

# Family Handbook



## Georgia State University Child Development Program



Lanette L. Suttles Child Development Center  
Capitol Hill Child Enrichment Center

## **Georgia State University Child Development Program**

This family handbook is not a contract. It is a guide to our policies and procedures.

**The Child Development Program may withdraw children based on serious infraction of policies set forth, non-payment of tuition, and failure to provide up to date contact information or enrollment forms. The Child Development Program also reserves the right to make enrollment decisions that are in the best interests of the children and families we serve.**

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Listed below are the names and titles of the professional staff at the center. We also supplement our program each semester with student workers, interns, and volunteers.

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Stacey French-Lee, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Child Development Program

Phyllis Kimbro  
Associate Director  
Pre-K Project Director  
Child Development Program

Sonji Owens  
Assistant Director  
Capitol Hill Child Enrichment Center

**SUPPORT STAFF**

Danny Darby  
Curriculum Coordinator  
Child Development Program

Ada Perry-Rookard  
Resource Coordinator  
Child Development Program

Kandis Steele  
Business Manager  
Child Development Program

Weida Fuller  
Administrative Assistant  
Lanette L. Suttles Child Development Center

Nekeshia Stein-Shoemake  
Administrative Assistant  
Capitol Hill Child Enrichment Center

Carlyn Ashley  
Cook  
Lanette L. Suttles Child Development Center

Joyce Brinkley  
Cook  
Capitol Hill Child Enrichment Center

## **TEACHING STAFF**

Each classroom has a lead teacher and an assistant lead teacher who are responsible for planning the daily schedule of activities. Each lead teacher is a professional with a background in early childhood education, child development, or a related field. The assistant lead teachers have a variety of educational backgrounds and years of experience working with young children. Full time and part time teaching assistants, aides and student teachers comprise the remainder of the teaching staff. Parents should get to know the classroom staff and always make contact with one of them before leaving their child in the classroom.

### **Capitol Hill Child Enrichment Center**

#### **Infant Room**

Lead Teacher, Sandra Holland  
Assistant Lead Teacher, Ambrosia Berry  
Assistant, Martina Baker

#### **Toddler I**

Lead Teacher, Gail Townsend  
Assistant Lead Teacher, Frances Hill  
Assistant, Amber Ponder  
Assistant, Briana Leonard

#### **Toddler II**

Lead Teacher, Abigail Washington  
Assistant Lead Teacher  
Assistant, Brittany Kendrick

#### **Preschool**

Lead Teacher, Keondra Tucker  
Assistant Lead Teacher, Ebony Kelly  
Assistant, Trish Parker

#### **Prekindergarten**

Lead Teacher, Zyquoia Westmoreland  
Assistant Lead Teacher, Janiece Tucker-Perry  
Assistant, Asya Farrington

### **Lanette L. Suttles Child Development Center**

#### **Infant**

Lead Teacher, Brenda Holt  
Assistant Lead Teacher, LaToya Alex  
Assistant, Angela Mitchell

#### **Toddler I**

Lead Teacher, Ansley Howard

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Assistant Lead Teacher, Alicia Cameron  
Assistant, Donna Durham

### **Toddler II**

Lead Teacher, Linda Watson-Mitchell  
Assistant Lead Teacher, Melissa Holder  
Assistant, Theresa Buckholts

### **Preschool**

Assistant Lead Teacher, Michelle Hampton  
Assistant, Jimena Soto-Gomora

### **Prekindergarten**

Lead Teacher, Nitra Coleman  
Assistant Lead Teacher, LaToya Johnson  
Assistant, Rosalind Billingsly

## **INTRODUCTION**

Georgia State University's Child Development Program, a part of the Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education within the College of Education and Human Development, is a unique childcare program within the context of the University. We have offered programs for young children since 1971.

The centers play an important role in University research efforts, supports teacher education programs, offers an ideal setting for students from a variety of disciplines to learn about young children through observation, interaction and research, and provides a model of "best practice" for Georgia's early learning professionals at all levels of the professional ladder.

The Program reflects current standards of best practice as articulated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and adheres to all Bright from the Start, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) licensing regulations.

The Program welcomes graduate and undergraduate students and faculty in a variety of fields: education, music, art, physical education, psychology, speech and hearing, nursing and social work.

Please be aware that in order to maintain the highest quality setting many of our policies and procedures exceed basic licensing requirements.

### ***License***

The Program is licensed by Bright from the Start, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). DECAL regulates the service we provide and we are required to meet their standards for all areas of child care. We have copies of the current licensing standards available for review at the front desk. DECAL reviews our program by unannounced and regularly scheduled visits. For more information on licensing regulations, please visit Bright from the Start, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning at [www.decal.state.ga.us](http://www.decal.state.ga.us).

### ***Quality Rated***

Quality Rated is Georgia's system to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early education and school-age care programs. Similar to rating systems for hotels or restaurants, Quality Rated assigns a rating (one star, two stars, or three stars) to early education and school-age care programs that go above and beyond minimum licensing standards. By participating in Quality Rated, child care programs demonstrate their commitment to continuous quality improvement. Both centers have been received the highest star rating in the Quality rated program.

### ***Mission***

The Child Development Program serves a three-fold purpose. First, we strive to provide a high-quality environment and experience for young children and their families. Second, we are a lab site with the mission of supporting research related to young children and preparing Georgia State University students to work professionally with young children. Third, we serve as demonstration and training sites for Georgia's early care and education community.

### ***Philosophy***

We believe that learning is a dynamic process as teachers and children are engaged in an ongoing collaborative effort of discovery and problem solving. We recognize the intrinsic worth and value of each individual child. We recognize that each child brings with him/her a set of beliefs, customs, and traditions, which we accept to the extent that each child is assured the same privileges.

Also, we recognize that each child has a unique potential, which develops through maturation and the unfolding of innate capabilities, and experiences with the environment.

As educators, we recognize that we can serve the child's best interests by working toward an understanding of ourselves, both personally and professionally. This includes being aware of our beliefs and values, and the potential effects these can have on interactions with others. As educators, we recognize that the group care setting is a valuable family support system wherein (1) the parents can pursue their own interests or obligations without the burden of concern for their child's welfare, and (2) the children can expand and enrich their overall development.

We believe that the ideal group care setting is one in which the classroom environment meets the individual needs of the children within the context of the group setting. In this setting it is the educator's responsibility to facilitate the establishment of a positive reciprocal relationship between themselves and the children in their care. Further, in this setting it is crucial that the educators and parents work together as partners in meeting the needs of the children.

### ***Goals***

The center's goals are based on current learning and child development theories. Young children learn through play, and they grow and develop when in a supportive environment that encourages them to try new things and express their natural curiosity.

The following goals reflect our mission and guide our work with children and adults:

*Goals for Children:* Our goals for children are in alignment with the State of Georgia’s Early Learning Development Standards (GELDS), which were developed by Bright from the Start, Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). This set of standards is appropriate, attainable learning goals for children from birth through three that align with the existing Georgia Pre-kindergarten Content Standards for four-year olds (the Pre-kindergarten standards are used in our Pre-kindergarten classes). These standards are consistent with research-based knowledge and “best practice” experience.

