7:30am to 5:30pm Monday through Friday. If the University closes early, the USYC will close 30 minutes after the stated time. If the University has a delayed start, the USYC will open 30 minutes prior to the opening time.

School Closure Policies

The Center will close under any circumstances that cause the University to close. The USYC follows the University's inclement weather policy: opening 30 minutes before the campus community and closing 30 minutes after. For example: if the University is opening at 10am due to inclement weather, the USYC will open at 9:30am. If the University is closing at 2pm due to inclement weather, the USYC will close at 2:30pm. The Center may also close under conditions that make the facilities unsafe for the children, such as lack of heating, cooling or sanitary water. For weather closings, families may check Channel 12, KFVS News. To receive emergency alerts via text messaging for all school closings or schedule changes, sign up at the Southeast Missourian website, www.semissourian.com Click on "Text Alerts" and follow directions to sign up for the University School for Young Children. There will be no refunds for unforeseen closures that the USYC may experience.

Parking

The parking for the University School for Young Children is located on the Bessie side of the building. Please pull into the parking lot from Spring Street and park in marked spots only. Also, parking is allowed on the North side of Bessie and the East side of Spring if needed. The USYC entrance is on the Bessie side of the building under the maroon awning.

Administration

Teaching Staff

The program values and maintains a high quality teaching staff. We employ 11 lead teachers all of which hold a Bachelor's Degree. When hired the lead teaching staff are expected to complete a Master's Degree within an allotted time frame. In addition we employ 8 assistant teachers who have a minimum of a CDA Child Development Associates. We also have 2 graduate assistants from the University and are the training and research laboratory school for Early Childhood and Child Development students each semester.

We value continuing education and allowing our teaching staff opportunities to learn new research and trends in Early Childhood Education. Teaching staff are encouraged to enroll in college courses and attend professional development trainings and seminars. Teaching staff are required to complete 12 hours of training per licensing and an additional 6 hours for NAEYC Accreditation yearly.

Services to Children & Families

Translation Services

Our goal is to have daily communication with each family about their child's developmental progress and daily activities. If you need or would like to bring someone you know to translate during pick-ups, conferences, activities, etc. please let us know. We will make every attempt to ensure that open communication exists between you and your child's teaching staff. If needed the USYC will reach out to students in the University's International Department to collaborate to provide translation services.

Addressing Children's Individual Needs

An important part of the role of every teacher at the Center is working in partnership with parents in supporting children's development. Our teachers will assist parents in monitoring their child's development and progress. Teachers observe all children enrolled in the program and document their progress by using assessment strategies and focused portfolios. This information is used by the teachers to develop plans and curriculum to respond to each child's individual needs.

In the event a teacher believes that a child might need or benefit from additional assistance outside of the realm of services the Center can provide, parents will be contacted and a dialogue will be established to discuss concerns and brainstorm strategies. The teacher's observations and documentation regarding the concerns and suggestions for possible next steps to be taken will be addressed, and parents will be referred to community resources if and as needed.

Children with Special Needs

Teachers at the Center are experienced in working with children with special needs, and are also experienced in working cooperatively with special education professionals. If a child has been identified as having special needs prior to enrollment at the Center (or after enrollment at the Center), and the parents are currently working with other agencies and professionals, the Center will coordinate services in an effort to provide the best care and educational experience for the child. Our teachers have valuable experience working with children with a wide range of abilities and we work hard to accommodate all of our children and to work with their families and support services.

If a child is working with special education professionals who believe it would be in the child's best interest to have the child's teacher attend the IEP meetings to provide information and assistance in developing IEP's, the parents will be advised. Periodic IEP meetings with the child's team of professionals will be held at the Center to discuss the child's progress and developmental goals. We also welcome into our classrooms other professionals who are providing services to our children who have special needs and who would like to provide those services in the classroom setting.

In situations where therapists are working with a special needs child in the classroom, the parents will be asked to sign consent forms allowing the teaching staff to communicate with the child's therapists and also permitting the Center to contact medical professionals treating the child if information from a medical professional is needed to ensure that the Center is providing the child with the appropriate care needed for the safety and well-being of the child.

Maintaining Effective Communication between the Center and Parents

In order to ensure that the Center can provide a safe, effective learning environment for children with special needs, it is very important that parents and teaching staff communicate regularly. It is vital to the best interest of the child that parents provide updated and consistent information about the status and special needs of their child and any changes in the child's symptoms, condition or medication to ensure that the teaching staff at the Center are kept informed and updated. That information will help to ensure that adequate and appropriate care is given and additional training can be provided to those working with the child, if and as needed and appropriate.

In addition, to maintaining effective verbal communication between teaching staff, professionals/therapists and parents of children with special needs, a binder will be maintained in the child's classroom that may be viewed by the team, by caregivers and by parents of the child. Information in the binder will outline the child's progress, issues, daily activity, and intervention strategies. Information will then be shared with the parents at their request when meeting with the teachers.

Child-Staff Ratios/Group Sizes

The Center follows NAEYC accreditation standards for group size and child-staff ratio. The following ratios reflect the maximum adult-child ratios. The staffing may increase on occasion, such as during center time or due to University students performing labs or practicums in the classrooms. The ratios would be reflective of this with more adults in the classroom with the same number of children.

Maximum group sizes and adult-child ratios are as follows:

	Group Size	Adult-Child Ratio
Infants/Toddlers	8	1:4
Two-year-olds	14	1:7
Three- to five-year-olds	21	1:10

Screening and Assessment

Ages and Stages Screening

Your child's teacher will administer the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) on your child within the first 3 months your child's enrollment. The ASQ has been researched and tested on an unparalleled sample of diverse children. Organizations such as the American Academy of Neurology, First Signs, and the Child Neurology Society all view the ASQ as a high-quality screening. ASQ was also favorably reviewed in articles appearing in the American Academy of Pediatrics journal, *Pediatrics in Review*.

The purpose of this screening tool is to help us assess your child's development to better plan for learning experiences based on their individual needs and possibly alert us on any delays. It is important to catch if children are experiencing delays early because early intervention is key to children's development. If a developmental delay is suspected your child's teacher will communicate with you in a confidential and supportive manner. Documentation and an explanation for the concern will be provided, as well as suggested next steps and information about resources for further assessment. Our goal is to be a support unit to your family as we discuss the future needs of your child.

The teaching staff has been trained through their schooling and specifically in the administration of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to implement these screenings. Your child will be screened in their classroom with their teacher in a noninvasive manner. The screenings are on a one-to-one basis and typically take under 30 minutes to complete. If at any time your child seems nervous or agitated during the screening it will be stopped and restarted at a later time. Your child's teacher will make sure you are aware of the results of the ASQ and will be available to meet with you to discuss the results. The ASQ is scored using a point system. Questions are answered "yes", "sometimes" or "not yet" based on your child's current developmental level. Your child's teacher will score the ASQ for you and assist you in reading the results. Also, if you would like to see a copy of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, please ask your child's teacher.

