**Table of Contents**

1. Welcome
2. Introduction: Mission, Philosophy, Goals and General Operations
3. Mission
4. Philosophy
5. Goals
6. General Operations
7. Security Access
8. Staff
9. Board of Directors
10. Enrollment and Procedures
11. Child’s Enrollment and Waiting List
12. Required Forms for Child Care
13. Enrollment Form
14. Emergency Contacts and Authorized Pick-up
15. Travel, Activities, Medical and Media Consent
16. Medical and Dental Information
17. Tuition Agreement/Tuition Express Automatic Payment Form
18. Intake Form
19. Physical or Health Statement and Immunization Records
20. Allergy and Medication forms with Doctor’s authorization
21. Child and Adult Care Food Program Forms
22. Infant Forms
23. Parent Handbook
24. Tuition Rates and Required Fees
25. Child Care Rates
26. Vacation Days
27. Holidays
28. Tuition Agreements Self-pay/DHS Families
29. Tuition Express Automatic Payment Process/Payment Options
30. Late Payment Fee
31. Late Pick-up Fee
32. Families Receiving Financial Assistance
33. CECC Sliding Fee Scale
34. Department of Human Services & Promise Jobs
35. Withdrawal Notice
36. New Parent Orientation
37. Disenrollment Policy
38. Programs
39. Staff/Child Ratios
40. Curriculum / General Information
41. Infants (Barnyard, Aquarium)
42. Toddlers (Ocean)
43. Early Two’s & Two-Year Old’s (Jungle, Arctic)
44. Three Year Old’s (Safari) (Must be potty-trained)
45. Four Year Old’s (Outer Space)
46. School Age Children (Dugout, Stadium)
47. During School Year
48. Summer Program
49. Children Moving Classrooms
50. Special Care Children
51. Center Practices and Policies
52. Times of Operation
53. Attendance
54. Arrival and Departure
55. Parking
56. Meals
57. Nap Time / Rest Time
58. Children’s Personal Belongings
59. Toilet Training
60. Behavior Management Policy
61. Multicultural and Religious Awareness Policy
62. Confidentiality
63. Pet Policy
64. Outdoor Play
65. Playground
66. Transportation
67. Field Trips
68. Health and Safety Policies
69. Prevention and Management of Illnesses
70. Hand Washing
71. Daily Cleaning Policies
72. First Aid Kits / Hip Packs
73. Immunization of Children
74. Illness
75. Medication and Medication Forms
76. Biting Policy
77. Bike Riding Safety Policy
78. Protection from Hazards & Environmental Health
79. Emergencies
80. Accident Reports
81. Fire and Tornado Drills
82. Inclement Weather Policy
83. Mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting
84. Substance Abuse
85. Smoking Policy
86. Parent Involvement
87. Home - Center Communication
88. Parent - Teacher Communication
89. Conferences
90. Assessments
91. Parent Visitation
92. Parent Meetings
93. New Parent Orientation
94. Board Meetings/Parent Board
95. Fundraising
96. Volunteers
97. Parent Conduct

VIII. Emergency Preparedness

1. Evacuation and Relocation
2. Sheltering in Place
3. Lockdown
4. Addressing the Individual Needs of Children
5. Communications and Reunification with Parents/Families
6. Continuity of Operations
7. Other Emergency plans

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**I. WELCOME**

Welcome to Community Early Childhood Center, a non-profit childcare facility organized and run by a Board of Directors and two Early Childhood Education Teachers. We have been a licensed center in Fort Dodge since 1971. The center collaborates with the United Way, the Department of Human Services, Promise Jobs, Webster County Public Health and the Child and Adult Care Food Program in order to provide high quality childcare at an affordable rate to families in our community. As a United Way Agency, we are the only daycare provider in Fort Dodge to offer a sliding fee scale to those families who qualify by income, but not for state funding. Our facility is unique to all others, by helping the families financially that need it most, while providing top-quality care.

Community Early Childhood Center is proud to be rated on the Iowa Quality Ratings System. This is a voluntary childcare rating system in the state of Iowa. We are proud to say that we are a 4 Star Center and have maintained that rating since 2009. Currently, we are the highest rated childcare center in our area. By participating voluntarily in the QRS, we want to show parents and the community, that we are committed to providing quality childcare and always working towards improving that quality.

**II. INTRODUCTION:**

**Mission, Philosophy, Goals and General Operations**

1. **Mission**

The mission of Community Early Childhood Center is to provide a warm, nurturing, safe, and loving environment where self- concepts are enhanced, independence is encouraged, and individualities are respected.

1. **Philosophy**

Community Early Childhood Center believes that children are our most valuable resource. We have the opportunity to influence who they will be someday. We can give them a safe, secure, positive learning environment where caregivers offer opportunities through their daily play and interactions to develop the emotional, physical, social, and cognitive needs of each individual child.

Community Early Childhood Center staff work to provide a nurturing, supportive, and enriching atmosphere to promote an eagerness to learn and create positive social interactions. Teachers will create “Learning Centers” in the classroom, which will provide the materials, equipment, and environment needed to offer a variety of experiences for learning. These centers are created in each classroom and are the basis for these opportunities. The “Learning Centers” we offer are Art, Dramatic Play, Table Toys, Blocks, Floor Toys, Science/Discovery, Messy Play, Sand, Water and Library. We feel that each one of these “Learning Centers” creates a new experience to learn from and develop as they interact and play. Children are encouraged to explore all centers. Their exploration of the environment is usually self-initiated. Children can learn several different skills in each center because of the variety of materials. Creativity is enhanced by the open-endedness of the learning materials and child/teacher interaction.

Teachers also serve as examples to the children, since children learn as much by observing others as they do by direct instruction. As the children play, the teachers will interact and play with the children. They will be modeling appropriate behavior, interacting appropriately with others, and asking open ended questions to the children to spark interest and intrigue. The children in our care are playing, learning, and socializing throughout the day and they are having fun doing it. Our experiences show us that learning is what children do, not something that is done to them.

1. **Goals**

The goals established by the center are:

* To provide a safe, consistent, positive learning environment where developmentally appropriate activities encourage exploration and “hands on” learning experiences for the children.
* To maintain an environment where parents feel comfortable leaving their child in the care of teachers who are devoted to making their child’s first experiences away from home positive ones.
* To enhance the sense of dignity, self-worth, confidence and self-esteem within the child and the family.
* To teach children the difference between right and wrong while developing their own self-discipline.
* To encourage more parent-child interaction, interest, and participation in their learning process.
* To provide consistent high-quality care by continuously evaluating center operations.
* To provide a unique service by helping families financially, that need it most, while providing top-quality care.
* To be a community leader and advocate for the children that we care for every day.

1. **General Operations**

Community Early Childhood Center strives to provide services for young children from the ages of six weeks through 12 years of age. We are currently licensed to care for 151 children. The center will provide a safe, secure, and stimulating childcare environment within a developmentally appropriate program. All the developmental areas of early childhood will be incorporated into lesson plans with a literacy-based curriculum and learning centers. These developmental areas will include social/emotional, cognitive, language, and physical development opportunities.

1. **Security Access**

In order to offer a safe and secure environment, the center has a security system in place. Each parent will choose two four-digit codes to enter into the computer to sign their child in or out and to open the security door. Parents are to enter and exit the building through the main entrance as they will also be required to sign their child both in and out each day on the clipboard near the computer also. If someone else is going to pick up the child, they must contact us in advance or make sure that they have included this person’s name on the emergency numbers or pick-up list we have on file for the family. No child will be permitted to leave with an adult, whom is not their parent (or guardian) or on the child’s pick-up list, without prior permission and identification.

Children may not be dropped off or picked up outside of the entrance or hallway. All children must be walked into their classroom. Parents are asked to acknowledge their child’s teacher, so they can greet the parent and child on arrival, and make sure that the same is done as they pick up their child at the end of the day. ***FYI: For health and safety reasons, all parents are required to make sure to help their child wash their hands in the classroom on arrival.*** Also, teachers who are sitting at the table with children eating are NOT allowed to get up from the table (this is a Food Program regulation for the safety of the children). Please be aware that the teachers want to help with arrivals and departures but may not be able to get up from their seat if the children are eating.

1. **Staff**

Community Early Childhood Center recognizes its employees as the center’s most valuable component. The CECC personnel policies reflect the respect felt for staff as professionals and provide a basis for understanding and meeting the needs of both the center and the families. For this reason, we are committed to providing a working environment that exemplifies cooperation and support.

Our teachers exceed the requirements set by the Department of Human Services for qualification and annual training. All Staff are required to obtain certification in CPR and First Aid, CECC Orientation Training, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training, Universal Precautions, DHS Essentials and Food Program training, in addition to 10 hours child related training, and attendance at 12 monthly staff meetings/trainings. To show their dedication to the enhancing of positive behaviors exhibited in the classroom, several of the teachers have participated in a Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) Training and / or the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), Infant and Toddler Environmental Ratings Scale (ITERS) or the School-Age Childhood Environmental Ratings Scale (SACERS). These are the same trainings that the Fort Dodge School District and other area schools have adapted to help with the behaviors of children, offer a higher quality of care or enhance the centers learning environment.

Each staff member and volunteer in the building must have a required criminal record check and child abuse registry check. Staff members must also be fingerprinted and submitted to the fbi. CECC only accepts teachers with a commitment to parents and children. In order to optimize a child’s growth and development, we hire teachers who are interested in providing quality care and stimulating environments.

1. **Board of Directors**

Community Early Childhood Center is a nonprofit childcare center licensed by the Department of Human Services. The daily operation and management of the center is the responsibility of the Directors, while overall direction is the responsibility of the CECC Board of Directors. Board Meetings are scheduled the 3rd Tuesday night of every month at 6pm. If you are interested in attending a meeting, please contact the office.

Parents of children enrolled at the center and members of our community are encouraged to serve on the Board of Directors and/or Committees. If you or someone you know would be interested in information or an application to join our Board of Directors, please stop in the office today. We are always in need of more people willing to share their strengths or just opinions.