1. To facilitate the development of language and literacy skills (verbal and non-verbal, expressive and receptive).
2. To facilitate cognitive development (those skills which provide the ability to think, reason, and problem solve).
3. To facilitate physical development (fine and gross motor, self-help skills).
4. To facilitate social-emotional development. (self-concept, social skills).
5. To acknowledge diverse approaches to learning and support curiosity, persistence and creativity.
6. To facilitate the opportunity for play as a tool for learning and development.

*Goals for Families:*

1. To increase the awareness of general child development characteristics and the uniqueness of the individual child.
2. To provide resources concerning child growth and development, family relationships, and family opportunities.
3. To provide the opportunity for parent involvement and education.
4. To reflect a commitment to the values of diversity, inclusion, sensitivity and compassion while serving the unique needs of individual children and families.

*Goals for University Students:*

1. To provide a dynamic training and research facility for students and faculty.
2. To provide an opportunity to learn about appropriate teaching skills and professional behaviors.
3. To provide an opportunity for students to learn appropriate communication skills with parents.
4. To serve as a model of excellence in providing quality child care and education.

***Link to the University***

The Child Development Program provides settings in which students from other departments within the university have an opportunity to learn about young children through structured interaction or observation in the classrooms and/or observation rooms. Students learn appropriate skills and practice techniques that are relative to their programs. They also have an opportunity to learn effective communication skills and to develop professional behavior.

***Link to Early Childhood Education Department***

As an integral part of the College of Education’s Department of Early Childhood Education, the Child Development Program provides practical training for future teachers. Students in this model program learn from a highly qualified staff and receive strong support from faculty

members. These professionals ensure that theories taught to teachers are actually used in the classroom.

### ***Link to the Community***

The program offers educators an opportunity to observe master teachers working with children while using developmentally appropriate lessons and materials. Making facilities available for observation promotes the improvement of other child-care facilities in the area. Program staff members serve as consultants to groups establishing child-care facilities and offer assistance in improving existing programs.

### ***Research***

The Child Development Program is an interdisciplinary research Program. The primary objective of the research program is to gain knowledge in child development, family life, teaching and care-giving practices, and child-care management. Teams of faculty and students from various departments, including education, psychology, nursing and sociology contribute different perspectives to the research. All research conducted in the Program is approved by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), which provides a rigorous review of all research and whose primary responsibility is to protect human subjects. Data from research is strictly confidential.

### ***Class Projects and Observations***

Graduate and undergraduate students from a variety of departments, in association with their class instructors, conduct both general and specific projects and observations in our classrooms. These usually relate to developmental issues of children (language, motor skills, and play relationships).

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

The Lanette L. Suttles Child Development Center and the Capitol Hill Child Enrichment Center at Georgia State University welcomes all children and is committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of each and every child. We believe that each child is unique and work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach their full potential.

### ***Students***

The following rules apply:

- If a parent withdraws from classes during a semester, the child may remain in the Center for the rest of that semester. The child may remain in the center beyond that time only if the parent enrolls the following semester.
- If a parent completes a semester of classes but does not enroll the following semester, the child may remain in the Center for a "grace period" of one semester. The child may remain in the Center beyond that time only if the parent enrolls in classes the semester following the grace period. This applies to students who take a "break" from classes as well as those who graduate.
- Summer Enrollment-Students who do not attend classes during the summer, but have met the student eligibility requirements the previous spring semester and will meet student eligibility

requirements the subsequent fall semester as a full-time or part-time student may use the center during the summer session.

**Note: these rules are consistent with the Student Code of conduct and Policies, amended, March 4, 2014, which states: Non-Enrolled Students may not benefit from the privileges reserved for “Students” ... and “Non-students may not benefit from the privileges reserved for enrolled students.”**

#### ***Faculty, Staff and State of Georgia Employees***

GSU faculty and staff members may apply for child care at the Center during the time they are employed at GSU. Proof of employment must be presented at the time of enrollment. The following rules apply:

- If a faculty or staff member terminates employment during a semester, the child may remain in the Center for the rest of that semester only.
- If a faculty or staff member terminates employment at the end of a semester, the child may remain in the Center for a "grace period" of one semester.

**\*Faculty and staff eligibility for enrollment of a child for enrollment at the Child Development Center will be confirmed through the University PeopleSoft system.**

#### ***Alumni***

When a parent graduates from GSU, the child may remain in the Center for the semester immediately following graduation.

**Note 1: An exception to the above restrictions applies to children whose parent (student, faculty or staff) leaves GSU after the child has been accepted into the Pre-K program. In that case, the child may participate in the Pre-K program for the full year. (This is in accordance with the rules of the Office of School Readiness for administering the state funded Pre-K Program.)**

### **BASIC INFORMATION**

#### ***Hours of Operation***

The Suttles center's hours are 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Capitol Hill center's hours are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. For your child's well-being we ask that you arrange your schedule so that he/she is not in the center for more than 10 hours per day. Upon entering the classroom parents and children must wash their hands before interacting.

#### ***Family Centered Practice***

The GSUCDP acknowledges and respects the priorities each family has for their child(ren). Families are encouraged and supported in collaborating with staff to ensure that each child has an opportunity for optimum success. The GSUCDP staff communicated with each family daily and has regular meetings to discuss children's successes and challenges.

#### ***Ages served***

Lanette L. Suttles Child Development Center – 12 weeks through Pre-K  
Capitol Hill Child Enrichment Center – 12 weeks through Pre-K.

### ***Classroom assignments***

Children are placed in classrooms based on date of birth. For example, to enter the one-year old class, a child must be one on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. Children in all classrooms from Infant through Pre-Kindergarten remain in the same classroom, with the same teaching staff for *at least* the entire the academic year (August through May).

### ***Orientation***

Before a child may begin attending the center, the parent must attend a classroom orientation with the lead teacher to discuss classroom procedures.

### ***Transition Behavior***

Changes are unsettling for young children and adults as well. When a child first comes to the center, he/she may be uncomfortable with the new surroundings. Your child may cry or display other signs of unhappiness when being brought in. Many parents find separating from their children difficult as well.

Take heart! This transitional behavior is a way of coping with change, and usually disappears in a couple of weeks. Once the child settles into the classroom and gets to know the teachers and the other children, smiles and laughter take the place of tears.

### ***Parking***

There is very limited space for parking at both locations, so please adhere to the short-term parking maximum times.

The M Deck parking lot is owned and managed by Georgia State University, not the Suttles Center. Rules for parking are prescribed and enforced by Parking Services. Please take caution to abide by the parking rules or expect to be ticketed or booted. The person who picks up and drops off is required to use the access card that distributed by the center to enter and exit the deck.

### ***Arrival/Departure***

We do not provide transportation of children in our program.

Young children rely on the routines of their day to provide stability and predictability in their lives. One very important routine is their arrival and departure time at the center. As your work and/or class schedule permits, it is preferable to have approximately the same arrival and departure time each day. If changes occur, for any reason, such as a change in work schedule, visits from grandparents, or illness in the family, please talk about the changes with your child and your child's teacher.

Children may not be unaccompanied in the building and should never be sent inside the building or down the hallways alone. When dropping off and picking up, please supervise your child by sight at all times. Do not allow your child to run ahead of you to the classroom at drop off, or to the front door at pick up time. Before you leave the classroom at arrival please check and departure, please speak with one of the teachers before you leave the classroom so that we may exchange important information concerning your child.