All measures will be taken to ensure confidentiality of your child's screening and assessment. The lead and assistant teachers will have access to the results as they will be completing the assessment, and the Director will have access to assist the teachers when they are in need of assistance with implementing, scoring or sharing the results of the ASQ. As previously mentioned, the University School for Young Children adheres to the Family Education Right to Privacy Act. Written, informed consent from

parents will be required before releasing any information or documentation regarding children attending the Center, except in the case when authorized officials are reviewing files for purposes of licensing or accreditation. The children's personal files are kept secure by the Operation Supervisor.

In addition to the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, teaching staff will complete Child Development Reports twice a year on your child. These will be discussed in parent teacher conferences and provide parents information on developmental progress, milestones the child has reached, areas or challenges they will be working on and the child's favorites and friends in the classroom. Attached to the child development form will be a family development form that parents will complete on things they would like the teaching staff to focus on, areas of accomplishments or concerns and anything they have noticed at home.

Classroom Assessment

Teachers will be observing your child daily in the classroom to see what his interests are and when he is ready to take a new step in development. As they make these observations, the teachers record what they see so that they can share the information with you. Our teachers use the Focused Portfolio assessment to keep track of these observations. They will share their findings with you at your child's conference, through annual written reports, and finally in your child's portfolio at the time they move to the next classroom. Also, your child's teacher will ask you verbally or in writing for your input on your child's development to better plan for their experiences in the classroom. Your child's teacher will be able to answer any questions you have about their assessment methods and can work with you to create an assessment method that will best meet the needs of your child. Please remember that even with these set times, you should always feel free to talk to your child's teacher at any time or schedule a meeting if you have questions or concerns.

Occasionally we will have University students performing labs or practicums and they may contribute to your child's portfolio as they observe the children as part of their coursework. We feel that it is important that students have this opportunity to study the development of children. Please keep in mind that the University students are still learning and are under the supervision of the Lead Teacher.

Transitions between Classrooms

The University School for Young Children transitions children into the next classroom based on the child's developmental readiness and availability of spots. When a child is ready to move to the next age group, his current teacher recommends new class placement. The center's administration determines the child's placement based on this recommendation and other factors affecting the well-being of the child and class. If there is any disagreement about the recommendation or lack thereof, the Director will make the final decision. When the child is ready for transition the lead teacher will write up a transition plan for the new teacher. The teachers will discuss the transition plan to better transition the child into the new classroom. Parents are notified of the transition, the dates the child will make the transition and will be informed on the transition plan from one classroom to another.

At the USYC we have our classrooms structured so that your child will spend around a year with each of their classroom teachers, and possibly three years with their preschool teacher. We believe that keeping a child with a familiar teacher for this amount of times allows for trust to form between teacher and child, as well as for teachers to truly understand a child's development.

If a withdrawal notice is given for a child the teaching staff will write up a transition plan on the child including information such as fears, likes, dislikes, favorite areas, how they may handle frustrations, social emotional development and such. This transition plan will be given to the parents in hopes of providing information to the child's new teacher.

Attendance/Arrival

Because continuity is important for the child's adjustment and development, we encourage consistent attendance. However, if you would like to take a day off to stay at home with your child or go on a special outing, know that we also value your time together and respect your personal need for a varied schedule at times. It is helpful to us if you inform your child's teacher if you will be deviating from your scheduled times.

Children will not be accepted by the teacher prior to 7:30am. The time before the center opens is used by the teachers to set-up the classroom environment and to prepare that day's activities or gather supplies. Each child should be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or adult designated by a parent who will remain with him or her until the child has entered the classroom. **Until that time, the accompanying adult is responsible for supervising the child.**

Sign-in sheets are provided to track which children are in each classroom. This information is important in case of emergencies. **The adult must sign the child's arrival and departure times. Signing in and out is crucial. We use these sheets to account for children when we have to leave the classroom for emergencies, such as fires, tornadoes and earthquakes. Should your child not be signed in, your child could be missed in such a situation. Please do not take the sign-in process lightly.**

The children will benefit most from the program if they arrive by 9:00am. Lunch is served between 11:00 am and 12:00pm. Rest times take place between 12:00pm and 3:00pm. Please be courteous to your child and do not bring your child to the center between 11:00am and 3:00pm because this will make separation more difficult and be disruptive to the class.

Parents are asked to not bring children after 9:00am except in the event of a doctor's appointment, emergency or a special family event. When this occurs please let your child's teacher know as soon as possible depending on the situation.

Some Tips for When It's Hard to Say Good-bye

Your child is entering a different world of new toys, adults, and children – a whole new environment. He is leaving the familiar: you and the home he knows, to establish himself as a member of a group in a new setting. If your child meets these new experiences successfully we can expect self-confidence to build. This feeling of security contributes significantly to healthy personality development. Together, we will work to achieve this goal. Listed below are some tips to keep in mind during your child's adjustment period.

1. Be sure to attend the Center with your child ahead of the first day so that your child has seen his classroom and knows where he will be going.
2. Don't overpromise. Tell your child he will make some new friends and that his teacher will take good care of him. He will have lots of new toys to play with at the center. If you tell him this is the most exciting thing that will ever happen and talk too much about it, it will probably just build anxiety. Keep it simple.
3. If your child is especially attached to a stuffed animal, blanket, or other object let him bring it.
4. Please keep in mind that your child may be anxious, knowing that you will be leaving. Because of this, you need to let your child know exactly when you will leave. For example, you might offer to stay for five minutes or long enough to read a story. When the time is up, tell your child calmly that it's time to go, and then leave. Prolonging the separation at this point is very hard on children. Be

firm and pleasant about saying good-bye. Tell the teacher when you are leaving so that she can help by holding and comforting your child if necessary.

5. Always say “good-bye” to your child. It may seem easier to sneak off while your child is involved in play, but it’s traumatic for a child to suddenly realize a parent has disappeared. In the long run saying good-bye helps your child build trust with you.
6. Ask for help if you have trouble separating from your child. Our staff has been through this hundreds of times and we are glad to help. Sometimes we have to physically remove the child from the parent so the parent can leave. While this is hard for everyone involved it is our experience that in the long run it is much easier on the child than having the parent continue to stay a little longer in hopes that the child will then let them leave without a scene. In many cases the child cries a short time then becomes involved in play. Other children may take a longer period to adjust. Feel free to call to find out how your child is doing. We will be honest about his adjustment.
7. We encourage families to bring photographs of the family for the child to place in the room. Children often carry these around when they feel sad or miss their parents or just to feel comforted. Some older children benefit from a note reminding them when the parent will return.
8. Tears are not unusual. Expect them. Sometimes a child will separate easily the first few days and then have difficulty later in the week. Adjustments may last several weeks. Talk to your child’s teacher or to the director if you are concerned. Avoid trying to convince your child through talking and re-talking that he will have a good time. Children seem to adjust better if they’re allowed to express the very real feelings that they have. Be reassuring and upbeat, but accepting of your child’s emotions. Let them talk about how they feel. Assure them that it is normal to miss Mommy/Daddy and that you miss them too, but that it will be easier with time.
9. Let your child know that you have a job to do during the day and so does he/she - to attend school.
10. During periods of adjustment children will test you to see if you will change your mind about him attending. Do not change your arrangements even for one day during adjustment periods. Your child will learn that his behavior can persuade you to keep him home and you will have a real battle on your hands in the future.
11. During adjustment periods, the routine of eating, toileting, and sleeping may regress, your child may be more aggressive as well. This will pass.
12. Some signs of readjustment may occur after the weekend, after an illness, when a new sibling is born, after a vacation or when the child has had visitors. Let your child’s teacher know if these things are occurring so she can help.