**III. ENROLLMENT & PROCEDURES**

1. **Child’s Enrollment and Waiting List**

Children between the age of 6 weeks and 12 years of age may be enrolled for full-time or part-time with a 4 – 1/2 day minimum. Enrollment is on a first come, first serve basis. Applications for enrollment are accepted without regard to race, religion, sex, or national origin. Community Early Childhood Center accepts children with disabilities and special needs and will make “reasonable accommodations” based on the recommendations of the child’s health care provider and in consultation with the child’s parents.

Parents must read the CECC Parent Handbook to understand the centers policies and procedures, and complete and sign all necessary forms (see below). The registration fee of $25- and first-week’s tuition is due on or before the child’s first day, to guarantee the spot. Also, if you are interested in going over the Parent Handbook in more detail with one of the Directors, we have a New Parent Orientation available for all families. We will schedule an orientation meeting for parents in September, January and June. If you are a new parent to Community Early Childhood Center, and would like to come to one of these meetings, you are welcome to sign-up in the office at any time. If you are starting CECC at another time throughout the year, and want to schedule a New Parent Orientation meeting sooner than these dates, please speak with a Director to set one up. (see New Parent Orientation below)

For any family needing childcare in which we are unable to accommodate, they may be put on our CECC waiting list. As childcare spots for the needed age group becomes available, we will contact those families on the list to see if they still have a need for childcare. If we are unable to contact the family or the numbers are disconnected, they will be taken off the list and we will move on to the next family. If we can set up a future start date, the family will need to pay the first week’s tuition and the $25 enrollment fee and a non-refundable guarantee that they will start their child or children on this date.

As parents call for infant spots, it may be hard for us to determine birthdates and/or needed start dates. For this reason, we will put these families on the waiting list and determine when we can guarantee a spot. Once we can do this, the family will pay their enrollment fee and their first week as a non-refundable guarantee to start on an approximate or estimated date.

1. **Required Forms for Child Care**

All required forms listed below are in the enrollment packet given to families upon accepting a childcare spot. Families will need to complete these forms and turn them into the office before their first day:

1. **Enrollment Forms**

These forms ask for information about the family like addresses, phone numbers, places of employment, emergency numbers, and pick-up authorizations. We are also required to have doctor and dental information, along with authorizations for travel, medical treatment, media consent and for application of sunscreen, bug spray, or basic first aid ointments. These MUST be filled out entirely.

1. **Emergency Contacts and Authorized Pick-up**

Parents are required to list *at least two people*, other than themselves, who the center will call if we are unable to contact the parent for any reason. The center will also check these names and numbers if someone arrives to pick up a child that we have not met before. We will ID the person and compare to the names that are listed as authorized pick-up. If the person is not listed on the form and we have not heard from the parent about this person, we will not let the child leave. Staff are required to contact and speak with the parent for their permission. If there is a custody issue, we MUST have a copy of a court order on file outlining the custody arrangement. If a copy is not on file, we must allow both parents the right to pick up their child.

1. **Travel, Activities, Medical and Media Consent**

The travel and activity authorization are a blanket permission form for the staff at CECC to take the children for a walk outside the center. This will also be permission for us to transport children in our center vehicles to be taken to school or on planned field trips for those over the age of three. Parents will be informed by calendars or letters sent home, along with signs posted outside of the child’s room, for any planned field trips. If at any time a parent does not want their child to attend an outing, they should contact their child’s teacher and the office.

1. **Medical and Dental Information**

The Department of Human Services and Public Health require the center to have both medical and dental information on file for any child enrolled. It is important to include their phone numbers and addresses. If the child has not seen a dentist yet, the parent is required to fill one in that they plan to visit in the future. In case of a medical or dental emergency your child will be taken to Unity Point Trinity Regional Hospital. Exception: If you have listed a specific dentist or hospital in your child’s forms, they will always be tried first.

1. **Tuition Agreement**

In the packet that parents receive for enrollment, a contract is included. This contract is a Tuition Agreement between the parent and Community Early Childhood Center. This contract is for paying and State paid families. State paid families are contracted for payment if for some reason the State does not pay. The parent signs the agreement after entering their weekly tuition amount. By signing this, the parent agrees to pay this amount on a weekly basis prior to the child’s week and they understand the consequences, if this is not done so in advance.

1. **Intake Form**

This form goes into a separate file than your enrollment forms. We do this for a few reasons.

1. This enables us to have quick emergency access to all family’s phone numbers and emails to text, call or send messages in the event this is necessary.
2. We are working on setting up a communication option between the center and the parents through either texting or emailing important messages, pictures, videos, upcoming events, reminders, etc.
3. To make parents aware of our Facebook page and let us know if they are uncomfortable with their child’s picture being on our page. We use our Facebook page as a way to update parents on upcoming events and details, and share pictures or videos of the children, so they can see and share in the fun and learning that is going on here at the center every day.
4. This form also offers easy access to important information as to if a family has a No Contact Order in place, if their child have any allergies or intolerances and if the family has any cultural/religious preferences that we need to be aware of.
5. **Physical or Health Statement and Immunization Records**

Prior to enrollment, every child must receive a physical examination. Our physical form must be completed, prior to enrollment, by the child’s physician and returned to the center. The center is required to get an updated yearly physical for every child enrolled. The center director will inform families if they are past due. If this occurs, it is the parents’ responsibility to let the office know the date they have scheduled.

School Age children need an initial physical form to be on file and then a Health Statement filled out by their parent or guardian every year from then on.

The Department of Public Health and Human Services require that every child receives immunizations in order to attend daycare. Therefore, it is extremely important that every child’s immunization records be kept up to date. It is the parent’s responsibility to bring the Center a copy of their child’s immunization records for their files and update them as immunizations occur throughout the year. The center director will inform families if they are past due. If immunizations are not to be administered because of a medical condition, a statement from the child’s health care provider documenting the reason why the child is exempt from the immunization requirement shall be on file. If immunizations are not given because of parents’ religious beliefs, a notarized waiver signed by the parent shall be on file. Children who have not received their age-appropriate immunizations prior to enrollment and do not have documented religious or medical exemptions from routine childhood immunizations MUST show evidence of a scheduled appointment for immunizations to be enrolled in childcare.

1. **Child and Adult Care Food Program Forms**

Community Early Childhood Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The goals and purpose of the Food Program is to promote good nutrition, introduce different types of foods, and help teach good eating habits. We have many specific guidelines to follow to be a part of this program. Every family must have a food program application form and CACFP enrollment form on file at the center. These forms will need to be updated yearly (Sept-Oct.). **If a family does NOT qualify for free or reduced meals according to the guidelines, they still need the forms on file.** We are reimbursed in some way for every child enrolled.

1. **Infant Forms** (if applicable)

Upon enrollment parents with infants will receive specific forms including a “Welcome Little One” form on which the parent will fill out the basic daily care information needed for the staff to care for the child. The other infant form is the “Infant Meal Pattern Requirements”. This describes how much formula, cereal, fruit, vegetables, etc. each child is required to be offered for us to claim it for CACFP reimbursement.

1. **Parent Handbook**

All families enrolling their children in the center are given a Parent Handbook to make themselves aware of the Community Early Childhood Center’s policies. The Parent Handbooks are available at any time in the office if a parent would like to review any information. The directors are available at any time if you have questions. Also, parents may attend a Parent Orientation Meeting if they wish to hear an overview of the Community Early Childhood Parent Handbook. Speak to a Director if you wish to do so.

**Tuition Rates and Required Fees**

Caring for children is a tremendous and challenging responsibility. This business is a service offering quality childcare. Tuition not only pays our staff to plan and implement this quality program, but also is used to purchase food, equipment, toys, books, art supplies, necessary improvements to the building, professional training and materials for staff, insurance and much more. With this in consideration the following policies regarding rates, methods of payment, contracted hours, and vacation are necessary. ***Also, a two-week written notice is required (or/and payment thereof) before leaving the center.***

1. **CHILD CARE RATES**

**Classification**  **Daily Rate 4 Day Rate 5 Day Rate**

**6 weeks to 36 months:**

Full Day (5-10 hrs.) $36 $144 $180

Half Day (5 hrs. or less) $31 $124 $155

2nd Child (under 3 yrs.) $32 $128 $160

**Over 36 months of age:**

Full Day $33 $132 $165

Half Day $29 $116 $145

**2nd Child:**

Full Day $26 $104 $130

Half Day $23 $92 $115

**More than 2 children**

Full Day $24 $96 $120

Half Day $22 $88 $110

**Children Transported to Four Yr. Old Preschool** $130

2nd Preschooler $125

**School Age: K- 12 yrs. (Above RATES apply to SchAge kids during the summer months)**

School Age ***with*** transportation to school $120

2nd SchAger ***with*** transportation to school $115

School Age with no transportation: $20 before OR after school $24 for both

(4 day minimum does apply here $80)

\* Early out and late start days are included in these rates.

\* An additional amount to total $33/day for any full days your child attends daycare.

* **An infant and a non-infant combination will be billed at the infant rate plus the 2nd child rate.**
* **A late charge of $2.00 every full minute after 6:00 p.m. per child will be charged.**
* **There is a 4-day minimum charge for all children enrolled. These can be full (over 5 hrs.) or half days (less than 5 hrs.).**  Exception: School age children and Preschool children have a flat rate during the school year if we are transporting them.
* **Reduced Rates are available based upon income guidelines. (see CECC Sliding Fee Scale)**
* **If a family decides to re-enroll at the center within the year, they will be charged a discounted re-enrollment fee of $10.**
* **You will need to verify with the Director if your child can attend on a non-scheduled day.**
* **If a child’s hours change on a daily basis (they are coming in late, they are sick for the day, not coming in on a scheduled day, etc.) the parent MUST call the office by 9am in the morning to let the office know these changes.**

1. **Vacation Days**

Vacation days are allowed for all full time/5 day per week families. Full time (5 days/wk.) families are allowed 10 vacation days each calendar year, beginning January 1st and ending December 31st, for which the family will not be charged. Vacation days are prorated for a family’s first year depending on their start date. If they wish to use one of their allotted vacation days, they will need to fill out a vacation day form and turn it into the office. Parents will be charged at the regular rate for days of absence in excess of the allowed vacation.