If you have more than one child in the center, drop off the older child first and pick up the younger child first.

Do not use the classrooms on the playground side of the building to enter or exit the playground.

Daily sign in/sign out is required by parent or another authorized adult as listed on the child's registration packet. A person on the current registration forms who is unfamiliar to the staff must show identification before being allowed to take your child to their class. No person will be allowed to remove your child from the premises if their name is not on your authorized pick up list. Any person on the authorized pick up list will be allowed to pick up and observe in the program. Changes to the authorized pick up list must be in writing.

If any individual (including the parent) attempts to pick up a child and appears to be unstable, intoxicated or under the influence of drugs (as determined by a staff member), we will contact another person on the child's authorized pick up list. We will call the police if necessary. When a child custody issue exists, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide official court documentation if there are restrictions or limitations placed on the noncustodial parent. The program may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.

Parents sometimes find it difficult to get their child to leave at the end of the day. It is important for the parent not to feel rejected or unneeded when this happens. In fact, the child may be feeling more secure with a parent present, and may feel freer to participate in activities with other children. If possible, it is helpful for the parent to come into the room and tell the child that they will be leaving soon. However, if a speedy exit is necessary, tell the child that it is time to go and stick to the decision. Our teachers will support you by telling your child it is time to go. If you have questions, teachers are able to help with this process.

### ***Visiting during the day***

Parents are welcome in the Centers at all times. The observation rooms in the Suttles center are provided so that parents can observe without being seen by the children or interrupting the program. If parents wish to visit in the classroom at the Suttles or Capitol Hill center other than at arrival and departure times, they should discuss with the teacher how their visit would affect the children. Many children, especially infants and toddlers, have a difficult time if parents come into the classroom and then leave without taking them.

### ***We request that adults follow the procedures listed below when observing at the Child Development Program:***

\*Sign in at the office upon arrival and out prior to departure

\*Observe from observation room or observation window whenever possible. Children's behavior is often significantly affected by a parent's presence. In addition, repeated reunions and separations can be difficult for young children. (of course, you are always welcome to come in to read or participate in activities).

\*Please refrain from talking on cell phone in the classrooms

\*If you would like to talk individually with a teacher, please make an appointment to do so during a time that the teacher can meet with you out of the classroom.

## **ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

### ***Confidentiality***

Confidentiality applies to all verbal and written information about potentially enrolled, enrolled, and previously enrolled children and their families. Your child's records: enrollment forms, health records, observation records, parent-teacher conference reports and all other information about your child is confidential and will only be accessible to you, center personnel, teaching staff and a person designated by Bright from the Start, NAEYC, and the Department of Human Services to review our records for licensing, immunization and accreditation purposes.

Children's records are stored in secure file cabinets and computer files in the Centers. All staff members are committed to abiding by the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct regarding respect and confidentiality.

No information will be released about a child and the parent/legal guardian during enrollment or transition to another receiving program or school without us first receiving the written permission of the parent/guardian. This excludes the responsibility held by early childhood educators as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect as outlined in Georgia law or when information is subpoenaed by the court.

### ***Enrollment Priority Schedule***

The requests to enroll children in the GSUCPD far exceed the enrollment capacity, therefore, the program maintains a waiting list for children of all abilities to be accepted into the program and given an equal opportunity for enrollment. Enrollment of a child/children in the program will be based upon policies that prioritize eligibility.

All new admission applications will be governed by the following Enrollment Prioritization Schedule:

***First Priority:*** Families who currently have a child enrolled in the program

***Second Priority:*** Full-time enrolled students in undergraduate or graduate degree programs and full-time staff/faculty

***Third Priority:*** Part-time enrolled students in degree programs, part-time staff/faculty.

***Fourth Priority:*** Enrolled students with non-degree status.

### ***Enrollment Eligibility and Prioritization:***

The following University definitions will apply:

***Student*** – a person who has both registered and matriculated throughout the entire semester. If, after registering for classes, a student drops all courses after the midpoint of the semester, s/he is put in non-enrolled student status, retroactive to the beginning of the semester. If a person enrolls but drops all classes after the semester midpoint for two consecutive semesters, the person then immediately becomes a non-student upon the dropping of all classes in the second consecutive. Persons who do not fit the above definition of “students” or “non-enrolled students” or who enroll but drop all class before the midpoint of the semester are deemed to be non-students. **Non-students may not benefit from the privileges reserved for enrolled students.**

*Enrolled Student* - status of one during a semester he/she is enrolled in classes and completes that semester. This status is applied to all students upon enrollment for classes and continues unless and until the student withdraws from classes during a semester, at which time the student's status changes to either a Non-Enrolled Student or Non-Student status.

*Non-Enrolled Student* – status of one during a semester he/she has both enrolled in classes and subsequently dropped all class after the semester midpoint.

*Non-Student* – status of one who, during a semester, has (a) not enrolled in classes; (b) has enrolled but drops all classes before the semester midpoint; or (c) has been in a non-enrolled student status for two or more consecutive semesters.

**\*Student eligibility for enrollment of a child at the Child Development Center will be confirmed through class registration in the Banner system each semester**

### ***Enrollment Requirements***

- **Parent Contract** with required signatures.
- **Fees**, one monthly payment (which will be held as the final month's tuition) and the registration/insurance fee paid by check or money order.
- **Application Form** with required signatures and complete information about emergency contact persons.
- **USDA Income Statement Form**
- **Health Information**

**1. IMMUNIZATION RECORD** (Must be on form 3231, Georgia Department of Human Resources Certificate of Immunization) In an effort to manage and prevent the spread of disease, the state requires us to keep on file children's immunization records and regular up dates. A current immunization record must be kept on file at all times. Parents must be responsible for knowing when their child's next shot is due, having it given, and providing the Center with an updated Certificate.

**2. HEALTH STATEMENT:** (5.A.07) a note from your doctor stating that your child is in good health and can participate in group care. If your child has a health problem, please ask your doctor to explain. When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for any immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

Information in your child's file must be kept current for us to provide quality care for your child(ren) and the best service possible for you. It is your responsibility to inform the center of changes such as:

- Home phone and address of parent(s).
- Work place phone or cell phone/day-time phone number of parent(s).
- Name, address and phone number of child's physician.
- Person(s) authorized to pick up your child and their phone number and address

- Emergency contact with their phone number and address

Children will be released from the center ONLY to authorized persons whose names appear on the application form or on a written note from the parent. (A note should be given to the center staff in advance -- please do not send a note along with the person who is picking up.) A telephone call will only suffice in the case of an emergency. Please give the teachers in your child's classroom (and the office staff) advance notice if someone else is picking up your child. Anyone who is picking up a child and is unfamiliar to a staff member MUST show identification before the child can be released. Anyone who does not provide identification will be turned away (this includes parents who are unfamiliar to us).

### ***Transfer between Lanette L. Suttles and Capitol Hill***

Once a family has accepted a space in one of the centers, children will not be transferred to the other center until the one-year contract is fulfilled. The child must be placed on the waiting list at the center that they wish to move to, and will only be moved in the order in which they were placed on the list.