13. Some children separate easier from one parent than the other. If you are having a really hard time, you might try changing who drops off your child. It can make a big difference in some cases.

Adjustment is a slow, gradual process. Taking into account the child's age and previous experience away from the family, parents and teachers together work out the best adjustment plan for each newly enrolled child. With infants and toddlers, it may be advisable to "ease" the child in over a two or three day period, gradually lengthening the stay.

Additionally, more time may be needed in adjustment for non-English speaking children. We encourage one member of the child's family to attend several times with the child. Having a parent to translate can make the child feel more secure. Also, in some cases it helps if the child attends for only part of the day the first few days.

Keep in mind that all our children and parents have gone through these periods of adjustment. While your child may not experience difficulty in adjustment, we do want you to be aware of situations that can occur and be prepared to handle them. We regard the adjustment period as a normal, healthy time for the child.

Pick-Up Routines/Dismissal

It is in the best interests of the children and the school that families arrange to pick up their children promptly. **It is necessary that children be picked up no later than the stated closing time.** Of course, children may be picked up early. Please inform the teacher when leaving with your child and sign the child out. If someone other than the parent is picking up or dropping off a child the parent must call or stop by the front desk to sign the Parent Pick Up book with who will be picking up the child.

Parents are required to designate, upon enrollment, the names of any adults who will be picking up their children. If some person other than those designated on the *authorization for pick-up* is to transport the child, the teacher should be notified to that effect, as children will only be allowed to depart with the person to whom the teacher is authorized to release them. **Any new adult will be required to show photo identification. Please remind those picking up your child that a photo ID will be required until the staff is familiar with that person. Parents should also be prepared to show photo identification in instances when they are not familiar to the supervising teacher.**

Late Pick-up Fee

It is necessary that children be picked up no later than the stated pick-up time since the teachers have many responsibilities after the center closes. It is also distressing to a child to be picked up later than the other children in the class. When children are picked up late, families will be assessed a late pick-up fee. The late pick-up will be recorded by your child's teacher and will be billed to your account. Late pick-up charges are consistent across the Early Childhood Centers for Training, Research and Education and are assessed as follows:

- **\$25 for the first ten minutes (5:30pm to 5:40pm)**
- **\$75 at eleven minutes (5:41pm)**

Recommendations for Children's Clothing

Clothes for Messy Play

We believe that children must employ all their senses to become engaged learners through exploration and discovery. We want them to develop curiosity and inquisitiveness, to persist in their work, even when they become frustrated, so that they reach mastery beyond their present level of knowledge and skills. In order to become masterful young explorers, it is important for children to feel free to make a mess. Sometimes the materials we use are messy and sometimes they get on the children's clothes. We do try to protect clothing, but spills do happen and smocks don't protect all parts of the clothing. Please send your child in play clothes so that making a mess is not a problem. If you have an important engagement after school, please bring a change of clothing for your child. Also, if you have strong feelings about how you want your child's clothing treated if it does get paint or other material on it, please tell the teacher. We work hard to comply with parents' wishes.

Change of Clothes

Children need to keep a complete change of clothing (underwear, socks, pants and shirt, or dress) at school. Each piece of clothing should be labeled with the child's name. Parents should check frequently on each child's supply of clothing, keeping it complete and appropriate for each season of the year. Whenever soiled clothing is sent home, it should be replaced the following day. Please keep in mind that your child's extra clothes might get messy as well and that children who are in the beginning stages of potty-training need several pairs of pants and underwear at school.

Clothing Suited to the Weather

We will go outside on most days, so children should dress accordingly. We will not keep individual children indoors during outdoor time. Children who are too ill to go outside should not be at school, so children who do come should be ready to go outdoors. Children should wear mittens or gloves and a cap or head covering in windy or cool weather. Children should also have long pants or other covering for the legs for cold weather and should have boots or appropriate foot gear for rain/snow. We recommend that children wear sneakers or other snug shoes, not loose sandals, in warm weather to provide better protection for their feet and better traction while running and climbing. We ask that no flip-flops be worn since the children have difficulty keeping them on while engaging in active play.

Belongings

Provisions for diapers, wipes, creams, ointments

Families must provide diapers, wipes, creams and ointments for their child. Diapers must be commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use. A health provider must document the medical reason. Diapers, creams and ointments should be labeled with the child's name. We must have a completed medical form on file in order to apply any creams or ointments to the child, including diaper ointments or creams or any body lotions, including sunscreens, lip balms, or baby lotions. You may complete one form that will cover the school year for non-prescription products. Please ensure you have completed this form if you wish your child to use any of these products.

Cubbies & Mailboxes

Each child will have an assigned cubby in their classroom to keep his or her belongings. Please label all items brought to the Center. Your child will have a mailbox near or in their classroom that will contain items such as newsletters, artwork and center updates. We ask that you regularly check your child's cubby and mailbox for items that need to go home.

Treasures/Possessions

Any educational artifact that your child wishes to share may be brought in to show their friends. For example, your child might bring in a leaf that has changed colors or a postcard from a traveling relative. Items of this nature could spark a week long discovery process for the children in the classroom about the fall season or the travel site. We ask that all toys be kept in the car or at home.

For young children, a transitional object, such as a favorite blanket or doll, may be needed at the beginning of your child's experience at the Center and we encourage the use of objects that make children feel more comfortable. Please talk with your child's teacher about your child's individual needs.

Unacceptable Items

At the University School for Young Children, we request that the following items not be brought to the child's classroom: guns, violent toys, gum, candy, or money. Please do not send juice in bottles with toddlers, as we are unable to let children drink juice from bottles, in keeping with our health policy.

Under no circumstances should you put medication in your child's backpack. There have been instances at other centers where parents have done this and children have taken the medication. If you are transferring your child to another party who will need to give your child medication, please give the medication to the child's teacher for safekeeping.

Guidance

Guidance Policy

Young children are in the process of developing an understanding the rules of society and how to function with other people. Because of this, a large part of our curriculum focuses on social learning and helping children understand how to play and work together. In accordance with the philosophy of the Child Development faculty, as well as our licensing regulations and the standards for NAEYC accreditation, we use no form of physical punishment. Teaching staff should never use threats or derogatory remarks when handling guidance issues. Also, teaching staff should neither withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Staff is prohibited from the following behaviors:

- 1. Corporal punishment (any physical punishment)**
- 2. Psychological abuse or coercion**
- 3. Yelling or belittling children**

- 4. Using derogatory remarks**
- 5. Withholding or threatening to withhold food**
- 6. Threatening children**
- 7. Compelling children's actions through the use of coercion**

Unacceptable behavior at the University School for Young Children includes physical and emotional harm to other people, destruction of the learning environment or materials, and safety violations. In addition, children are expected to be respectful of others' feelings and needs. These limits may be explained to children in the following way:

- We do not hurt ourselves.
- We do not hurt other people.
- We do not hurt the materials or equipment.