1. **Holidays**

In the event that the center is closed in observance of a holiday, and a child is contracted to be in attendance on that day, the parent will be billed for this. For example: If Christmas falls on a Thursday and the child would usually attend day care on Thursday, the parent will be billed for the day regardless if it is a holiday or not. These holidays will be as follows:

*- New Years Day - Memorial Day*

*- Labor Day - Fourth of July*

*- Christmas Day - Thanksgiving Day*

If a holiday occurs on a Saturday, the center will be closed on Friday to observe the holiday. If the holiday occurs on a Sunday, the center will then be closed on Monday to observe the holiday. The Director will post notices as reminders if the center will be closing for any of these holidays. Sign-up sheets will be posted for certain days throughout the year in which the number of children signed up will determine whether the center will remain open. The day after Thanksgiving or Christmas Eve are usually the only days that this will occur.

If the center decides to close on a certain day (such as the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, a day for staff training, necessary cleaning and maintenance, etc.), other than the 6 holidays listed previously, families will *not* be charged.

1. **Tuition Agreements**

All families are required to have an agreement on file. This contract will specify the days, approximate hours of attendance, and the amount of their weekly tuition payment. Parents will be billed according to what they have contracted for. If at any time during the year their tuition amount needs to change because of a change in their child’s schedule (ex. School-age in summer, when child turn 3 yrs. old, etc.), it is the parents’ responsibility to fill out a new Tuition Agreement and turn it into the office.

DHS and Promise Job families must also fill out a Tuition Agreement and Tuition Express Auto payment

form. This is to ensure that if for any reason their childcare assistance has been cancelled or the parent

has not turned in the needed paperwork for renewal in time, the parent is responsible for the childcare

tuition payment or the child will be disenrolled immediately.

1. **Payments**

**Payments for childcare are DUE IN FULL the Friday before the week care occurs.** Payments may be made by cash, credit or debit cards, or paid online. WE DO NOT ACCEPT CHECKS. If you are paying by cash, please stop in the office and get a receipt. All families will provide the center with an account to be used for tuition withdrawal. If payment is not made in full by 8:00 AM Monday, this account you have on file will be used and your current balance will be deducted. (See Tuition Express Auto-payment Form) Any parent wishing to pay online can go to “myprocare.com” to make a payment. You will sign up there with the email you gave the center on your enrollment forms. Credit and Debit cards may be used at the check-in computer to make a POS payment.

1. **Late Payment**

If payment for childcare tuition balance is not paid in full by Monday morning at 8am CECC will charge the account on file through Tuition Express to pay the account balance. If the funds are not available in this account, a $20 fee will be charged through Tuition Express. If this payment is not taken care of immediately, the child or children will lose their childcare spot.

1. **Late Pick-up Fee**

We ask that parents’ make every effort to pick up their child before the center closes. Staff have families and responsibilities after the center closing time. A fee of $2 per minute per child will be charged to any parent who does not pick up their child by the center’s closing time at 6 pm. If a child is left at the center after closing, the supervising staff will take the following measures:

1. Try to contact the parent by phone
2. Try to contact the emergency numbers
3. If unsuccessful, the supervisor will have to contact the appropriate community authorities.
4. **Families Receiving Financial Assistance**
5. **CECC Sliding Fee Scale**

Community Early Childhood Center offers a sliding fee scale to families who qualify. When the necessary Food Program Application is filled out, we will check the income level to see if the family is eligible for the discounted childcare rate. Families may qualify for a 10% or 15% reduction on their child’s weekly tuition.

1. **Department of Human Services and Promise Jobs Families**

It is our policy at Community Early Childhood Center to allow families to attend the center that use the Department of Human Services or Promise Jobs. They must understand the following guidelines:

1. The children must attend the center a minimum of 4 days per week. We are only allowed to charge the state for the times the children are here, so we cannot afford to keep a spot open to a child that is only here one or two days each week.
2. All DHS and Promise Job families are required to review and sign attendance forms that you will find in your parent pocket monthly. Turn these into the CECC office (there is a basket located near the security door), so we can save on file for our records.
3. The child’s teacher MUST have a copy of the child’s weekly schedule. Parents’ are to inform us if their child will be absent on a given day or if other schedule changes arise.
4. If a family should decide to leave us, we require a written two-week notice. If they fail to do this, the parent (NOT DHS) “personally” will be charged for two weeks.
5. Parents MUST clock their child in and out on the computer daily. This is how we report to the state which days and times the children are at Community Early Childhood Center.
6. If the parent is required by the state to make a co-payment, it must be paid weekly.
7. All families must provide “back up” account information for the center to use if a balance is showing by 8:00 AM Monday. All parents need to fill out the Tuition Express Auto-Pay Form in which you provide your account information. This account will be charged accordingly, if DHS/Promise Jobs does not.
8. All other CECC policies apply to these families.

Those families participating in any financial assistance program with CECC will be responsible for any charges or tuition that is not covered by their assistance program for any reason.

1. **Withdrawal Notice**

To withdraw a child from enrollment at the center, we require a two-week notice. A written notice must be turned into the office which states the intent to withdraw from the center and the final date of attendance. Failure to provide written notice before withdrawal will result in parents being held responsible for two weeks tuition costs beyond the date of withdrawal (or when the office is informed of the withdrawal).

1. **New Parent Orientation**

The center offers a Parent Orientation Meeting for all new families in Sept, January and June or upon request. If for any reason a parent is unable to attend a scheduled orientation meeting or it is months away from the date they started, they can always stop in the office and set up an individual meeting with the Director. Some of the topics that will be discussed at the meeting are:

* Expectations of the teachers, parents and children.
* Communications (daily reports, accident reports, etc.)
* Schedules / Agreement / tuition / vacation days
* Forms (updating)
* Illnesses / Medications
* Conferences and Assessments
* Also, some policies and important information that will help you get through the year.

1. **Disenrollment Policy**

Please be aware that should one of the following situations arise, Community Early Childhood Center may ask a parent to dis-enroll their child:

1. Failure to pay tuition in full or on time. Fees for care are due no later than the Monday morning at 8am the week of care. Services will be discontinued if the account is not paid in full.
2. Verbal or physical abuse by a child to other children or to staff. Our goal is to provide a safe, loving environment for every child and every staff member at all times. A child’s language or behavior that is hurtful to other children or staff such as profanity, using sexual language, humiliating, attacking or injuring others, throwing rocks, furniture, toys, etc. is inappropriate and unacceptable. If a child should display such behavior, an Incident Report will be written, and the Director will review it with the parent to identify a possible solution. If the behavior continues, the child will be disenrolled.
3. If a child bites another child. If a child bites, we will develop a plan with the parent to try and correct the behavior. Community Early Childhood Center may ask a parent to temporarily dis-enroll their child if the biting is aggressive i.e. breaks the skin, or the biting does not lessen within a reasonable amount of time (maximum of 10 bites in 3 weeks).
4. Non-compliance with policies set forth in this Parent Handbook. It is the responsibility of the parent to comply with and respect the policies set forth in this Parent Handbook. If there is a policy that a parent has questions or concerns about, please contact the Directors to discuss it. Policies are designed and implemented in order to offer high quality care for the child and some are not negotiable.
5. CECC reserves the right to refuse enrollment of any child or to ask parents to make alternative childcare arrangements of any child enrolled at the center.

**IV. PROGRAMS**

1. **Staff/Child Ratios**

Community Early Childhood Center is required to have a certain number of teachers per room depending on the number of children in attendance. We determine the teacher: child ratio by the youngest child in the room. This ratio is set by The Department of Human Services as follows:

**Infants & Toddlers: (6 weeks – 23 months) 1 teacher : 4 children**

**Two Year Old’s: 1 teacher: 6 children**

**Three Year Old’s: 1 teacher: 8 children**

**Four Year Old’s: 1 teacher: 12 children**

**School-Age Children: 1 teacher: 15 children**

1. **Curriculum / General Program Information**

Lesson Plans are prepared on a weekly basis by the Lead Teacher in every classroom. We offer a Literacy-based Curriculum for all the children in our care. Each classroom has a designated age-appropriate book scheduled for every week of the year. This book is the basis for the activities and the learning environment that the teacher will create for the week. We also implement Learning Centers (or interest areas) which offer the children a variety of new educational and social opportunities in Dramatic Play, Art, Blocks, Toys and Games, Library, Science/Discovery, Sand and Water, Music and Movement, Tablets, and Outdoors. As the children play and socialize, they are encouraged to explore their world while learning several different skills. The teachers will interact with the children to encourage learning, by asking questions and sparking the child’s interests. Each classroom has different goals and opportunities for the age group they care for. Below we have described briefly some more specifics of each of those classrooms.

1. ***Infant Program: Barnyard & Aquarium***

We have two Infant Rooms (6wks - 12 months & 12 months - 18 months) in our center. Each class can have up to 16 infants enrolled. Parents will find experienced, nurturing caregivers who want nothing more than to make them and their baby’s daycare experience, a comfortable one. Throughout the day the caregivers will keep a daily sheet for the parent to take home at the end of the day. This will keep good communication between the parent, the caregiver, and the child. We are dedicated to creating a flexible schedule for all babies, which caters to their individual needs. Our activities focus on creating relationships with other children and caregivers as they have their first experiences away from home.

When an infant starts at the center, the parent needs to fill out a “Welcome Little One” form. On this form the parent will fill out the necessary information to introduce their baby to their new caregivers. They will let them know everything from brand of formula or breastfeeding to usual sleeping patterns and comfort items.

CECC follows “best practices” in the decisions that we make on setting policies. The Department of Human Services, The Department of Public Health, and The Child and Adult Care Food Program set regulations and recommendations for us to follow in order to offer the high-quality childcare that we do.