### **FEES**

#### ***Monthly Fees***

At time of enrollment, the first month and final month's tuition, in addition to the yearly registration fee must be paid. The monthly tuition fees provide care for up to 50 hours per week.

Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. If the 1<sup>st</sup> is on the weekend, tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday. If tuition is unpaid for two weeks, your child will be removed from our enrollment. If this occurs, your child's spot will not be reserved.

Extended care is available for children who participate in our state funded pre-kindergarten program. There is no charge for children who are enrolled from 8:45 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Fee schedules are available at the front desk.

**Fees are subject to yearly increase usually in July or August of each year.**

#### ***Building Closure***

The building is closed at 6:00 p.m.; everyone should be out of the building by that time. Teachers are paid to sanitize, lock doors, return phone calls and make notes and reports from 6:00-6:15 p.m. (with no parents or children present in the classroom). These duties do not include child care after 6:00 p.m. or presence in the classroom. If you arrive at closing time, please be respectful to the staff and leave the classroom.

#### ***Late pickup fees***

Late pickup is **NOT** a service. It requires that our staff stay late to care for your child after our licensed closure time. A per child late fee is charged anytime parents or guardians arrive or sign out at or after 6:00 pm to pick up their child(ren).

A fee of \$2.00 per minute will be charged to a parent who picks up a child after 6:00 p.m. This charge must be made in cash and must be made on the evening that the charge is incurred.

***Late payment***

A late fee of 10% will be added to tuition not received by the due date.

***Reimbursement of deposit***

Upon giving two weeks written notice, a family may terminate care and the deposit paid at registration will be used toward the final tuition.

**CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION/ASSESSMENT**

***Developmentally Appropriate Standards Based Practice***

The aims of our program are based on current knowledge of child development, quality care giving, and learning theories in the cognitive, physical, and affective domains. Program goals are aligned with state and national professional standards. We believe in the tenets of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and its philosophy of the education of the whole child. Our practice is based on the work of several theorists and theories incorporated in NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practice. The contributions of theorists including Arnold Gessel, Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, Bronfenbrenner, Lev Vygotsky, Loris Malaguzzi, Howard Gardner, Lillian Katz, and Maria Montessori have been the foundation of our eclectic approach to children's growth and development.

- Gessel: The course, pattern, and the rate of growth and development in typically developing and exceptional children.
- Piaget stages of cognitive development: A blueprint that describes the stages of typical intellectual development, from infancy through adulthood.
- Erikson stages of psycho-social development: Characterizes an individual advancing through the eight life stages as a function of negotiating his or her biological forces and sociocultural forces. Each stage is characterized by a psychosocial crisis of these two conflicting forces.
- Bronfenbrenner: everything in a child and the child's environment affects how a child grows and develops.
- Vygotsky: Stresses the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition. He believed strongly that community plays a central role in the process of "making meaning."
- Malaguzzi: (Reggio Emilia approach). Student-centered and constructivist. Utilizes self-directed, experiential learning in relationship-driven environments. The program is based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery through a self-guided curriculum. At its core is an assumption that children form their own personality during early years of development and are endowed with "a hundred languages", through which they can express their ideas. The aim of the Reggio approach is to teach how to use these symbolic languages (e.g., painting, sculpting, drama) in everyday life.
- Gardner: Suggests that the traditional notion of intelligence, based on I.Q. testing, is far too limited. Introduced multiple intelligences theory of how children think and learn.
- Katz: The project approach to learning.

- Montessori: An approach to learning which emphasizes active learning, independence, cooperation, and learning in harmony with each child's unique pace of development.

We strive to provide a wide variety of real-life experiences that build on children's interests and extend their knowledge and skills. These experiences encompass the areas of fine and gross motor development, language and logical thinking development; and social-emotional and moral development. In an appropriate supportive environment, we encourage firsthand experiences, risk taking, curiosity and exploration of a variety of materials. Our hope is that children in our program will become confident, courteous, capable, creative and caring. Finally, our care of children is centered in our commitment to respect and celebrate the diversity of our families and the world at large.

### ***Child Selected Play***

Play; often called the "work" of the child has long been the subject of observation and research. Play allows children to practice and expand specific cognitive and social abilities. Play is also the ideal arena for practicing and developing language. In the last decade, its importance in early childhood development and education has been well documented.

Through developmentally appropriate play, children are enjoying the investigation and exploration of their world and acquiring the basic concepts and abilities that will enable them to meet future challenges.

In our program, children have the opportunity to participate in activities of their choice, either alone or with others in several areas of the room, which may include the block area, housekeeping center, art area, computer area, listening center, or with puzzles and other manipulative activities. The teacher provides materials, encourages the children to make choices, and provides guidance as they play. The choices are varied from day to day.

### ***Chosen Curriculum***

We implement Creative Curriculum, which has a national reputation and is widely used in high quality centers. Creative Curriculum is a nationally recognized Curriculum that provides a framework for teaching and learning with young children. The Creative Curriculum is based on accepted theories of child development and the latest research on the importance of early learning and the development of the brain.

### ***Individualization***

Teachers plan lessons and activities to meet the needs of all children in the classroom at each child's own developmental level. For example, a teacher may plan activities and routines because it is appropriate for the entire group of children. A teacher may, however, plan a different activity for a child who may have accomplished or still be working towards skills in one area. All staff receive orientation on inclusion policies and attend training focused on effective inclusion and/or other disability topics. The Curriculum Coordinator provides additional support and resources as needed.

### ***Assessment***

The lead and assistant lead teacher in the child's assigned classroom assess each child both individually and in groups in order to make informed curricula, planning, and professional development decisions, to set goals for individual children, to provide information to parents, and to establish a database for research purposes.

Assessment is ongoing and portfolio-based in our program. Teachers systematically collect examples of children's work, written observations, anecdotal records and photographs in order to have a record of progress in specific areas over time. Most assessment information is gathered during structured activity times when teachers observe each child's level of skill and the way he or she approaches a task. Observations are shared with parents during twice yearly conferences and as needed to keep them informed of the growth and development of their child.

### ***Guidance***

It is the policy of the Program to use positive methods of behavior management. At no time is corporal punishment or verbal humiliation allowed in the Centers. Teachers in the program are trained in positive communication and guidance techniques and are encouraged to use effective interpersonal skills in communicating with children, parents, and fellow staff members.

The staff uses encouragement to enhance the children's self-esteem and independence. Teachers use logical consequences to help the children understand that certain behaviors are tied to consequences, e.g., if a preschooler spills milk, he is taught to clean it up. Children are taught to tell other children how they feel, e.g., "I don't like it when you hit me!" This technique provides children with communication skills to use to defuse an unpleasant situation and a way to use nonphysical strategies to solve a problem.

Teachers use effective methods to redirect a child's inappropriate behavior. They reinforce positive behaviors and avoid power struggles by giving a child a choice of acceptable activities in which he or she may take part.

The goal of the Child Development Program staff is to assist each child toward the development of self-control and positive interactions with other children and adults.