Teachers take time to interpret the child's level of development, understanding of the limits, motivation, and personality when guiding the child. We use the least amount of intervention that is effective. This varies from one child to another. If a child consistently behaves in an unacceptable manner, we reexamine our methods and the child's situation. Parents are contacted to give us input so that we can all work together to resolve the problem.

In guiding behavior, our teachers use both indirect and direct forms of guidance. Indirect guidance includes providing a variety of interesting learning materials, attention to the impact of room arrangement, scheduling, planning ahead, making smooth transitions, avoiding situations which are difficult for young children (waiting, lining up, etc.), and redirecting behavior before a problem arises. Direct guidance includes those techniques we use once a problem is evident. As teachers we find the following techniques to contribute to helpful relationships with children:

- Be a positive role model. (Adults probably have more power in this area than they realize.)
- When speaking to a child, gain the child's attention by moving close to the child and bending, sitting, or squatting at the child's eye level.
- Use comforting physical contact.
- Be consistent in expectations.
- When dealing with unacceptable behaviors, the following are some techniques we use. We always start with the least intrusive intervention, going to the more directive when the situation calls for it.

- Use simple, positive directions. State what you want the child to do. Avoid using “don’t” except in extreme circumstances when a child’s immediate safety is in jeopardy. Surprisingly this technique works most of the time. Children really do want to please adults, and a straightforward statement usually gets results.
- Explain briefly why you want the child to behave in the directed manner. Children need to know that the limits are not arbitrary. (Remember to keep this short. Too much explanation is as bad as too little.)
- Use “I” messages to let the child know how the behavior affects you. For example, “When you throw sand, I worry that you or one of the other children could get it in your eyes. I would like you to keep the sand in the sandbox.”
- Whenever possible, give choices to let the child feel a sense of control. Remember that both choices must be acceptable to you. (“Would you like to put the puzzle away now or leave it here and finish it after lunch?”) Don’t give choices when you don’t mean to let the child decide. (“Would you like to go in and get ready for lunch now?” or “Let’s go in now, okay?”)
- Use logical consequences. These are directly related to the behavior. For example, “If you throw sand you’ll have to leave the sand area,” or “When you’ve scraped off your plate, then you can go play.” Logical consequences are explained to the child once, and then enacted if the behavior continues. The adult uses a firm, friendly manner, and children are given a chance to try again later.
- If none of these methods work, (they usually do), the child might be physically guided. Again, the child is given a choice at this stage: “You can walk inside or I will carry you.”

When the problem is between two or more children, rather than using the above methods, we work with the children on problem-solving techniques. These include helping the children verbalize their feelings to each other and assisting them in negotiation. We find that once children become familiar with ways to solve problems, they are able to resolve conflicts without adult assistance a great deal of the time. By learning to work together at a young age, these children gain skills that will last a lifetime.

Disruptive Behavior Policy

Sometimes a child exhibits challenging behaviors that are not resolved through the usual classroom interventions that the teachers use. Challenging behaviors are considered any behaviors that interferes with children's learning, development and success at play; are harmful to the child, other children or adults; and/or puts a child at a high risk for later social problems or school failure. Of particular concern are behaviors that are hurtful or unsafe to any of the children in our care, including the child exhibiting the behavior, or behavior that is disruptive to the children's learning. In these situations, the following steps are followed:

1. The teacher discusses the situation formally and/or informally with the parent(s) to examine possible causes and solutions.
2. The teacher meets with the Center director to ask for further guidance.
3. Staff observes the child to give a clearer picture of the behavior, focusing on the environment, curriculum, transitions, activities planned, schedule, peer interactions, adult interactions, and teaching strategies.
4. If the problem is not resolved, the teacher and director will meet together with the family to discuss concerns and observations.
5. A plan is developed. This plan may involve seeking support from other agencies, community services or an outside evaluation. All involved will work as a team to support the child and family.
6. The plan is implemented.
7. The plan is reviewed after a predetermined amount of time.
8. If the results of an outside evaluation determine the child needs accommodations for special services, the Center will work with the family to find and secure resources for the special services. The Center may be able to provider these, as long as they don't create undue hardship for the program.
9. If it is determined that the University School for Young Children is not able to meet the needs of the child, the Center will give the family notice that we must discontinue services. We will provide the family with 2 week's notice, except in a case where allowing the child to remain in attendance would create a safety concern.

Biting Policy

We feel it is important to address biting and our response to biting. The following section is from the book *No Biting* by Gretchen Kinnell and reflects our understanding, philosophy and policy on biting.

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected in toddler groups and can be very emotionally charged. There are many reasons toddlers may bite. Sometimes the biting is related to teething. Sometimes toddlers bite to express feelings they can't express with words yet. We have seen children bite when they are frustrated, and we have seen them bite in the excitement of a happy moment. No one can predict which children will bite, but we are ready to help toddlers who do bite to learn other behavior. We are also ready to give treatment, sympathy, and advice to children who are bitten. Here are ways we work to prevent biting and how we respond to it when it does happen.

First, we try to program the day to avoid boredom, frustration, or overstimulation. We provide a calm and cheerful atmosphere with a mix of stimulating, soothing, age-appropriate activities and multiples of favorite toys. We also work to model acceptable and appropriate behaviors for the children, helping them learn words to express their feelings and giving them tools to resolve conflicts with our help.

Second, if a bite does occur, we help the child who was bitten. We reassure him or her and care for the bite. If the skin is not broken, we use a cold pack. If the skin is broken, we follow medical advice and clean the bite with soap and water. If it is likely the bite may get dirty, we will cover it to keep it clean. If your child is bitten, we will call you to let you know about the bite. The teachers will fill out an accident report, [sign it, have you sign it when you pick up your child, and have it signed by the administrator.] We also respond to the child who did the biting. We show the children strong disapproval of biting. Our specific response varies by circumstances, but our basic message is that biting is the wrong thing to do. We also help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior, and we let his or her parents know there's a problem so we can work together to solve it.

Third, the teachers and administration analyze the cause of ongoing biting. We develop a plan to address the cause of the biting, focusing on keeping children safe and helping those who are stuck in biting patterns. When we need to develop such a plan, we share the details with parents so they know specifically how we are addressing this problem.

Fourth, parents are notified if their child starts to bite. We ask parents to keep us informed if their child is biting at home. Children who bite in our program do not necessarily bite at home. But if

your child is biting in both places, it is important for all of us to be consistent in dealing with it. Communication is very important in order to help your child stop biting.

We wish we could guarantee that biting will never happen in our program, but we know there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting so it will end as quickly as possible. We will support your children whether they bite or are bitten. We want the best for all the children in our program. If you want more information on biting or have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

Although biting is a distressing issue, we recognize that it is a stage that some toddlers go through on their way through normal development. Because of this, our goal is to assist them, their families, and all parties involved through the process. If a particular biting situation becomes a major safety concern for the classroom teachers and children, the Disruptive Behavior process will be initiated to assist in the issue.