Community Early Childhood Center offers Enfamil formula to any families who want to use it. Parents will need to let the caregivers know if they will be bringing in breast milk (nursing), using the center’s formula or bringing their own. Four bottles should be brought and left at the center, so that the staff can sterilize them nightly. The teachers take apart the bottles, rinse them and place them in each child’s mesh bag as they are used throughout the day. At the end of the day the mesh bags are washed and sanitized in our commercial dishwasher. We provide “Nursery water” (bottled water) for making the daily bottles. This water can be used by adding powdered formula to a bottle of water just before feeding. These bottles do not require warming and are promptly ready for feeding. Bottles can be used up to an hour after they have been prepared but must be dumped if not finished within that hour. CECC can start supplying and offering baby food or table food at the age of 6 months. If you wish to start earlier than 6 months you are more than welcome to do so, but you will need to bring in your own food from home. We ask parents to speak with the Infant Room teacher about their wishes. If bottles or infant foods need to be warmed, it will be done under running warm tap water or by placing them in a container of water that is no warmer than 120 degrees. Bottles and infant foods will not be warmed in a microwave. After warming the bottles, they are mixed, gently, and the temperature of the milk is tested before feeding. Infant food shall be stirred carefully to distribute the heat evenly. Children are not to be held while a staff is preparing or warming a bottle or infant food. If a container of water is used in the process of warming the bottle, the container (cup) must be sanitized and left to air dry before another use.

Breast fed babies are welcomed and encouraged at the center. Breastfeeding moms are welcome to come to the center and feed their babies or bring in the breast milk daily. All breast milk must be labeled with first and last name of the child and the date the milk was expressed. Unused expressed breast milk will be discarded after 48 hours in the refrigerator or after 3 months when frozen. Frozen breast milk will be thawed under running water or in the refrigerator. Once frozen breast milk is thawed, it must be discarded after 24 hours.

Infants must be held when they are fed and should never be left with a propped-up bottle. Juice should not be offered to infants until they are ready to drink from a cup. Bottle feeding of juice or bedtime bottles may cause baby bottle tooth decay.

In each Infant Room there is an “Information Board” listing each child and some basic information for them. It will include; formula brand or breast milk, usual number of ounces per bottle, time between bottles, what (if any) foods they are eating. Usually babies should be fed every 2-4 hours when hungry or “on demand”. Once a child turns one year of age, the child will be taken off formula and will be given whole milk (unless otherwise approved by a doctor).

When children are ready to start cereal, fruits, vegetables, and other foods, we ask that the parent inform the caregiver. At this time, a sheet will be added to child’s clipboard for the parents, along with the teacher, to keep track of the foods the child has tried. Solid foods are optional for infants 4-7 months of age and should be introduced only if the infant is developmentally ready.

CECC provides baby food for the infants. Once the child is ready for baby food, parents are to inform the caregiver. We offer each food for 3 days in a row to watch for any allergies or reactions. Once the child is ready to eat table food, menus are available in advance for parents to look over and determine what their child can try.

Infants 6 wks. to 18 months are placed on their backs to sleep. Children are never to be propped up in their crib, unless we have a written doctor’s authorization. Blankets are not allowed to be placed in cribs of children under the age of one year. Infants are not to be left sleeping in car seats, swings, bouncy seats, etc. for more than 10 minutes. Children must be moved from activity to activity throughout the day, including tummy time. They should not be in the same infant “equipment” for more than 30 minutes at a time.

Caregivers are required to wash their hands multiple times throughout the day. Infants’ hands are to be washed as they arrive at the center by the parent and after every diaper change by the caregiver. Children’s hands must be washed with soap and water. Teachers and children must lather with soap for 20 seconds before rinsing off with water, and then water must be turned off with the paper towel. If there is only one sink available in a classroom, for food preparation and diapering, the sink must be washed and disinfected after every diaper changing use. If there are two sinks available in the room, one will be delegated for diaper changing and the other for food prep. When staff are changing diapers, they are encouraged to wear gloves, and still required to wash their hands. If the teachers are changing a child’s diaper on a mat placed on the counter, they are required to wash the mat and the countertop also. The use of baby powder is not recommended, because reports indicate that talc and corn starch in baby powder can injure a baby’s lungs. If a parent chooses to have baby powder applied to their child, then a caregiver needs to apply it very sensitively, pour out carefully and keep away from baby’s face. Also, no aerosol sprays (air fresheners) are to be used in the classrooms when children are present.

Cleaning in the Infant rooms is done in the morning before arrival, throughout the day, and at night before closing the center. In the morning all highchairs, bouncy seats, exersaucers, swings, etc. are sprayed with bleach water spray and allowed to air dry. This is also done at night before closing. Highchairs are always washed and sanitized in between uses also. All infant toys are rotated and washed daily. After a child puts a toy in their mouth the toy is put into a bucket of bleach water and then allowed to air dry. Any cloth seating that can be removed is taken out and laundered weekly, as are all infant sheets. This is done more often if an illness is going around or if a child dirties it specifically.

As you can tell there are many specific regulations and guidelines that we are expected to follow, in the infant rooms especially. CECC wants to make sure that the parents are comfortable with the policies we must follow when caring for their children. Some of these policies may be altered because of doctor’s medical opinion or parent opinion, but some of them may not. Parents need to feel free to come discuss any of them with the Director.

1. ***Toddler Program: The Ocean***

Our Toddler room is for children approximately 18 months to 2 years old. This classroom can have up to 8 kids. The toddler experience provides these children with the opportunity to discover their world while building their cognitive, language, motor, and social skills through daily play and interactions with caregivers. CECC has a large, age appropriate outdoor playground area to encourage the development of large motor skills and to help release some of that toddler sized energy!

1. ***Early Two’s and Two-Year Old’s: Jungle & Arctic***

Our Two-Year-Old program (as in all of the classrooms) starts with a book to base the daily activities. Our lead teacher prepares a lesson plan to include fun, learning experiences and exploration for the children. Our learning centers include Art, Discovery, Dramatic Play, Table Toys, Floor Toys, Library, Sand and Water and Housekeeping areas for the children. As the children learn their ABC’s and 123’s, we recognize the importance of developing their social skills, and we can’t forget the potty training! The Jungle can have up to 10 children and the Arctic can have up to 16.

1. ***Three Year Old’s: Safari***

As the 3 Year Old’s grow and learn they are developing a sense of who they are and we offer an environment encouraging positive self-esteem, opportunity for independent play and social interaction. Our structured daily routine still allows the child choices throughout the day to help in developing that sense of self but teaches them the discipline of a preschool learning environment. Exciting literacy-based activities are shared with the children to make their experiences with learning fun, leaving them wanting more, and looking forward to what they get to learn about next! This classroom is licensed for 16 children.

1. ***Four Year Old’s: Outerspace***

Singing, dancing, laughing, playing, learning and exploring - this is what you will find in our 4-year-old classroom! Our experienced teachers provide stimulating activities, positive experiences with books, and learning centers incorporated into a daily lesson plan. Tablets in the classroom offer a jumpstart in learning for these kindergarteners to be! We feel that it is our job to help prepare your child as much as we can before they begin their journey into Kindergarten. There can never be too much fun on the way! We can have up to 24 children in the Outerspace room.

1. ***School-Age Programs: Dugout / Stadium***
2. After a full day of school, we want to offer the kids an enjoyable time with their friends. The school-age children love the hands-on activities and experiences we offer. The large outdoor playground area offering opportunities to play ball, games, dance, climb, ride bikes, etc. are always a hit! As we encourage the development of new friendships, we pride ourselves on the positive staff interactions and fun activities we plan for the children daily. This leaves the children wanting to come back the next day. We have 15 children in the Dugout and 30 in the Stadium.
3. Our Summer School-Age Program is undeniably the best place to be for the summer while mom\dad are at work. We offer a safe, healthy, active, and FUN environment with daily activities and field trips for the children. These trips include picnics & cookouts at area parks, swimming lessons, aquatic center, movies, roller skating, bowling, etc. The daily planned activities are prepared with the idea of promoting the child’s creativity and experiences with as much child-directed planning as possible. The school-age summer program does have an additional cost to cover the field trips your child goes on (up to $30 per month) and a summer enrollment fee for all children to cover for gas and any additional summer activity fees ($25 one-time fee per child). The children are offered small group choices, a sense of belonging, and planning opportunities to reach their own interests. The teachers coordinate to support the child’s ideas for fun. Now the kids can have a real summer vacation.
4. **Children Moving Classrooms**

It is our expectation that parents, and the Center’s staff will work together when a child needs to move from one age group to the next. Community Early Childhood Center does an annual class move at the end of the summer session for those children who are age-appropriate and developmentally ready. Throughout the year as children grow there will be other opportunities to move to the next classroom. Your child will be assessed to determine his/her readiness to move from one group to another. Moves are based on the needs of the child, developmental criteria (ex. mobility or potty training), and the occupancy of the classrooms.

Parents will receive a written notification of a pending move. If parents have any questions or concerns, they should discuss them with their child’s teacher and/or one of the Directors. We want this transition to be as comfortable and stress free as possible for everyone. Parents are encouraged to interact with the new teachers to learn more about the new classroom. We try to give the children a transitional period, spending time in the new room and with the new teachers before their official move.

1. **Special Care Children**

If a child requires special care of some sort, we will schedule a meeting to discuss whether the facilities and staff at CECC can provide the necessary care for the child. We do want to ensure quality care to every child in our program and make any reasonable accommodations, based on the special needs of the child. We ask that the parent provide any information up front if it will help us in dealing with a special needs child. It may be necessary to consult with a professional or qualified specialist in some cases.

 

**V. CENTER PRACTICES & POLICIES**

**A. Times of Operation**

Community Early Childhood Center is open Monday thru Friday from 5:30 am – 6 pm. Center

staff will arrive at the center earlier in order to prepare for the arrival of the children. They are

not to open the doors until 5:30 am. Please do not ask them to do so, it is for the safety of the

children to have proper supervision. Parents are to pick up their children in time to exit the

building by 6 pm. Our staff need to take care of closing duties and sign out to get home to their own

families. A substantial fee will be charged to those who do not pick up their child by 6 pm. (See

the Late Pick Up Policy)

**B. Attendance**

According to your tuition agreement you have contracted for a certain number of days per week.