### ***Challenging Behaviors***

Challenging behaviors can be defined as a behavior which interferes with a child's learning and success in the classroom, is harmful to others, or puts the child at risk for later social emotional problems (Kaiser & Rasminsky, 2007). All staff is expected to use positive guidance techniques and measures to reduce challenging behaviors in the classroom. However, at times you might have a child in your classroom who exhibits persistent challenging behaviors. The following strategies must be followed to ensure successful inclusion of a child with challenging behaviors: observation, collaboration, documentation, individual support plan, and seeking support services if needed.

Teachers are expected to try to find the cause of the behavior. Children communicate to us through behavior. It is up to us to try to decipher the message the child is sending with his or her behavior. Observation is an essential tool when trying to find out the message of a child's behavior, as well as identify any other factors which might trigger the behavior. The CDFC uses

a Child and Family Success Plan to help document specific challenging behavior as well as to help identify causes of behavior, create plans for success, and provide necessary referrals.

Any staff member who has concerns about a child's behavior will be in communication with a director and begin the Child and Family Success Plan. This documentation will also be used when setting up plans for support and success. Children often engage in challenging behavior if they do not know the social expectations or if they are lacking a skill. It is important to identify what skills the child may be lacking and create a plan which focuses on actively helping children achieve the skills they need to be successful in the classroom. Collaboration amongst staff, families, and supervisors is important for staff to have a more comprehensive view of the child and the behavior. When staff becomes concerned about behaviors, staff should seek understanding of the behavior through communicating with the families. Families are an essential part of creating the individual support plan. After the classroom teachers and director have gathered enough data, a conference must be set up with the family to create an individual support plan. Staff and families will work collaboratively to monitor children's progress. Follow up meetings to review and update the individual support plan will be set up, as needed.

We will make every attempt to work with each child and family. If there are continual discipline problems with significant disruptive or aggressive behaviors, the parent(s) will be called in for a conference with the teachers and director. Our goal is to work together to help your child. If needed, we will call in a social worker, parent educator or nurse from 4-C to assist the staff and parents. We sometimes require parents to seek additional services from their school district. Parents **must** be cooperative with our efforts to seek assistance or additional services for their child. If a parent is not supportive or cooperative with our efforts, we maintain the right to discontinue child care.

In general, we will take the following steps when working with a child who exhibits challenging behaviors in the classroom: the teacher, along with a director, will meet with the parent(s) and develop an action plan; strategies will be implemented in the classroom to help the child; referrals and recommendations will be made to the parent which need to be acted upon; other options such as changing classrooms or reducing child care hours will be considered. **If a child is a threat to the other children or teaching staff he/she will be removed from the classroom. If center staff are unable to return the child safely to the classroom the parents/family will be called to pick up the child for the day.** Any child who, after attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs demonstrates inability to benefit from the type of care offered by the center, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, shall be discharged from the facility. It is never our goal to discontinue child care, but that will be our final option if we do not feel we can meet the individual needs of a child / family or if the child's behavior is creating an unsafe environment for him/herself or others. In all instances, when the center decides that it is in the best interest of the child to terminate enrollment, the child and parents needs shall be considered by planning with the family to meet the child's needs when he or she leaves the center, including referrals to other agencies or facilities. Each situation will be evaluated on an individual basis. The final determination regarding a child's enrollment status will be made by the executive director and the faculty advisory board. Other children's parents will not be part of any decision-making process on the issue of another child's enrollment, nor

will other parent's requests for termination of enrollment for other children impact any child's enrollment status.

### ***Referrals***

If a concern is raised by a child's teacher or parent regarding the child's development, a meeting will be scheduled to include the teacher, parents, curriculum coordinator, and assistant director. If it is determined that the program staff will benefit from additional guidance by outside resources to fully meet the individual needs of the child, a referral to a community agency or University department will be made.

If a parent is not cooperative with our efforts to seek assistance with his/her child, we will exercise our right to discontinue service and enrollment will be terminated.

### ***Inclusive Environment***

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we make reasonable accommodations for all children. Early childhood educators in our program use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning. Staff will make every attempt to make adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children in our program.

Many children with disabilities or other special needs are supported by developmental and educational professionals such as therapists, teachers, and coaches. The GSUCDP welcomes those professionals and works with them to ensure the child's success. The service provider is encouraged to provide services to the child in the context of the early childhood classroom environment. The child's teacher and the service provider work collaboratively to determine the best strategies to support the child in the group setting. The GSUCDP supports the teachers and other appropriate staff member's participation in Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings.

Schedules, routines, and activities are flexible and we will work with therapists, special educators, and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications, and strategies into classroom routines and activities. Prior to enrollment, the parents must discuss the nature of the child's special need with the Director, the Assistant Director and the Curriculum Coordinator in order to determine appropriate placement. The Director may then consult with other university officials or specialists if necessary.

***Program activities in the Child Development Program are designed to meet the needs of children for educational experiences within a group setting. If, after a reasonable period of time, a child is unable to adjust to a group setting, or the program is unable to meet a child or family's special needs, the family may be asked to withdraw the child.***

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### ***Secure Access***

Access to both centers is controlled through security entrance doors. At Capitol Hill, anyone entering the building must be buzzed in by the person at the front desk. At Suttles, parents who are affiliated with Georgia State University, and who have provided us with their Georgia State identification number may enter the building using their Panther cards, all other visitors must be buzzed in by the person at the front desk.

### ***Security***

Both centers are monitored by Georgia State University Police, who are notified and respond immediately in the event of an emergency.

### ***Accidents***

Center staff is trained in first aid. When minor accidents occur, which may or may not require medical attention, staff will handle the situation until parents can be notified. Attending staff will fill out an accident report for parent and center files.

### ***Communicable diseases***

Exposure to many contagious diseases is a normal part of childhood. Children are susceptible to infections from bacteria, viruses, and other organisms. Many communicable diseases are referred to as childhood infectious diseases because they are most likely to be contracted in childhood. In an attempt to prevent the transmission of infections, group child-care settings institute universal hygienic precautions and have exclusion policies. Communicable diseases may be categorized into two types:

**Type I:** Those which are self-limiting and/or readily treatable. Some examples of this type of communicable disease are childhood illnesses such as chicken pox, influenza, streptococcal infections, impetigo, and lice. Because of the nature of these illnesses, risks to the children who have the illnesses and to their contacts within a group child-care setting are time-limited; therefore, decisions can be readily made about the exclusion of these children from a center for a period of time.

**Type II:** Those which are of a more chronic nature which may require extensive treatment and/or which suppress the immune system of the child who exhibits them. Some examples of this type of communicable disease are AIDS, hepatitis A, and cytomegalovirus (CMV). Children with Type II communicable diseases could be admitted to the program if their health, neurological development, behavior, and immune status are appropriate. This decision will be made on an individual basis by qualified persons with expertise regarding communicable disease, including the child's physician and the program director. They will evaluate (a) whether the child will receive optimum care in a group setting, (b) whether the child is at a greater risk of encountering severe complications from infections with tuberculosis, measles, herpes simplex virus, and chicken pox in the group setting, (c) whether an infected child poses a potential threat of disease transmission to others. Children who presently exhibit biting behavior or who have exudative skin lesions will not be considered for enrollment.

An enrolled child who has a Type II communicable disease may need to be temporarily removed from the center for his/her protection when cases of measles, herpes simplex,

tuberculosis, chicken pox, or other illnesses presenting a hazard to the child are occurring in the center population.