Health and Safety

Medical Examinations and Immunizations

When a child is accepted for admission, the University School for Young Children requires a health and immunization history form be completed by the child's physician. The following procedures are to be followed regarding completion of this form

- According to the State's Licensing Mandate, all children must have enrollment forms completed and a copy of immunization records on file in the office. The health form should be returned to the Center office prior to the child's first day of school. If the health form is not returned, a written reminder will be given to the parent. There is a 30 day grace period for turning in the form, starting from the enrollment date. After the 30 days, the child will be unable to attend the center until the health form is produced. The child may return to the center once the health form is received.
- When a child is overdue for any routine health services (immunizations), evidence must be provided of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the center and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program. An exception is made for immunizations for which families are using a religious exemption.
- Please keep the office informed of changes in your child's health and a current record of all immunizations.

Illness Policy

Parents are requested to keep their child at home if he/she exhibits any of these symptoms which might indicate a contagious disease: fever, pain, skin eruptions or rash, frequent or constant “hacking cough”, sneezing with colds, redness of throat or eyes, discharge from the eyes, vomiting, diarrhea, or evidence of extreme fatigue. If any of these conditions is chronic in nature because of an allergic condition, the condition should be thoroughly discussed with the teacher at the time the child enters school. It might be necessary for the safety of all children for a doctor’s note to be obtained stating the above symptoms are allergy related.

If a child develops any of these symptoms at school, the parents will be notified to pick up the child. The child needs to be kept at home until all symptoms are gone or until verification is brought in, signed by the child’s physician, that the child’s condition is not contagious. Any child who has had a fever over 100 degrees may not return to school until he has been fever-free for 24 hours and any child who has been prescribed antibiotics, including eye drops, must be on the medication for a full 24 hours before returning to school. For the protection of the other children, parents are asked to report the presence of any contagious disease when calling to notify the Center of their child’s absence. Also, parents are asked to inform the teacher if a child is on medication and if any changes in behavior may be expected. Requests for children to stay inside all day cannot be accommodated. If the child is well enough to come to school, he or she should be well enough to play outside for short periods of time.

Children are admitted to the program each day at the teacher’s discretion. When the teacher believes the child’s needs are not best met by the program on a particular day, due to an illness or accident by the child, the teacher has the authority to exclude the child from class. The teacher must consider the safety and well-being of all the children in his or her care. If there is a question about the program’s decision, it will be the parent’s responsibility to secure a doctor’s certificate. The program will readmit the child when the doctor’s statement is on file in the office.

If any of the symptoms listed below are found, you will be notified to pick up your child:

Fever of 100’ or more

Extreme pain

Frequent cough

Signs of conjunctivitis

Vomiting

Diarrhea(s)

Excessive nasal discharge

Communicable disease

Communicable Diseases

The staff will inform families about any unusual level or type of communicable disease occurring in the center. This information will include: signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that families should implement at home. If there is an outbreak of any vaccine-preventable illness at the center the teaching staff and Director will notify any parents whose children are not immunized. These children will be excused from the childcare center until the illness is no longer present.

Hand Washing Procedures for Adults and Children

Hand washing is of primary importance in the prevention and spread of disease. Because of this, we follow strict hand washing procedures at the Center.

Children wash their hands when arriving for the day before beginning play. We ask parents or other accompanying adults to help them with this practice. Other times we wash hands include the following:

- After diapering or using the toilet
- After handling body fluids
- Before meals or cooking activities
- After playing in water that is shared by two or more people
- After handling pets or other animals
- Before and after feeding a child
- After assisting a child with toileting
- After handling garbage or cleaning

First Aid

Simple injuries will be cared for by the teacher, and the parent will be informed about the injury and steps that were taken. In the event that a more serious injury is involved, the parents will be notified at once, and, if necessary, the child's physician will be called. If a child's life is endangered, we will call 911. All staff members are trained in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid in order to professionally handle such emergencies. Parents are requested to sign an authorization for emergency medical care in case a child requires immediate hospital care and the child's parents cannot be reached. USYC teaching staff will complete an accident report any time a child is injured. In addition, the Director will read the

accident report and sign it. A parent or a representative of the parent will be asked to sign the accident report when the child is picked up. An incident report will be written by the teaching staff for the child who performed the injury. The parent of the child will sign the incident report along with the Director when picking the child up. Additional names of children will not be written on the reports. Accident and Incident reports are confidential and should not be shared outside of the program.

Medication

For the safety of your children and the protection of our staff, we ask that you take care of administering medication at home. We will make an exception in the event that you are unable to come to the center to give the medication. A form must be completed to give the staff permission to administer the medication and instruction with the dosage. We ask that you DO NOT put medication in school backpack, cubby or mailbox. Physically hand the medication to your child's teacher. Also, medication must be in its original container and/or have the prescription label on it. A teacher who has been trained in the five steps of proper medication administration will administer your child's medication. Teaching staff are trained annually in medication administration.

The 5 Steps of Proper Medication Administration are:

1. Verifying that the right child receives the
2. Right medicine
3. In the right dose
4. At the right time
5. By the right method with documentation of each right step each time the medicine is given.

- The staff member giving the medication signs documentation of the above 1 to 5 steps. -

Children with allergic reactions who need medications administered in case an allergic reaction occurs or for children who have conditions such as asthma that may need immediate attention should have a medication form on hand at all times. In such cases, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the child's teacher of such conditions, to provide medication, and to ensure that medication is up-to-date at all times.

Health Consultant

The center maintains an agreement with a Health Consultant. The Director and health consultant meet twice a year or on an as needed basis. The Health Consultant reviews our illness policy, helps write additional policy regarding Health and Safety.

Allergies

When a doctor diagnoses a child as having an allergy, a statement from the doctor should accompany the child's health history report, **and** the parent should inform the teacher in person. Parents should complete an Allergy Action Plan and an Allergy and Food Restriction Plan, if the allergy is food-related. If the child's allergy or medical condition is regulated daily, a copy of the child's food intake for the day can be made available for families. Also, please make sure you check the box on the health form allowing the center to post your child's allergy in the kitchen and the classroom. If a child is allergic to a certain food, alternative meals will be prepared upon request. If the allergy is severe, plans should be made with the teacher for dealing with a reaction, should one occur. It is imperative that the parent speak directly with the teacher and kitchen supervisor about any allergies, as they will be the ones directly working with the child and monitoring the child's food intake. We also encourage parents to meet with the Operations Supervisor and Kitchen Supervisor to discuss food allergies and food substitutes. We work to accommodate children's needs and provide foods as similar as possible to what other children are eating, and we take this seriously. Please also feel free to discuss any allergies with the director.

The staff will try and maintain the areas used by staff or children who have allergies or any other special environmental needs according to the recommendations of health professionals.