It is the responsibility of the parent to provide a schedule to their child’s teacher. It is important

that parents call the center by 9 am if they will not be bringing their child or if there is a time

change that day. In order to maintain staff/child ratios, figure snack and lunch counts, etc. it is

important for the parent to let us know. If the child is not at the center at their regular time and

we have not heard from the parent; we will assume they will not be attending and not count them

in ratio for the day. We greatly appreciate the parent informing us ahead of time.

**C. Arrival and Departure**

All children are to be accompanied by parent or guardian to his/her classroom. The first thing

anyone does when they walk into the classroom is wash their hands. This is a required policy for

infants through school age for health and safety purposes. Parents need to ensure that the teacher

in the room is aware of the child as they arrive. Children should never be left unaccompanied in

the parking lot, dropped off at the front entrance or let go in the hallway. All children need to be

signed in by the parent, walked into their classroom and greeted by the teacher before the parent

leaves the center. Once a parent enters a room to pick up their child, the child must stay with that

parent. Children are not allowed to wander around the center alone, go into the staff room, kitchen

or offices, other classrooms, run ahead of the parent or walk out the front door of the center without

an adult.

Arrivals and departures are transitional times for children and need to be handled with care.

Children may cling to parents in the morning or cry when it is time for him/her to leave in the

afternoon. Do not take tears as a personal rejection or the clinging as a sign of dislike for the

center. This reaction is normal for a young child. Parents and teachers will work together to make

these difficult times a little easier for both parent and child.

As they enter the room, parents should inform staff of any special instructions or information for

the day that might be needed (change in pick-up time or person, medication, etc.). The teacher

will welcome the child into the classroom and make a “healthy child” check. This is to make sure

the child is in good health to be at the center for the day. Remember that the teachers are

required to stay sitting at the tables if the children are eating. Children should be brought over to

the teacher, after hand washing, if the teacher’s help is needed with the morning transition.

When children are being picked up, we ask that parents come into the center through the front

door. All children should be signed in and out on the computer for access into the building. Parents

should always acknowledge to the teacher that they are there to pick up the child. There may be some

information that the teacher needs to share with the parent. If a staff does not know the person there to

pick up a child, they will need to ID the person, and check the child’s emergency contacts and pick up list

to make sure that it is okay. If they are not on the list, the parent will be contacted immediately for

clarification.

All transportation vehicles provided by parents, guardians, or others designated by the parent are

required to use age and size appropriate seat restraints that are not outdated. Please let the office

know if this is a problem for any of the families.

**D. Parking**

As you arrive to Community Early Childhood Center you can park in the driveway or in the parking lot. When someone enters the driveway, they need to enter from the south end and exit through the north end (the parking lot exit). Also, there is only one lane for parking in the driveway. Do not park in the west lane; this will block other parents as they are trying to leave the center. If you choose to use the parking lot, please make sure not to park in the designated daycare van spots. These spots are marked with signs. Whether or not you park in the drive or the lot, please watch out for other families as they are coming and going. Also, everyone needs to make sure to turn off their vehicle and lock their doors, before entering the building. This is for everyone’s safety.

1. **Meals**

The center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) administered by the United States Department of Education. By participating in this Program, the center receives partial reimbursement for nutritious meals served to the children. The amount of reimbursement the center receives is determined by the information provided by the parent or guardian.

The goals of this program are to provide nutritious and appetizing meals and snacks for children, introduce different types of foods and help teach good eating habits. We will serve whole-grain foods and a variety of fruits and vegetables, encourage children to make healthy choices, and limit overly sweet items.

We serve our meals Family Style, so the children will have lots of opportunities for developing the skills in feeding and serving themselves. Teachers are required to stay seated at the tables with the children modeling appropriate behavior and pleasant conversation. They are not allowed to get up for any reason during meals or snacks, until they acknowledge that the meal is over. Children are required to take “some” of every food we are serving. They are encouraged to try everything, but not forced.

The Barnyard & Aquarium Room teachers are to prepare all the food on the plate, and cut up what needs to be, at the counter. The teacher may put the plates (and sippy cups) on the table as they sit down with the children, but they MUST be sitting once the plates are in front of the children. The teacher helps and encourages the children to use a spoon on their own.

The Ocean Room teachers sit down with the children at each individual table family style, helping the children learn how to scoop and serve themselves appropriately.

The Jungle Room children are learning how to pass the food and eat family style. Before the

meal begins, the teacher may need to go around the table as the children pass the food bowls

serving themselves with the appropriate measuring cup in each bowl. Also, the teacher will help

by pouring the correct amount of milk into the small pitcher, then helping the child pour it into

their cup. The children are not allowed to start eating until after the teacher sits down at the table

and acknowledges the start of the meal.

All the rest of the children on up, will be eating completely family style. They will pass the food

bowls around the table, serving themselves using the measuring spoon/cup in the bowl to

determine the correct portion to be taken. While sitting at the table the teacher will pour the

specific amount of milk needed for each child individually into a smaller pitcher and the children

will pour it into their own glass. As the children get older, they will be able to pour from the large

pitcher.

Our weekly menus are posted on our parent information board by the check in computer for your

convenience. You will also find a copy of the menu on our Facebook Page. Caregivers will not use food

as a reward or punishment.

Children may bring breakfast, lunch and/or snacks from home, as long as they meet the CACFP guidelines. This means that children are not allowed to bring in things such as donuts, chips, candy, fast food, poptarts, etc. Please check with our Kitchen Manager if you feel the need to do so. The center will not be reimbursed by the CACFP if children are not eating the nutritional meals that we provide. All food brought into the center needs a label showing the child’s name, the date, and the type of food. These foods are not to be shared by other children. The center will supplement any food brought from home by a child if it does not meet the nutritional requirements for the child.

Parents need to inform the center of any allergies their child has. There is a spot on the back to the enrollment forms for this information, and they are responsible for filling out an Allergy/Food Exception Statement. It is also a good idea to verbally talk with the classroom teacher, so they understand the details of the allergy. The allergy must be documented by a doctor, posted in the room and kitchen, and a copy will be kept in the child’s file.

1. **Nap Time/Rest Time**

Rest time is scheduled for every classroom with children under the age of 5 years old. The Barnyard classroom offers their sleep times “on demand” throughout the day. The Aquarium – Outerspace classroom schedule a nap, rest or quiet time from 12-2pm. We ask that all children rest on their cots at this time. If your child does not take a nap they will be allowed to get up, for a quiet activity, after the other children have gone to sleep (no longer than an hour). *Children need to bring a blanket for naptime, and it should be taken home weekly to be laundered. Please remember to bring it back on Monday AM.* Infants under the age of 1 year are not allowed to have blankets in their cribs for safety reasons.

For health and safety reasons the children have a crib or cot labeled with their name on it. Children will not be allowed to share or use another child’s crib or cot without proper sanitation. All cots & cribs are to be sprayed weekly with bleach spray and allowed to dry. CECC provides sheets for each crib and cot and washes them weekly. Cribs and cots are all to be 3 feet apart from one another (when a child is sleeping on or in it) unless a barrier is between them. A walkway must always be available through the classroom for safety precautions.

1. **Children’s Personal Belongings**

***Barnyard & Aquarium***

Parents are responsible for providing diapers, wipes, and any needed ointment for changing. It is a good idea to bring an extra outfit or two to keep in the infant’s drawer. We are encouraged to take all of the children outside every day, weather permitting. (This is a more difficult decision to make with the infants, but we love to take the babies for stroller rides and on our Toddler Playground!). Please provide the outdoor clothing necessary for these days.

***Ocean through Stadium (School-age)***

Dress your child in clothing that is washable, comfortable and appropriate for play. When children are hard at work and play, they do get dirty. We view this as a part of healthy growth and development. Some of the most fun and best learning activity materials are sand, water, paint, dirt, playdough, etc. These will be available to your child regularly.

Parents should bring an extra set of clothing to keep in your child’s cubby. If a child is in the process of potty training, several outfits may be necessary. Children will all need to have the appropriate outerwear throughout the year. As we said before, we are required to go outside every day. It is important that the children are dressed for the weather. If for any reason a parent is unable to provide the needed outerwear, they should come to the office so we can help. Appropriate shoes for running, climbing, and playing are needed. Boots and shoes, winter coats and snow pants along with hats and gloves will be needed in the winter months. Make sure that EVERYTHING is labeled!!

Toys belonging to your child may be damaged or misplaced at the center, so we ask that you leave these items at home. We will provide enough toys and materials for all of the children. If a classroom plans a show and tell day, children may bring a special item for “Show and Tell”. However, we encourage items to share that help others discover their world. Guns or weapons of any kind are not appropriate and will not be allowed in the center.

If a child has a special blanket or “comfort” item that he/she likes to use at rest time, please feel free to bring it. (Children under the age of one are not allowed to sleep with blankets for safety reasons). It is very important that all items and clothing brought from home be labeled in permanent ink. The center cannot be responsible for items that are not labeled.

1. **Toilet Training**

The center believes the parents should start toilet training at home. When you feel your child is ready, we will be happy to assist you. Your child may be ready if he/she is:

* Staying dry for several hours
* Able to communicate the need to use the toilet
* Appears to be aware of wet or soiled diapers
* Is in a cooperative mood

There is no set age as to when a child is ready for potty training, and many toddlers and two-year old’s alternate between periods of cooperative and negative behavior. It is our experience that potty training is best started sometime between 24 and 36 months of age. It is important that both parents and staff are using the same “procedures” at home and daycare for training. If there is too much anxiety or stress, then it may be better for the child to wait and try again at a later time.

The Centers for Disease Control of the United States Public Health Services requires that clothing (or cloth diapers) soiled with bodily fluids (stool, urine, vomit, blood) need to be placed, unrinsed in a sealed plastic bag, labeled with the child’s name, to be picked up by the parent or guardian at end of the day. This center follows these recommended precautionary guidelines for the safety of the children and the staff. You are asked to bring a change of clothes for your child in case of such a situation.