Children with Type II communicable disease are subject to the same policies as those children with Type I communicable diseases; however, children who would be harmed by virus vaccines will be excused from regulations requiring them.

Any child enrolled in the center that has diarrhea, fever, impetigo, influenza, vomiting, measles, herpes simplex, chicken pox, tuberculosis, streptococcal infection, thrush, or other Type I communicable diseases will be temporarily removed until the child is free of all symptoms of the illness for 24 hours and/or past the contagious period.

Parents of children attending group programs do not have the right to know the health status of other children in the program unless there is a threat to their children.

Caregivers and teachers need to know when a child has an immunodeficiency, regardless of the cause so that precautions can be taken to protect the child from other infections. The program director will assure that the confidentiality of the child's health and other records are maintained at all times.

Exclusion of a child already enrolled in the program that is subsequently found to have a Type II communicable disease will be decided based on the preceding policies.

Because of the nature of these illnesses, risks to the children who have the illnesses and to their contacts within a group child-care setting may indicate a need to be excluded from the group for a period of time, or it may be inadvisable for the child to attend group child care. Therefore, decisions about group child care for children exhibiting these types of communicable diseases need to be made by program administration along with the child's physician.

### ***Sanitation policies for control of all infectious diseases***

There may be infants and children with communicable disease already enrolled in the center because the child has no symptoms; the child's parents are unaware of the child's condition; or because the family has elected to keep the knowledge from the center. Therefore, the program has established policies for the control of all communicable diseases. These policies are practiced at all times by the program's administrative, teaching and housekeeping staff to protect every child and adult participating in the program. These universal precautions have been adapted from the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Emory University AIDS Training Network. Every staff member will be trained and monitored in the use of these precautions. Every effort will be made to assure that all program staff and families of enrolled children have received and will continue to receive the latest information about the control of the spread of communicable diseases, the course of each condition, modes of transmission, management of the child in the classroom, and prevention efforts as a means of reducing the spread of communicable diseases.

### ***Illness***

The most common illnesses that the children have are associated with the upper respiratory system and the gastrointestinal system. Infants and toddlers are particularly vulnerable to some disease because certain components of their general immune system are not fully developed. Both centers are well child facilities. In an effort to keep children and staff healthy, we will strictly enforce our health policies. It is important that we have parents' full cooperation in compliance with these health policies. A child's day at the center is active, and can be stressful if he/she is not feeling well. For the benefit of your child and others, it is important that you keep your child home when he/she is not well. **When you are called to pick up an ill child, the child must be picked up within the hour. We do not have facilities to care for sick children long term. Failure to follow this time limit will result in disenrollment from the program.**

***Inclusion or Exclusion from Program due to illness***

Any child who has any of the conditions listed below or a child who shows extreme discomfort from teething, ears, stomach problems, etc., is considered ill and will be temporarily removed from the program.

- Fever (100 auxiliary, 101 orally) and another symptom such as sore throat, diarrhea, rash, etc. At times children can have no fever, but still exhibit other signs of illness and can find it difficult to be in a group situation. You may also be called to pick up your child in this instance.
- A child with any communicable disease may not attend the center during the contagious period and at least until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Rashes of unknown origin are treated as if they are contagious. The child must be checked by the pediatrician and a statement that the child is not contagious, and the cause of the rash must accompany the child when he/she returns

The center must report some communicable diseases to the Fulton County Health Department. **Parents in the ill child's class must also be notified. Children must have a note from their pediatrician to return to the school** when they have had any type of reportable communicable disease.

In addition to the restrictions cited above, The Child Development Program follows the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations for excluding sick children from school which is:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities
- The illness results in greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
- Any child with diarrhea of unknown origin should not attend school. Children who develop diarrhea at the school need to be picked up by their parents. Diarrhea is defined as loose stools of large volume and/or abnormal frequency.
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores associated with the inability of the child to control saliva, unless the child's physician states the child is not infectious.
- Pink or red eyes with white or yellow discharge that may indicate conjunctivitis, unless checked by a physician and cleared for readmission.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment is initiated.

- Children with impetigo or skin sore must have sores completely covered when attending the center. Parents must present evidence that the child is being treated for the skin sores
- Head lice, until the child has been treated and all nits are gone. Pediatrician certifies that they are totally free from infection.
- Scabies, until after final treatment
- Ringworm infection until 24 hours after treatment has begun and infection must be covered.
- Pertussis, until five days of appropriate treatment.
- Chicken Pox, until sixth day after onset of rash or when lesions have dried and crusted.
- A bad cold. A bad cold has all or some of these symptoms: Heavily running nose, colored mucus, frequent coughing, runny eyes, hoarseness, general listlessness.
- Respiratory distress: fast, difficult, or different breathing, uncontrolled coughing, and/or wheezing.

This list is not intended to be all inclusive. Certain other illnesses/conditions will arise that require us to make decisions regarding the need for a child to be removed from the center.

If a child is sent home ill, a physician's note authorizing the child's return to group care may be requested, depending on the specific situation.

Please understand that we must insist on these rules in order to insure a healthy environment for all the children in our care.

#### ***Children who become sick at the center***

Our staff reserves the right to decide that a child should be sent home if he or she appears ill upon arrival or becomes ill at the center. The on-campus parent is contacted immediately to pick up the sick child. If that parent cannot be reached, the next available person on your list will be contacted.

#### ***Re-admittance after illness***

Children will be checked by a classroom staff person upon returning to the center to be sure the child is free of contagious conditions.

Children who are sent home with an illness such as fever, diarrhea, or vomiting must be free of symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to the center.

#### ***Medication storage and administration***

Inevitably, some children will require medication while in the childcare setting.

When possible, a child's parents and physician should try to minimize the need for medications while in childcare. Medicines ordered twice a day should be given before and after, rather than during, childcare hours. Medications ordered to be given three times daily also may be planned so that they are given in the morning before the child leaves for childcare, in the afternoon after the child returns home, and again during the evening. However, in some cases, administration of medications during childcare hours is unavoidable.

Staff can administer no medication unless the parent fills out Medication Authorization Form completely. If a child should require medication while in our care, staff can administer the medication if the following conditions are met:

- Whenever possible, it is best that medication be given at home. Dosing of medication can frequently be done so that the child receives medication prior to going to child care, and again when returning home and/or at bedtime. The parent/guardian is encouraged to discuss this possibility with the child's health care provider.
- Medication is given only to the child if the parent has signed a medication form.
- Medications that are scheduled for two or fewer times per day will not be administered at the center.
- The first dose of medication should always be given at home and with sufficient time before the child returns to care to observe the child's response to the medication given.
- The first dose of any medication should always be given at home and with sufficient time before the child returns to child care to observe the child's response to the medication given.
- Authorization for medicine can be for no longer than two weeks.
- The medication is in its original container and has a pharmacy label with the child's name, date prescription was filled, prescription number, expiration date, name of the drug and directions for administration.
- Non-prescription medication will be dispensed only if the child's physician approves the administration and dosage on official letterhead or prescription pad.
- Medication is kept inaccessible from children and stored in a locked box in a cabinet in the classroom that is closed with a child's safety latch.