Food Allergies/Dietary Restrictions

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the Center office regarding any food allergies or dietary restrictions and to complete an Allergy and Food Restriction Plan. The child's physician will need to complete the Allergy Action Plan form also. For allergies, please read carefully the above section on allergies. We provide families a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food consumed for all infants and for children with dietary restrictions.

Mealtime Routines

We consider mealtimes an important part of our curriculum. They give children opportunities to learn about food, social skills, and language skills. Meals are served family style, and teachers sit at the table and eat with the children. Meal times are opportunities for us to model good eating habits that children will carry with them throughout their lives. They also serve as a time for teachers to engage children in conversation and social sharing. Adults interact with children in casual conversation during meal times making this both a pleasant experience and a time for learning more about each other.

Tooth Brushing Policy

Once a day the toddler/twos and preschool children will brush their teeth and gums to remove food and plaque. Tooth paste will not be used, just tap water. The toothbrushes will be stored in manufactured containers for keeping them sanitary. If a child becomes ill and has used their tooth brush that day, it will be discarded and a new tooth brush will be provided to the child upon their return to school. Each classroom will schedule tooth brushing at a time that best fits their classroom schedule. If you do not wish for your child to participate in tooth brushing, please tell your child's teacher.

Emergency Procedures

Emergencies

Each parent will be asked to provide at least three local emergency numbers. Please keep the Center office informed of changes in your emergency contact information as soon as possible. The Center will ask you to confirm that the current emergency contact information on file is current and correct for your child quarterly. We ask that you arrive at the Center as soon as possible after a disaster. Identification will be required for a child to be released to anyone other than the parent or a known authorized person after a disaster.

Emergency Drills

The children and staff participate in monthly emergency drills. Every month we have a fire drill, and we rotate months with earthquake, tornado drills and active intruder.

Tornado – If there is a tornado spotted or a tornado warning issued for Cape Girardeau, we will initiate our action plan and all staff and children will immediately go to their designated inside safe place. Clipboards or books containing sign-in information and child's information should be taken to the safe place. Roll call should be done using the sign-in sheet. Staff and teachers will remain in the safe places until further information is provided or the tornado warning has expired.

Earthquake – In case of an earthquake, all children and staff will find cover under a table. The children's heads and the majority of their bodies should be under the table. Non-walking children and the younger children will need assistance securely getting under the tables. Once the earthquake has stopped (for example, the shaking has ceased) the staff should take role call using the sign-in sheet. Then the staff should report to the designated inside safe place and take role call again.

**** The Gross Motor Room is the designated safe place for all staff and children. ****

Fire – In case of a fire, the fire alarm will sound. Non-walking children are to be put into evacuation cribs and pushed out the building. Walking children and staff should hold hands and walk outside their designated classroom exit. Infants, Toddlers, and Twos use their classroom exit doors. Preschool 1 will exit through the Clark St. exit, Preschool 2 will exit through the Spring St. exit and Preschool 3 will exit through the Twos 3 exit door. Teachers should take their clipboards or books containing the sign-in sheets and child's information with them as they exit. Staff should use the sign-in sheet to take role once they have safely evacuated the building.

Active Shooter/Intruder – In the event of an active shooter or intruder, teaching staff will be notified immediately and begin to secure their classrooms by shutting, locking and barricading their classroom doors. All staff have been trained in the ALICE program. *A- Alert L-Lockdown I-Inform C-Counter E-Evacuate*. The teaching staffs have been trained in how to secure their classrooms by barricading as soon as they are informed while getting the children out of harm. The teachers will not evacuate the building with the children. After the building is secure, children will then be reunited with their parents.

Individual children's emergency contacts are listed accordingly and kept with the sign-in sheets. Even in an emergency, all new people picking up the child should be asked for ID.

Designated Safe Places – Outside

Infants 1 – Exit through your classroom door onto Caterpillar Playground on Clark St.

Infants 2 – Exit through your classroom door onto Butterfly Playground on Spring St.

Toddler1 – Exit through your classroom door on Bessie St. take the gate key and unlock the Playground on Clark St.

Toddler 2 – Exit through your classroom door on Bessie St. take the gate key and unlock the Playground on Clark St.

Toddler 3 – Exit through your classroom door on Bessie St. take the gate key and unlock the Playground on Clark St.

Twos 1 – Exit through your classroom door on Spring St onto the Butterfly Playground

Twos 2 – Exit through your classroom door on Spring St. onto the Butterfly Playground

Twos 3 - Exit through your classroom door onto Caterpillar Playground on Clark St.

Preschool 1 – Exit through the playground door onto the Caterpillar Playground on Clark St.

Preschool 2 – Exit through the playground door onto the Butterfly Playground on Spring St.

Preschool 3 – Exit through the Twos 2 classroom exit onto the Butterfly Playground on Spring St.

ALL must remain in their designated places and remain quiet until otherwise instructed.

**If we must exit the premises staff and children will seek shelter at Horizons Enrichment Center.*

General Information

Expectations for toilet training

We work with our families to provide information about the transition from diapers to underwear, no matter the child's age. We will follow the parent's lead in the process and encourage the use of the potty at school. When you feel your child is ready to try underwear at home, we will try underwear at school. Hopefully, the process continues with very few accidents, however if several accidents are occurring, the decision might be made to place your child back in diapers for sanitary purposes. The teacher and parent can discuss trying underwear when the signs of potty-training readiness present themselves again. Please be aware that it is a potty-training *process*. Keep working with your child and remember that eventually you will reach the goal of having your child potty-trained.

Our NAEYC guidelines do not allow us to rinse underwear that has been soiled by urine or feces. These will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home for laundering.

Classroom Pets and Animal Visitors

We sometimes include healthy household pets that present no danger to children as part of our curriculum. We ensure that these animals are properly housed, fed and maintained and that the children are supervised when handling the animals. Teachers are responsible for supervising the care of classroom pets. Families who wish to bring in family pets or other animals to share with their classmates should consult the teacher first.

We have had wonderful experiences when children have brought in a family dog or an interesting insect they found, so don't hesitate if you have the opportunity to do this. However, we do have a few restrictions. Temperament of the animal should be discussed in regards to whether this is an appropriate animal to have around children. Some animals are not suited to the classroom environments and dogs or cats which show fear or aggressive tendencies (growling, hissing, etc.) should be immediately removed from the classroom. No animal that has ever bitten should be brought into the Center.

No live wild mammals may be brought into the classrooms, except as part of a program conducted by wildlife professionals.

Reptiles are not allowed in the Center because of the risk of salmonella infection. This is both a licensing standard and a criteria of NAEYC accreditation. Because of this, children may not bring turtles to school to visit.

Any animals or insects collected by children or adults should be released at the end of the day in the same place they were found. All animal cages should be cleaned by adults only. If an animal is spending a lengthy amount of time at the Center, say longer than it takes to drop-off a child and let our friends see the animal, then documentation from a vet or animal shelter will be needed showing the animal is fully immunized and is suitable for contact with children.

When a child is allergic to an animal, staff should make sure that the child is not exposed to that animal. Please inform us if your child has an allergy to a specific animal and have your doctor complete an Allergy Action Plan so we can best protect your child.