1. **Behavior Management Policy**

It is the policy of the center and the Department of Human Services to neither spank nor physically punish a child. A constructive technique for managing behavior and maintaining a child’s self-worth should be applied. The goal of the behavior management is to teach the child self-control and self-correcting techniques.

The philosophy of the Center requires that discipline support the total development of children. Discipline is used when children violate another child’s or adult’s rights. The approach to discipline is positive and developmentally appropriate. Specific techniques are listed below.

Focused Attention

– Before speaking, move to the child’s eye level and make eye contact. Give the child your full attention while you interact.

- Directions or suggestions are stated simply and positively.

Active Listening

– Listen for the verbal and non-verbal message of the child and reflect it back. “You don’t like it when the block tower falls down. Your face looks angry.” (All age groups)

- Use active listening when setting limits. “You’re angry and you want to throw blocks. I can’t let you; it’s not safe.”

Positive Direction

- Tell the child what to do instead of what not to do. “Blocks are for building.” Demonstrate the activity for a child who does not have the language skills to understand verbal explanations.

- Explain why you are setting a limit and separate the child from the behavior. “It scares me when you throw blocks. A block could hurt someone.”

- Offer choices if they are realistic. “You can throw balls or bean bags. Which would you like to throw?”

- Actions of the child, not the child itself, is the focus.

Preventative Discipline

- Do not expect that the children know how to play or act appropriately. As the teacher, we will teach the children by explaining how to play with something or someone, how to follow the rules, repeating our daily expectations, schedules, or rules, and communicating these wanted outcomes before any activity. By discussing these specific details ahead of time, we will help prevent some unwanted actions and behaviors.

Redirection

- Divert a child’s attention (turn a child’s attention to an appropriate use of a material or a new activity of equal value or interest). “Here are some balls you can throw.” (toddler thru school-age)

Natural Consequences

- A child needs to understand and learn that for every action there is a consequence. By using natural consequences for inappropriate behavior, we are teaching them that they are the one in control of their actions and that in turn, will determine a positive or negative consequence. An example of this would be if a child will not share the dolls in the dramatic play center, then the teacher will choose a different center for them to play in by themselves.

Ignoring Inappropriate Behavior

- Use only when there is no danger to the child or others. Do not ignore the child, just the behavior. When the inappropriate behavior ceases, interact with the child. (All age groups)

Temporary Separation

- Use as a last resort when a child infringes on the rights of others.

- Use to protect other children, but the separation is not to exceed 1 min/yr. of age.

- Use to allow the child time to calm down.

1. **Recurrent Uncontrollable Behavior**

Under certain situations, Community Early Childhood Center may require a parent to pick up their child due to aggressive behavior. It is the goal of CECC to work proactively and constructively on behavioral issues with each child and family using the strategies described above. However, if a child displays persistent uncontrollable behavior and the above approaches are to no avail, the parent or guardian will be required to remove the child from CECC immediately. Admitting the child back into the center will only occur after appropriate steps have been taken by the parent or guardian to correct the child’s behavior, and only after consultation between the Director and the parents.

1. **Multicultural and Religious Awareness Policy**

Community Early Childhood Center reinforces an awareness and pride in the multicultural heritage and various religious backgrounds in the world around us. As incidents happen in which questions arise on these subjects, we will create the teachable moment. Examples of this would be “Why are they a different color?” or “What is Hanukkah?”. We will provide a curriculum that will offer a variety of multicultural experiences for the child through books, dolls, puzzles, games, music, socialization, and other visual items in the environment. If anyone is interested in volunteering their time to share any cultural or linguistic backgrounds or knowledge with the children, we would be more then appreciative to you offering this learning experience to the children. This could be preparing a food that the children could try, reading a book about the culture, learning a few new words of your language, sharing family traditions, etc. Please speak with the Director or classroom teacher if you are interested.

1. **Confidentiality**

CECC respects the rights of each family to have privacy and confidentiality regarding all health, behavioral, and developmental records and information concerning their child. Any employee, parent or person associated with Community Early Childhood Center who acquires information regarding a child (or relative of) or an employee, shall not directly or indirectly disclose this information except upon inquiry before a court of law or with written consent from this person or this child’s guardian.

It is extremely important to protect the confidentiality of any information concerning children and their families. Staff will maintain a professional attitude and show respect to the children by refraining from talking about or labeling a child negatively or positively, in front of them or their peers.

It is also important that the parents do not ask questions to the staff or children about issues that we are not to comment on about others. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child’s parent. Staff and Parents may become close, and parents of one child may work with another parent from the center, please refrain from discussing specific situations about others at the center. Examples of this would be; asking “Who has pink eye in my child’s room?”, if a communicable disease notice is posted, “Who is the “biter” in the classroom?” or discussing other personal issues. It is important that we all respect the privacy of all the families and staff here at the center.

1. **Pet Policy**

We encourage the children to experience a variety of animals, learn about them, and care for them. Some of our classrooms have their own pet and sometimes we will have visitors bring them in. It is important that if you are aware of your child having an allergy to any animals that you inform the Director, so we can take the necessary precautions or remove the animal. All animals requiring shot records, including rabies vaccinations, are required to be kept on file at the center. We do not have or allow any reptiles, amphibians, or birds of the parrot family (parrots, cockatiels, parakeets), which can carry a bacteria that can cause serious illness in humans. All debris and waste from animals in cages and from any outdoor areas will be discarded in a plastic bag, tied and placed in the garbage. All areas where pets have been will be cleaned and disinfected with bleach spray. Teachers and children are required to wash hands before and after handling or caring for any pets.

1. **Outdoor Play**

Community Early Childhood Center has just recently added new equipment to our playground area. The children are offered a variety of play opportunities to promote healthy growth and development, stimulate creative thinking, encourage a love for nature, and experience social play. Our Teachers are encouraged to take the classroom outdoors as much as possible by offering the same Learning Centers outside as they do inside the center.

The state of Iowa requires each child to play outside daily, weather permitting. It is important that each parent brings the necessary clothing items their child needs throughout the year. Our policy is that if your child is too sick to go outside in the fresh air, they are too sick to be at daycare. We are unable to staff for children who are unable to go outside with the rest of their class. On days when the weather is too cold, windy or rainy, we will offer indoor large motor activities in the classrooms.

1. **Playground**

The children are allowed to go outside every day, weather permitting. We use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the wind chill or heat index are a factor in our outdoor play time. The children will not be going outside if the temperature including the wind chill is under 15 degrees or if the temperature including the heat index is above 90 degrees. This offers the children the opportunity to be active, get exercise, fresh air, and use their large motor skills.

* Children may not be out on the playground unless they are being supervised and the appropriate teacher/child ratios are maintained.
* Any child wanted to ride the bikes on the playground MUST bring a labeled helmet to wear. The School-age children are too big to ride the playground bikes.
* Teachers must use good judgment on the number of children allowed to play on one piece of equipment at the same time, suggesting that children take turns, or directing their attention toward other equipment.
* All playground equipment must be used appropriately and safely. Teachers are to make periodic checkups, and keep the administrative staff informed as to what pieces of equipment need to be repaired or replaced. Broken toys need to be thrown away.
* Teachers are to be active or interacting with the children on the playground. They should be separated around the play area with a good visual of all the children.

1. **Transportation**

Community Early Childhood Center will provide transportation for elementary age children to and from school (at the regularly schedule 8am and 2:45pm times, early outs and late starts) for 5 area schools including; Cooper, Butler, Duncombe, Riverside, and FDMS. Parents MUST sign up for the School-age transportation at the end of the summer in order to guarantee availability. There are limited spots available and it may depend on the school, but we based this on a first come, first serve, basis. These transportation costs are included in the regular weekly rate set for the school-age children. This includes before and after school time (early outs and late starts will be no added charge). We are unable to provide transportation or childcare for children needing only early outs or late start care, because of space availability. It is the parents’ responsibility to inform the center of their child’s weekly pick-up and drop off days. If there are any changes to be made on a daily basis we ask that the parent writes them in the school-age log book located outside of the office at least 1 hour before the scheduled pick up time (example: if their child went home sick or someone else is picking them up at school). This keeps us from being delayed at certain schools. We have a list of children to be picked up at each school in the van. The van driver is responsible to make sure that every child is dropped off and picked up at the appropriate school. If a child is not at the school, we will try to contact someone in the school and/or the parent as soon as possible, until we locate the child. All children under the age of 6 are required to use a booster seat while riding in the daycare vans.

All children will be transported in our licensed and insured daycare vans driven by Community Early Childhood Center teachers who have a Chauffeur’s Driver’s License.

Each of our four vans has up-to-date list of Emergency Numbers, located on the clipboard at all times. All children are to be in a seatbelt fastened appropriately. Any child under the age of 6 is required by law to be in a booster seat. The center does have some available, but we ask that as you have no need for your child to be in a seat that you think of donating to us. All booster seats need to be in appropriate working order and not past the expiration date.

For children with special need, which need transportation, we will meet together with the family to discuss any special equipment, staffing or care that may be needed in the vehicle during transportation. It may be necessary to refer to the child’s Individualized Educational Program or address the situation with the child’s doctor also.

1. **Field Trips**

Field trips can be an important learning opportunity, which can help build on the experiences in the classroom and/or just something extra fun to do! All parents (or legal guardians) MUST sign a transportation authorization located in the forms given upon enrollment. Parents may be informed of each individual field trip by a newsletter or signs posted outside the classroom in advance. A field trip permission form MUST be filled out for each child going on the scheduled field trip. The field trip permission forms and the details of the field trip (including date, time of departure, time of return, and the destination location) will be located in a designated area near the office. The information will be available at least 48 hours ahead of time. It is the parents’ responsibility to fill out the permission slip and turn it into the office before the scheduled field trip in order for their child to go. For any school-age field trips which have a cost, we will automatically charge your account (please do not pay the teachers in the classroom unless otherwise posted). On some of the school-age field trips we do allow the children to bring along extra money for a snack. If you choose to give your child money, it will be their responsibility to take care of it. It is too difficult for the teacher to take on the responsibility of all the individual money for 20-30 children at one time.