It is suggested that if an illness continues after 5 days, the child be seen by his/her pediatrician. "As needed" medications may be given only when the child's health care provider provides a statement that lists specific reasons and times when such medication can be given.

***If a child is to be given medication on an as needed basis, a statement must be on file and renewed quarterly***

### ***Special Medical Management Procedure***

For children who require special medical care management, the staff are (or will be) trained by the Georgia State University Nursing Department to administer the medical care. ***Examples*** of special medical management procedures are:

**Asthma Action Plan (use of nebulizer)**

**Allergy Action Plan (use of an epi-pen)**

### ***Medical emergency***

Our staff will take every precaution to insure the safety of all children. If the staff determines that medical care is needed, every possible effort will be made to first contact the child's parent so that the parent can help plan further steps to be taken in the particular situation. If emergency medical attention is needed and the parent cannot be reached or there is no time to reach the parent first, the child will be taken to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Hughes Spalding by

ambulance. A signed permission form is on file for all children and will be taken with the child to the hospital.

***Medical claims***

If an accident occurs at the center and medical attention is required a claim form can be filed for payment of medical expenses which are not covered by the parents' health insurance. It is the parent's responsibility to get a claim form at the front desk and have the medical facility and physician complete it.

***Severe weather warnings***

In the event that the Center is notified of a severe storm watch in the area, the children will play in areas of the classrooms away from windows and doors. In a severe storm warning, the children will be evacuated to designated inner areas of the building.

***Weather closing***

The Child Development Program will follow Georgia State University's inclement weather closing schedule. If Georgia State remains open, the centers will remain open. If Georgia State University closes, the centers will close. Official announcements will be broadcast on local radio stations.

***Physical facility problems***

Any problems such as power failure, which affect climate control, water supply, or structural damages, will be immediately reported to the Physical Plant department. If the problem cannot be resolved and the program cannot be operated safely, parents will be notified to pick up their children.

***Fire drills***

The Assistant Director conducts a fire drill at least once a month. Fire drill instructions and a plan for evacuation are posted in each classroom, and teachers discuss and practice the fire drill procedures with the older children before a drill takes place.

**FOOD/NUTRITION**

***CACFP Nondiscrimination Statement***

"In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, and Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202)720-6382 (voice and TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

The Child Development Program is a participant in the USDA Food Program. The goal of the USDA Food Program is to improve health and nutrition, establish good eating habits and further nutrition education. Annually, families are asked to complete an income eligibility statement.

Copies of menus are posted in the lobby and in each classroom for parents to review. Once the menu is posted, every effort is made to adhere to it. If a change is necessary, the food substituted is from the same group.

Except for human milk, staff serve only formula and infant food that comes to the center in factory sealed containers (e.g., ready-to-feed powder or concentrate formulas and baby food jars) prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions. Bottle feedings may not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice

### ***Peanut & Tree Nut Free Policy***

#### **Policy Topic Description**

The following policy establishes Georgia State University Child Development Program as a peanut and tree nut free program. If you are bringing food into the classroom for special celebrations or projects, please make sure you carefully read the label to check for ingredients that may contain nuts. Many-seemingly-innocuous products actually do contain nuts. For example, some products that contain nuts but are often overlooked include some types of chili, gravy, chocolate candies, cereals, protein bars, salad dressings, cosmetics, hamster food, bird food and dog food.

#### **Policy Statement**

The goal of the Child Development Program is to provide a safe environment for children who may have or who may develop a severe allergic reaction to tree nuts & peanuts. Many severe reactions occur in children who were previously undiagnosed with an allergy. Therefore, it is imperative that we avoid nuts and nut products altogether in the program. Universal "Allergy" Precautions: Treat all children as potential carriers of allergies. These allergies are life threatening and require medical intervention if a child is exposed to these foods. Some children are allergic to the smell of peanuts, while others may have an allergic reaction after touching tree nuts, peanuts or tree nut/ peanut products.

(5.A.02, 5.C.04) Allergy information is recorded by the parent at the time of registration for front office, classroom and kitchen use. If your child has an allergy or physical intolerance to a certain food or food group, we must have a **physician's note** stating the intolerance. ***During registration, all parents of children with food allergies/preference, or parents of children who develop allergies while enrolled in the center must meet with the Food Service Supervisor before the Special Meal plan will be implemented***

It is the responsibility of the parent to also inform the child's teacher of the type of allergy and any special instructions. The information will be posted in the child's classroom and in the kitchen. If food substitutions are required parents must follow the guidelines for bringing food into the center which are available at the front desk. ***No products containing nuts may be bought into the center at anytime. If you bring in food substitutes for your child, please check the ingredient label to ensure the product does not contain nuts. Any treats from home must be pre-approved by classroom teachers and may not contain tree nut/peanut products. If there is any question about whether it is appropriate, it will not be distributed to students, and we will asked that you immediately remove the product from the center.***

***The only meat substitutes purchased by the center will be Boca Ground Burger Crumbles or Patties and Morning Star Brand Chicken Nuggets or Patties which contain no nuts.***

If you would like more information, there are several websites you can visit:

[www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)

[www.healthy-kids.info](http://www.healthy-kids.info)

[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)

### ***Food for Sharing***

Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared foods in factory-sealed containers. Please refer to our nut free center policy in selecting foods to bring in for sharing.

## **MANDATED REPORTING**

### ***Child abuse***

In accordance with Georgia law, the program and staff, as child care professionals, are mandated by law to report any suspicion of child abuse, neglect or deprivation. Children are observed regularly for signs of injury, illness, or abnormal behavior. Unusual observations will be documented in detail and immediately reported to the Assistant Director or Program Director.

The Assistant Director or Program Director will report the suspected abuse to the local County Department of Family and Children Services in accordance with state law.

Georgia Child Care Licensing Regulations require that all employees be trained to recognize child abuse and child neglect. The definition of abuse and/or neglect can include but not limited to the following: bruises, burns, and marks, lack of daily medical or surgical care or treatment, or other care necessary for the child's health, or well being.

**Employees who report abuse and/or neglect in the workplace shall be immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action.**

It should be advised that as mandated reporters, staff is also required to report any center employee witnessed abusing a child.

According to the Center's Policy, failure to report such incidents will be cause for disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment. An employee suspected of abusing a child will be immediately removed from the classroom until a thorough investigation takes place. If the report is found to be substantiated, the employee will be terminated.

## **PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN**

Corporal punishment is not allowed in the child care centers. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director. Parents are not permitted to intervene in conflicts between children while the children are in the Program. The teachers and staff are responsible for such matters and are therefore the only adults permitted to do so. Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### ***Birthdays***

Birthdays are special events in the life of each child. We certainly want to share in the celebration if that is the wish of the family. However, we believe that the celebration in this setting should be as simple as possible. If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at the center, please plan this in advance with the teacher. Each classroom usually has protocol of how they celebrate. Please remember to check ingredients and make sure that anything you bring in is nut free. Please avoid foods with high sugar content, food additives or highly processed foods. If you plan an additional birthday celebration outside of school, please mail invitations from home unless the entire class is invited.

### ***Holidays***

For many reasons, our program chooses not to emphasize all the various holidays throughout the year. We will discuss holidays and sometimes read stories about them, but we avoid parties and art activities related to holiday themes. We feel it is up to each individual family to celebrate these special days in their own way. In addition, young children often find holidays such as Halloween to be frightening.