Protection from Natural Elements

Children go outside to play every day unless prohibited by dangerous weather. We believe the adage “there is no bad weather, only bad clothing.” However, of course, we keep children inside when there is lightening or dangerously cold temperatures. To ensure warmth, the children should wear dry, layered clothing in cold weather. Shaded areas are provided on sunny days and children should wear a sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection of SPF 15 or higher and/or should wear protective clothing. If you wish you may send your children with sunscreen already applied as it takes time for it to take effect. You will need to sign the permission form to allow staff to apply sunscreen to your child.

We do not routinely use insect repellents on children. However, if, and only if, public health authorities recommend and DFS licensing approves the use of insect repellent due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, repellents containing DEET will be used. Non-aerosol repellents will be used in keeping with our licensing standards, only with the written permission of parents and only on children ages two months and older. Repellents will be applied no more than once a day under any circumstances.

Field Trips and Excursions

Children may take walks in the immediate area during their time at the University School for Young Children and may visit sites within walking distance to further their studies. For example, the children may take a walk to Capaha Park or the Cape Public Library.

In addition, preschool children may travel to field trips or excursions via transportation by the center vans or bus. Teaching staff have been trained in driving the van and maintain a CDL. Parents will be notified and permission forms will be filled out for the specified children.

The USYC takes several safety precautions to ensure that our excursions go as smoothly as possible. All classrooms are required to take the following on any excursion:

- Sign in sheet; emergency information sheets, cell phone and first aid kit

Birthday Policy

A child's birthday is a special occasion for the family and the classroom community. Each classroom has a unique way to recognize special days. At the University School for Young Children, we work to find appropriate ways to celebrate in which all children can join. In addition, teachers try to balance the natural exuberance and energy without creating an overwhelming situation in the classroom. To these ends, and in keeping with our food policy, we ask that you please honor our request for no sweets (cake, ice cream, cupcakes, etc.) in the classrooms. In addition, we ask that you do not bring balloons, as they can be very dangerous to young children. Instead, we ask that parents and children work with teachers to find creative ways to celebrate. Some ideas include bringing a special material or activity into the classroom. For example, if a child is especially interested in art, a new art material for the easel or art table would be an exciting addition for the children. You might choose to donate a book to the classroom that is special to your child and could be read at group time. Children also enjoy choosing special napkins for snack time.

Of course, we expect that families, teachers, and children will have many more creative ideas for celebrations. If you would like to donate a food to a classroom event, please bring a 'non-sweet' food such as unfrosted muffins, fresh fruit, or applesauce cups. The food must be whole fruits or commercially packaged foods in factory sealed containers. All celebration plans should be discussed with the classroom teacher prior to the special day. Sharing your family's special occasions and celebration days is an important part of life at the University School for Young Children and can be very meaningful for your child. Together we can create many memorable and special celebrations for the children that are also appropriate to the classroom setting.

Holiday Party Policy

The rich cultural diversity at the University School for Young Children allows us to introduce many and varied family and cultural celebrations to the children. We encourage our families to share their family traditions with us. If you would like to initiate a family or cultural celebration in your child's classroom please talk to the lead teacher.

Building Security and Access

The only entrance that parents will use to drop-off and pick-up will be the Bessie Street entrance under the maroon awning. The infants, toddlers and two-year-old classrooms all have exit doors that will be used for emergency use only. These doors will not be used for drop-off and pick-ups. These doors will be locked from the outside at all times.

Each family will be given a four-digit access code for entrance into the building. This code can be shared with individuals on your pick-up list, or they can use the intercom and a staff member can let them in. Please inform us if someone else is picking up so we know it is ok to allow entrance though. These codes are programmed only for the hours of operation 7:30 am – 5:30 pm. After enrollment at the USYC is complete, your code will be deactivated.

Infant Specific Policies

Shoe policy

To protect the floor of the infant room from germs and debris, adults must remove shoes or apply shoe coverings prior to entering the infant room to prevent contamination of the infant floor. Shoe coverings are available at the door.

Back to Sleep and Safe Sleep Policy

The American Academy of Pediatrics, Missouri licensing standards, and NAEYC accreditation requirements for safe sleep require that all infants be placed on their backs to sleep to avoid Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Cribs are free from soft objects, soft toys, blankets, soft or loose bedding, bumper pads, pillows, quilts, comforters, sleep positioning devices, sheepskins, flat sheets, cloth diapers, bibs, wedges, infant positioners, special mattresses and other similar items. An approved infant swaddler may be used during sleep. Pacifier clips, or teething necklaces are prohibited while an infant is sleeping. Blankets or other soft loose bedding shall not be hung on the sides of the cribs or put under the fitted sheet.

Sitting devices such as car seats, strollers, swings, infant carriers, infant slings and other sitting devices shall not be used for sleep. Infants who fall asleep anywhere other than a crib will be placed in the crib for the remainder of their sleep. A child under 12 months of age will be placed on their backs to sleep. After being placed on their backs, infants may assume any position that is comfortable to them once they can turn themselves over from the back position (NAEYC, 2005). Written instructions from a

licensed health care provider for alternative sleep positions or special sleep arrangements must be provided and signed if differ from the Safe Sleep Recommendations by the AAP.

To ensure the supervision of infants during sleep times, teaching staff will be positioned in the classroom where they are facing sleeping infants and can be heard and seen at all times. Lamps and natural lighting will be used during rest periods. Teaching staff will check each sleeping infant every 30 minutes by walking by their cribs to ensure they are not in distress and resting peacefully. Sound machines will not be used allowing teaching staff to be able to hear if an infant is in distress. Soft music will be used during rest periods.

Infant Feeding

Infants will be fed based on individual needs. Staff work with families to ensure that food provided to infants is based on the infant's individual needs and developmental level, in conjunction with recommendations of the child's health care provider. While infants are on formula or breast milk, the center will provide Parent's Choice formula or families will provide breast milk. All families will provide their own bottles. Mothers will be welcome to breastfeed infants either in the infant room, Directors office or designated teacher's office. Breast milk must be provided in ready-to-feed sanitary containers labeled with the infant's name and date. It will be stored in the refrigerator no longer than 48 hours or 24 hours if previously frozen. It will be stored in the freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than three months. Staff should gently mix, not shake, breast milk before feeding to preserve special infection-fighting and nutritional components in human milk. The staff will strive to coordinate feedings as closely as possible with the infant's mother.

If you wish to provide your own formula, it must be presented to the Center in factory-sealed containers. Staff will prepare the formula according to manufactures directions. If warmed, formula or breast milk will be warmed in water no hotter than 120 degrees Fahrenheit and for no more than five minutes. No milk, including human milk, or infant foods shall be warmed in a microwave oven. Any breast milk or formula not consumed one hour after serving will be discarded. Bottle feedings will not contain solid foods unless written instructions and a medical reason to do so are provided by the child's medical provider.