When the children are away from the building the teachers always take their First Aid Hip Pack and clipboard with emergency numbers. Children are counted before leaving the building, as they arrive at the destination, as they return to the vehicle, and as they return into the classroom at the center. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. For ratio reasons they may have to stand outside the restroom door after checking the bathroom. Children are never to be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult. If a child refuses to keep their seat belt on, stay seated, or is too distracting to the driver, the child may be restricted from going on field trips for their safety and for the safety of others. Whenever the children are taken on a field trip away from the building, we are required to have at least one staff extra over the ratio, based on the youngest child in the group.

**VI. Health and Safety Policies**

1. **Prevention and Management of Illness/Accident**

For the health and safety of all children, we ask that parents follow Community Early Childhood Center’s Health Policies for immunizations, reporting communicable diseases, and prevention and management of illnesses.

If your child has a known medical or developmental problem or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency, the parent needs to help us prepare an individual emergency care plan for their child. This would include any child with allergies, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems and other chronic conditions that may require regular medication or technology support.

1. **Hand Washing**

Community Early Childhood Center complies with the nationally recommended standards of the U.S. Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control, American Public Health, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The guidelines were developed with the goal of implementing hand washing and sanitization procedures into the daily routines of the children and staff to

control the spread of disease and infection. Children need to develop good health habits. Young children learn by imitating, so we ask that you support these practices whenever you are with your child. Parents and volunteers are REQUIRED to wash their hands upon arrival.

The children and staff are required to wash their hands many times throughout the day:

* 1. When the child enters the classroom
  2. After toileting/diapering or assisting with
  3. Before and after meals and snacks / cooking activities
  4. After playing outside
  5. Before and after messy play
  6. After handling/cleaning up bodily fluids
  7. After handling pets and other animals or any other material that might be contaminated by contact with animals
  8. Before & after feeding a child
  9. Before & after administering medicine
  10. After handling garbage or cleaning

Appropriate handwashing is very important for our children and teachers. All must lather with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before rinsing off soap (sing the ABC’s), and then turn off water with a paper towel.

CECC *recommends* that staff wear gloves whenever there is a possibility of them coming in contact with a bodily fluid (ex. blood, urine, mucus, breast milk, vomit, feces, etc.), but they are still required to wash hands appropriately after taking off gloves. We do REQUIRE staff to use gloves when changing a “dirty” diaper or someone is bleeding.

1. **Daily Cleaning Policies**
2. Bleach water spray (1/4 cup bleach to 1-gallon tap water / 1/2 Teaspoon bleach to 1-quart tap water) is to be made daily in a labeled spray bottle, then emptied and rinsed out nightly. Spray bottles need to be labeled with the date, “Bleach Spray” and “1/2 Tsp. to 1 QT. Mix”.
3. Sinks are required to be washed and sprayed with bleach water throughout the day, if they are used for both handwashing after a diaper and any kind of food prep. CECC policy is that unless there are two sinks available in the room, which are labeled individually as diaper and food prep, the sink must be washed with soap and water then, sprayed with bleach spray after every diaper change use or before doing any food prep.
4. Tables will be washed with soap and water and then sprayed with bleach spray immediately before and after every meal/snack and art/messy play.
5. Bleach water bottles are to be kept up away from the children at all times.
6. Anytime that bleach spray is used for cleaning and sanitizing purposes, it can be left to air dry or can be wiped dry after two minutes on the surface.
7. Every classroom has a naptime and nightly cleaning list that must be initialed by the staff as they complete each duty listed. Lead teachers are to check and make sure these duties are being done appropriately and teachers are marking the charts as required.
8. Toys that have been in a child’s mouth or have been contaminated by body fluid of any kind will be removed after the child is done playing with the toy, then placed in a bleach water tub and laid out to air dry.
9. As toys are rotated from room to room they will also be cleaned by the teachers before they are brought into the room and again as they leave the room (this may be as they go into another room or are put back into the closet). Any toys that are found to be broken need to be thrown away and the Director should be informed incase the item needs to be replaced.
10. The frequency of cleaning and sanitizing will increase from the usual routine and cleaning schedule whenever there is an outbreak of illness, a known contamination, visible soil, or when recommended by the health department to control certain infectious diseases. All surfaces, furnishings and equipment that are not in good repair or that have been contaminated by bodily fluids shall be taken out of service until they are repaired, cleaned, and sanitized effectively.
11. Toys that cannot be washed and sanitized shall not be used. Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that have otherwise been contaminated by body secretion or excretion shall be set aside until they can be washed with water and detergent, rinsed, sanitized and air dried or washed in our commercial dishwasher. Machine washable cloth toys will be washed and sanitized daily. Indoor toys will not be shared between groups of infants or toddlers unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to another.
12. All soiled diapers are to be in containers separate from other waste.

1. **First Aid Kits/Hip Packs**

Every classroom has a hip pack with basic first aid supplies. Teachers are required to take them if the class moves to the gym, playground, another classroom, etc. Standard First Aid Kits are available to all staff members in the kitchen/gym doorway, laundry room (this is to take if a class goes on a walk), in each CECC vehicle, at the Ocean & Jungle room door to the playground, and the Arctic room door to the playground. The Standard First Aid Kit contains all the necessary supplies required and listed in the Department of Human Services regulations. First Aids kits and hip packs are to be replenished monthly or more often if needed. All of the items necessary to refill the Standard First Aid Kits are in the Laundry Room. Also, they are to be kept out of reach from the children at all times.

1. **Immunization of Children**

All parents should make certain that their child is immunized according to the schedule recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics to protect against polio, measles, mumps, rubella, whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus, Hemophilus (Hib), and Hepatitis B (Hep B) infections. If a child’s immunizations are not completed following the recommended schedule, it may be necessary to exclude the child from the other children in our program until such immunizations are current.

1. **Illness**
2. Community Early Childhood Center’s policy for the care of ill children is based on ensuring that facilities and staff available can meet the needs of all children in the program. Children will be excluded if the child’s symptom(s) or illness:
   * 1. Prevent the child from participating in routine activities
     2. Require continuous one on one attention from the caregiver.
3. Children are not to be at the center if they are not well enough to participate in a normal day’s activities or if they have been exposed to a contagious disease, develop symptoms or are diagnosed by a physician as having a contagious disease.
4. Refer to the Guidelines for the Management of Illness to determine when your child should not attend the center.
5. Should a child become ill during the day, the parent will be notified as soon as possible. Upon notification parents are required to make arrangements to pick up their child within the hour. In case a parent is not available, the persons listed on the Emergency Consent Form will be contacted. We will provide a place for the child to rest until the parent or emergency contact person arrives. If we suspect that the child has a contagious disease the child will be removed from the classroom, so there is no other chance for exposure to others.
6. In the event of a serious illness or injury, at the discretion of the Directors, paramedics will be called, and the child will be transported to an emergency medical facility.

*Guidelines for the Management of Illness*

Children are to be kept at home if they develop any of these symptoms of contagious disease until symptoms disappear, or a physician gives a written statement that they are NOT CONTAGIOUS and okay to return into the daycare setting:

Parents are instructed to keep their child at home if he or she develops any of the symptoms of contagious disease until symptoms disappear, or the physician gives a written statement that they are NOT CONTAGIOUS and okay to return into the daycare setting:

* Diarrhea (more than one loose stool or increased number of stools)
* Temperature of 101 F
* Severe coughing (causing the child to appear red/blue in the face or making a “whooping” sound)
* Difficult or rapid breathing (especially in infants under 6 months)
* Yellowish skin or eyes (may be signs of Hepatitis)
* Tears, redness of eyelids, with discharge (pink eye)
* Mouth sores

If a child has one of the following symptoms and/or a fever = 100 F or above:

* Unusual spots or rash - Headache and stiff neck
* Sore throat or trouble swallowing - Vomiting
* Infected skin patches - Severe itching of body or scalp
* Tea colored urine - Loss of appetite
* Unusually cranky, less active - Grey or white stools

If any of the above symptoms develop while at Community Early Childhood Center, the parent will be notified to make arrangements for picking up their child. We will use the parents’ and emergency contact numbers that the parent has provided in their child’s enrollment forms. We ask the person to come immediately, as the child will be resting in the office waiting for their arrival.

The following is a list of illnesses with the recommendations and regulations that Community Early Childhood Center enforces in the possibility of their occurrence:

ILLNESS KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| COXSACKIE  (Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease) | Child must be fever free for 24 hours |
| DIARRHEAL DISEASES  (Rota Virus, Salmonella, Shigella,  Giardia, Campylobacter) | Until diarrhea resolves  (exception with Salmonella typhi, Shigella or E. coli will need multiple stool samples are negative) |
| BACTERIAL MENINGITIS | Until the Health Department indicates it is safe |
| VOMITING ILLNESS | Until vomiting resolves or a health care provider determines that the cause of the vomiting is  not contagious and the child is not in  danger of dehydration |
| SCABIES | Until after treatment has been completed |
| VARICELLA-ZOSTER  (CHICKEN POX) | Until all sores have dried and crusted  (usually 7 days) |
| DIPTHERIA | Until a physician indicates that it is safe |
| HEPATITIS A | Until 1 week after onset of illness, jaundice or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis has been administered to appropriate children and staff members |
| IMPETIGO | Until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated |
| HEAD LICE | Until after treatment has been completed  (or if live lice are still found) |
| MOUTH SORES with drooling | Until a health care provider determines that the child is noninfectious |
| RASH | Until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease |
| MEASLES | Until 4 days after onset of rash |
| RUBELLA  (German Measles) | Until 6 days after onset of rash |
| MUMPS | Until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling |
| PERTUSSIS  (Whooping Cough) | Until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment (currently, erythromycin, which is given for 14 consecutive days) has been completed. |
| CONJUNCTIVITIS (Pink Eye) | Until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated |
| HEMOPHILUS INFLUENZA TYPE B  (Hib, Pneumonia, meningitis, Epiglottitis,  Arthritis, Cellulitis) | If not due to H-flu, until a physician determines it is safe. If due to H-flu, until the Health Department indicates it is safe. |
| STREP THROAT  (or other streptococcal infection) | Until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever |
| RINGWORM & PINWORM | Until 24 hours after treatment has begun |
| TUBERCULOSIS (TB) | Until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend |
| (RSV) | Until a physician determines  that the child is noninfectious |

*Head Lice* – if live head lice are found on a child, the parent will be called immediately. The child may return to the center after being treated with the proper medicated shampoo and removal of “nits” (eggs) in the hair. We cannot stress enough the importance of combing the eggs or nits out. Shampooing alone will not get rid of the lice.