### ***Clothing***

The clothing that children wear can contribute to their safety in the preschool environment. Clothes should be comfortable and fit properly so that movement is not impeded.

Please don't dress your child in special outfits or costumes (unless requested by the teacher). These garments restrict the child's ability to play and engage in the usual classroom activities. Children should not wear long dresses, shoes with heels, dress shoes (slippery), sandals with open toes (sneakers are preferred over sandals, since they are safer, but closed toe sandals with socks may be worn) shoes without a back or strap, overalls with difficult snaps, thongs, belts with heavy buckles, and hanging jewelry (hoop earrings and long necklaces). Hoods that have drawstrings must be removed. If the parent has not removed them, the staff will remove the drawstring prior to going out on the play yard.

Expect children to participate in activities that often result in soiled clothing. Both center's programs are designed for free play and exploration of the environment, with messy activity on the agenda on most days. The classroom staff will encourage children to participate in all activities. Even though the staff takes precautionary measures to prevent unnecessary damage to garments, incidents occur, and it is inevitable that children will get dirty at times. We strongly recommend that children not be dressed in expensive and difficult to clean pants, dresses, shirts and shoes.

Children go out to play every day, at least for a short period of time, even in very cold weather, and appropriate warm clothing, including hats and mittens, labeled with the child's name, must be supplied. In the summer, water play is a favorite activity, and children need swim suits and towels.

Parents are asked provide an extra set of clothing, including underwear, labeled with the child's name, in a backpack or tote bag, to be left in the cubbies.

***Personal items***

PLEASE DO NOT BRING OR WEAR ANYTHING TO SCHOOL THAT MAY POSE A SAFETY HAZARD (for example, anything with a diameter less than 1.25 inch, or 3.2 cm, jewelry that can get caught on objects and/or equipment). THIS INCLUDES JEWELRY AND HAIR ACCESSORIES.

Children are requested to leave food, gum, candy, money or other valuables at home. Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other prized possessions to the center. Such items are often difficult to keep up with and very hard to share. The only exception to this would be a teacher planned "show and share" activity.

\*The center is not responsible for any lost or broken toy.

\*The center is not responsible for any lost or broken jewelry that you child wears.

\*Special outfits or costumes (unless requested by the teacher). These garments restrict the child's ability to play and engage in the usual classroom activities.

**Your child may bring:**

**Naptime cuddle toys**

It understood that many young children do have an object of special attachment, such as a blanket or stuffed toy, that helps to ease the transition from home to school and that a child might not be ready to share. These items will be kept in the children's cubbies, but are available to comfort in times of need. Teachers will help other children to understand and respect such feelings.

**Books from home**

Give the books to the teacher upon arrival and the teacher will find a time to read them during the day.

Objects from nature that the child has found while at home (for instance, fall leaves, flowers or pine cones). Such items may be shared with the class and used to provide rich connections between home and school experiences.

### ***Diapering***

The program staff uses a sanitary method of diapering to prevent the spread of illness to others. Parents are taught this method and must use it when changing their child's diapers in the classroom. Parents provide disposable diapers, wet wipes and any ointment or powder needed for diaper changes.

### ***Toilet Learning***

When children show readiness for toilet training, teachers and parents work with them, using the same methods at school as at home. Parents provide a supply of training pants and changes of clothes marked with the child's name. Pull-ups and cloth diapers are not acceptable. Please meet with your child's classroom teacher to discuss the child's readiness for toilet learning.

### ***Cubbies***

Each child has a cubby that is labeled with the child's name. Parents are reminded to check their child's cubby every day for important items and information.

### ***Outdoor Play***

Child care licensing regulations require that children at the center go outside everyday unless it is raining, even on very cold days children go out for a short time. Exposure to the cold, when appropriately dressed, does not cause illness; it actually kills germs that cause illness. Children who are not well enough to go outside should not be brought to the center, because staffing ratios will not allow for a teacher to stay inside with one child. Children need to have proper clothing for outside activity during cold weather. It is a good idea to bring both a heavy jacket and a sweater, in case the jacket is too warm for the temperature later in the day.

We monitor outdoor play based on recommendation from the Clean Air Campaign. In "code orange: we go outside for a short period of time, but do NOT engage in strenuous play. In "code red" we will not go outside.

### ***Parental involvement***

Parents are strongly encouraged to become involved in the Child Development Program in various capacities and at whatever level they are comfortable with. There is no obligation, and we respect each other's busy schedules. Parents, grandparents and other significant adults in the lives of the children may wish to volunteer in the classrooms. Please talk to your child's teacher about how you can be involved in your child's experience here.

### ***Parent Committee***

The Child Development Program Parent Committee is a group for families with children enrolled in the Child Development Center. Each center has its own committee. Its purpose is to help support the program and its staff, to provide information and opportunities for parents to increase their knowledge of issues surrounding young children and families, and to encourage families to take advantage of the friendships and camaraderie available through socializing with other parents. All parents with children at the CDP belong to the Parent Committee; there are no fees or dues required. Meetings are held bimonthly.

### ***Parent/Teacher conferences***

Parents are encouraged to talk to the child's teacher if they have questions or concerns. Ongoing, informal evaluations of children's progress are made throughout the year. Individualized parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year. We are happy to accommodate additional conferences if needed. Children's personal and individual needs are of primary importance; therefore, more frequent interaction between parents and teachers may be necessary.

There are co-chairs and room representatives from each classroom who help coordinate activities for the committee. There are also two subcommittees—the center volunteer subcommittee and the teacher appreciation subcommittee.

### ***Communication***

Our goal is to foster an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and respect. We encourage you to let us know what is on your mind! Good communication is the essential key to reaching and maintaining that goal. When you have an idea, thought or suggestion that you feel would benefit the Program, please share it with us.

Parents are encouraged to read all posted information. There are several places where information is routinely posted. Please familiarize yourself with the reception area and classroom posting areas.

The Program operates under an "open door" policy. Your presence, thoughts ideas and suggestions are welcome. We encourage open conversation between parents and teachers. Arrival and pick up time are good for relaying pertinent information about your child. Parents may call or visit the center at any time.

Your phone calls to the center are also welcome. However, we try to limit classroom disruptions, so if your call is not time-sensitive, please leave a message and a teacher will return your call between activities or at naptime. If the phone call is an emergency, please let the administrative assistant know and you will be connected with the teacher immediately.

Email, notes in children's cubbies and posted notices are used regularly to communicate with parents. Please be sure your current e-mail address and phone numbers are on file with the office. In case of emergency, parents will be contacted by email and/or phone, depending on availability of internet services. If we cannot reach a parent, your emergency contact will be notified.

### ***Negotiating Differences***

We believe it is best to resolve problems right away, so please don't hesitate to let us know if anything is of concern to you. Differences are best handled informally and expediently between the involved parties. If you have a concern within the classroom please address it first with the lead teacher. If the issue is not resolved and it concerns curriculum, speak to the Program Curriculum Director, otherwise speak to the Assistant Director at your site and finally if you still feel that the issue has not been solved speak to the Child Development Program Director. Child Development Program staff members are interested in providing the best services to your family, so feel free to communicate your concerns, no matter how small.