Infants will be held for bottle feeding whenever possible. Teaching staff who are familiar with the infant feed him or her whenever the infant seems hungry, taking care to not use feeding in lieu of other forms of comfort. Under all circumstances, a child who is unable to hold a bottle will be held. Children will not be given bottles while in cribs and bottles shall never be propped. Children who do

hold their own bottle may sit for feedings. Toddlers and twos will not carry bottles while crawling, walking or in bed. Teachers will offer fluids from a cup as soon as families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to hold a cup.

Solid foods (cereals, fruits, and vegetables) and fruit juices will not be provided to infants younger than six months unless the child's health care provider recommends doing so and the family approves. If juice is served it will be 100% fruit juice and the amount will be limited to no more than 4 ounces a day. Infant food will be provided by the Center. If you wish to provide your own infant food, it must be presented to the center in factory-sealed containers. An individual jar will be opened for each child and will be labeled with that child's name. After each feeding, infant teeth and gums are wiped with a disposable tissue (or clean soft cloth used only for one child and laundered daily) to remove liquid that coats teeth and gums.

Teachers will document the type and quantity of food consumed by infants on a form to be given to the family at the end of each day.

Families

Communication with Families

The teachers and staff at the Center are partnering with the children's families to support positive development and learning. As part of this partnership, family communication is a priority. There are many ways in which we seek to communicate with families.

Informal Conversation – Teachers and parents can converse at drop-off and pick-up times. Please take advantage of this time to share information, concerns, or to ask questions about your child.

Family Events – Family events are held throughout the year and usually address a specific topic or allow parents and staff to gather in a social setting.

Written Communication – Center newsletter and communications from your child's teacher will be sent home throughout the school year. You will receive two written forms of assessment throughout the year as well.

Communication via Email – Teaching staff and the Director will use communicate through email. It is important that you list a working email address for both the director and your child's teacher.

Private Classroom Facebook pages – The teaching staff in each classroom operate a private Facebook classroom page. The parents of the children in that classroom are enrolled in the page. They may choose to opt in or opt out. Parents have a choice if they would like their child on the page. This

helps parents network with one another, see the activities and projects happening in the classroom and gives parents an additional way to communicate with teaching staff.

Parent Bulletin Board – Throughout the center, parents will notice parent bulletin boards. Menus, curriculum outlines and other information about your child’s classroom and the program can be found on parent bulletin boards.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences between parents and teachers lead to a better understanding between school and home.

A conference with parents is scheduled twice a year in the Spring and Fall semesters.

Parent Information in Family Room

In our family room near the kitchen you will find Community events and resources. Also, if you are in need of other resources, please don’t hesitate to ask. The monthly calendar and newsletter are always posted in addition to other center information such as family nights and special events occurring at the center.

Documentation Boards

Teachers regularly document the children’s experiences at the Center through displays located throughout the Center. These documentation boards and panels provide visualization of the learning that is occurring in the classrooms. These boards contain photos, work samples from the children, and explanations of what the children are doing and how they are learning through their explorations and discoveries. Family members are encouraged to stop and review these displays with their children.

Visitor Policy

The University School for Young Children has an open door policy for parents and guardians, as well as authorized visitors. Parents are always welcome to observe and participate in their child’s day at the Center. Visitors conducting approved observations or participating in field experiences must sign the guest book in the office, obtain a visitor’s badge and be escorted to the classroom.

Opportunities to be involved

Parents are welcome participants in the program. All parents are invited to visit or observe their child’s classroom at any time. All parents are also encouraged to participate in their child’s classroom.

Also, we love to have families come and share their talents. Talents could be anything from putting on an impromptu playground concert for the children or using your cooking abilities to assist in a cooking

project. In the past, parents have worked with the children on Mother's Day gifts or by bringing in the family pet for a visit. Others have shared their interests in art or architecture with the children. The possibilities and opportunities are endless. Parents are encouraged to talk with their child's teacher or the director about ways that they might be involved. The center maintains a family oriented atmosphere with great family involvement. The center offers many ways for the parents to be involved and offer a wide variety of family friendly events.

Babysitting

We at the USYC acknowledge the challenges that parents face in finding quality child care providers to care for their children. Professionals and students of early education and child development that work with young children have a code of ethics which guides our work. A part of this code states that as a professional:

"We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. 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 working with their children" (Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment, NAEYC Position Statement, P-2.11, for full text see <http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions/PSETH05.asp>).

For this reason, as well as related issues of confidentiality and potential bias, we ask that parents not ask students to baby-sit while the students are enrolled in a laboratory class or employed at the Center and are working in their child's classroom. If parents observe a student that they feel is working well with their child, parents may ask the student for their phone number at the end of the semester. The USYC staff will not give any reference for any student or employee for the purposes of babysitting or in-home child care. It is entirely the parents' responsibility to check references and any resulting arrangement is solely between the parent and student. The Director has a list of potential babysitters of students who have worked for the center in the past. You may ask the Director for the list if interested.

Grievance Procedure

At the University School for Young Children, we strongly believe in the importance of the family in ensuring that each child's learning and developmental needs are met. Therefore, we seek to work collaboratively with families to provide the best educational experience we can for the children in our care. Occasionally, however, differences may arise between the Center staff and parents about certain policies and procedures. The Center staff is always open to a discussion of differences in an effort to resolve them in a way that will be acceptable for all concerned.

When a parent has a difference of opinion with a staff member concerning a classroom situation, Center policy, or procedure, the following procedures should be followed:

1. If at all possible, parents should begin with the staff member closest to the situation. If the problem concerns a classroom situation, parents should make arrangements to meet with the teacher to discuss the issue.
2. If there is no satisfactory resolution, or if the concern is related to Center policy rather than a classroom situation, parents should meet with the director.
3. If the difference is still not resolved, parents may submit a written request to the director to call a meeting of the Center Appeals Committee to hear the problem. Members of the Appeals Committee will include: University Faculty Liaison, Chair of the Department of Human Environmental Studies, Teaching staff and the Site Director. The Appeals Committee will hear both sides of the issue and make a decision regarding the resolution of the problem. Any decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

Sources

Some material from this handbook is taken from the following sources:

University School for Young Children. (2005). *Family Handbook*. Cape Girardeau, MO: Southeast Missouri State University.

Katz, L. (2008). Another look at what young children should be learning. *Child Care Information Exchange* 180 (March/April).

Kinnell, G. (2008). *No Biting*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

Starbuck, S. (2002). *Child Development Laboratories' Parent Manual*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University.

Starbuck, S. (2002). *Child Development Laboratories' Staff Manual*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University.

Contact Information:

Bills regarding Center services:

Student Financial Services (573) 651-2253

Child Care Licensing

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (573) 290-5806

National Association for the Education of Young Children

Web site www.naeyc.org

National Association for the Education of Young Children
Statement of Commitment

As individuals who work with young children, the teachers, director and staff of the University School for Young Children are committed to furthering the values of early childhood education as they are reflected in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

To the best of our ability we will

- Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge of child development and early childhood education.
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children.
- Respect colleagues in early childhood education and support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society.
- Maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- Recognize how personal values, opinions and biases can affect professional judgment.
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
- Continue to learn, grow and contribute as a professional.
- Honor the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.