Day 1: Medicated Shampoo and combing

Day 2: Comb only (Do not wash!)

Day 3 – 9: Shampoo, condition and comb (even blow drying can help)

Day 10: Medicated Shampoo and combing (then start over process again)

Children MUST be treated again after 10 days. During this time, they can be at the center as long as no more live head lice are found. It is also important to wash all pillows, bedding, coats, and hats. Boil all hairbrushes, combs and hair ties. Bag up all stuffed animals for 72 hours. Other children and adults may need to be treated and personal items washed.

*Required Reporting*

For the protection of all children and staff, we ask that parents notify the center within 24 hours after the child has developed a known or suspected communicable disease. When a child has a disease that requires exclusion, we ask that the parent inform the Director of the diagnosis. In some cases, a doctor’s authorization may be needed to inform the center that the child is not contagious. Some doctors will say that they can go back to daycare, because “they have already contaminated the classroom”. We do not go by this philosophy. We need to take into consideration what is best for all the children and not make this decision hastefully.

If we become aware of a communicable disease affecting children in the center, a health alert will be posted. We will indicate the earliest symptoms so that additional exposures can be avoided.

1. **Medications and Medication Forms**

Community Early Childhood Center will only administer prescription medication when a parent has completed a Medication Sheet. The Medication Sheet must be filled out entirely and properly by the parent in order for the medication to be given. This includes:

- Child’s full name - Possible side effects

- Date - Required Storage

- Parent’s signature - Doctor approval

- Name of medication - Reason for Medicine

- Dose of medication - Any specific instructions

- Time to be given - Beginning and ending date for medication

- Route (oral, eyes, nose, etc.)

All medications must be in the original container, labeled with the child’s first and last name, date, and not be past the expiration date. All prescription medications must also include doctor’s name and instructions on label from pharmacy. If a child requires a nebulizer treatment while at the center the vials of medication MUST be in the original boxes with the necessary information on it. Medications will only be given by an employee that has been Med Certified. Parents need to consider the number of children that we have at the center and determine if it is necessary for the daycare to administer the medicine, or if it can be given at home. Medication should not be in a child’s bag, pocket or cubby. All medications need to be kept locked in the kitchen (exception: the infant rooms have their own medication lock boxes.)

Parents may fill out a medicine sheet on a monthly basis for an Epipen, Nebulizer or pain reliever. Parents may be contacted for verbal consent to administer pain reliever if necessary. A medication form will have to be filled out when the parent arrives to pick up the child.

If a parent would like to supply sunscreen, teething gel, diaper ointment or bug spray for their child we need to have written permission (and specific instructions of when to apply).

1. **Biting Policy**

**If A Child Is Bitten**

Child development research indicates that approximately 50% of all children enrolled in childcare center will be bitten. Toddlers especially will use biting as a form of communication. Community Early Childhood Center will strive to minimize biting incidents. However, it is highly likely that every child will be bitten at some time. If this should occur, we will do our best to comfort the child and care for his/her needs immediately.

- Staff will immediately separate the children and tend to the bitten child.

- The spot where the bite occurred will be washed with soap and water and ice pack applied.

- An incident report will be filled out for both children involved, along with a “Biting Chart”. The Biting Chart is a form filled out by the teachers which keeps track of habitual offenders. The teacher will record; who was bitten, what time of day, during what activity, why they think the child bit, and what the teachers did about it.

- After a child accumulates 3 or more bites in a two- week period, the Biting Chart will be turned into the Director for review.

- The classroom teacher will also inform the parents of the biter and work with them and their child to change this behavior.

**If A Child Bites Another Child**

They will be immediately separated from the other children.

The teacher will explain to the child that they hurt their friend when they bit them (usually showing them the other child’s mark and the fact that they are crying shows that child’s pain).

* An incident report will be filled out for both children, and a “Biting Chart” (see above) for the child who bit.
* If a child has accumulated 3 or more bites in a two-week period of time, the Biting Chart will be turned into the Director for review.
* At this time the Director will meet with the classroom teachers (and usually the parent) to review the problem together and determine a plan to discourage or change this behavior.
* However, if the biting is aggressive, breaks the skin, and does not lessen within a reasonable period of time (a maximum of 10 times within 3 weeks). The Director may ask you to temporarily dis-enroll the child until the biting diminishes. If the biting continues upon the child’s return, the parent may be asked to remove the child until they are older.

1. **Bike Riding Safety Policy**

* All children must wear a safety helmet when riding toys with a wheelbase of more than 20 inches in diameter. This includes bikes inside and outside the center. If CECC helmets are available, they will be sanitized with bleach spray in between users. We suggest that any child in the Jungle thru the Outerspace bring in their own labeled helmet for their child to use or they may not be able to ride the bikes on the playground. Please label all bike helmets, knee and elbow pads.

1. **Protection from Hazards & Environmental Health**

The center is housed in a facility that was updated with new construction in 2001. We are located in a housing neighborhood free from hazards and protected from high air pollution, loud or constant noises, heavy traffic, unsafe buildings, or any other unsafe or harmful environmental elements. Testing has been done in the building for asbestos, radon, and other hazards that could impact a child’s health.

Community Early Childhood does several other recommended environmental tests:

* + - 1. Our drinking water is tested monthly by the Fort Dodge Water Department and the results are kept on file.
      2. The heating and cooling systems are inspected before and after each new season of use. A heating and air conditioning contractor will verify that the equipment is properly installed, cleaned and maintained.
      3. Radon Testing is done yearly, sent in for reading, and the results are mailed back and kept on file at the center.
      4. Carbon Monoxide detectors are tested monthly and are monitoring at all times.

In order to have a safe environment for children and adults there are some basis daily checks which need to be performed by the staff before the children arrive and throughout the day:

* All safety and electric outlets covered, heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. are all in working order.
* All Cleaning supplies/poisons are out of reach of children and stored properly.
* Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
* Supplies checked – first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
* Daily monitoring of environment – spills, sand, wet floor signs used when and after mopping, etc.
* Reporting any other serious problems needing immediate or future attention to the Director.

1. **Emergencies**

In case of an emergency, staff are to follow specific procedures. (See Emergency Procedures). Emergency contact information must be kept current at all times. Please notify the Director of any changes. Our staff receive training in First Aid and CPR. We will contact the parent and/or emergency contact person as soon as possible in the event of any medical or dental emergency.

1. **Accident Reports**
2. *Minor Accident:*

In the event that a child receives a minor injury, the classroom teacher will administer first aid. Minor cuts and abrasions will be treated with soap and water. Bumps will be treated by applying an ice pack to the injured area. If it is difficult for us to determine the severity of the accident, and the child is in not serious danger, we may call the parent to get their opinion or come get the child to see their physician. An Accident Report will be filled out by the classroom teacher. This report will explain what happened to the child, and the measures taken by the teacher for the child. The accident report will need to be signed by the classroom teacher, a supervisor and the parent. One copy will go in the child’s file and the other will be given to the parent.

1. *Serious Accident:*

In the event of a serious accident, the classroom teacher will administer first aid and contact the supervisor in the office immediately. The Director or Supervisor will come assess the child’s injury and notify emergency personal (911) if necessary. At this time the parent will be called, using the emergency numbers found in the child’s folder, the computer or the classroom emergency number list. The ambulance will arrive to take the child, and a staff member will accompany the child to the emergency room to meet the parent there. An accident report will be filled out by the classroom teacher and the supervisor. One copy will go in the child’s file and the other will be given to the parent.

Community Early Childhood Center does have insurance coverage in place to handle serious injuries. However, it is expected that the parents’ insurance will be the first recourse of payment. Cost not covered by their insurance carrier may be submitted to the Director.

1. **Fire and Tornado Drills**

The Department of Human Services requires us to hold and record monthly Fire and Tornado Drills. The directors will perform at least 2 all building unannounced fire and tornado drills per year. All teachers are instructed to take part in a Fire and Tornado Drill for every room they are in upon employment. Emergency evacuation procedures are set in place. They are located near every classroom door and explained in detail in this manual. (see Emergency Procedures). During a Fire or Tornado Drill the staff will accompany the children to the appropriate evacuation location. Detailed maps and alternate routes are posted in every classroom. Fire extinguishers are installed in every classroom and tagged yearly by the Fire Marshall indicating its annual service date.

1. **Inclement Weather Policy**

Community Early Childhood Center reserves the right to close the center if inclement weather occurs. This decision could be made in the early morning hours before opening and/or after opening throughout the day if the weather worsens. The center Directors will take into consideration the safety of the families in our care, as well as our staff, the road conditions, travel advisories, and area closings. If the weather is too severe and we are forced to close, we will announce our closing on the local radio stations, our Facebook page and KCCI channel 8. If the Sheriff is recommending no travel, and the DART Bus System shuts down, we will be closing. If we do have to close the center by a certain time during the day, we ask that parents come pick up their children as soon as possible, so we are able to send our center staff home too. If the center does close early, we will credit any family sent home based on the hours they did attend that day.

1. **Mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

The safety and well-being of the children in our care is the most important aspect and responsibility of our job. Child Abuse Reporter Training is required by all childcare teachers working in licensed childcare centers by the Department of Human Services. This training explains what to watch for, what is abuse or neglect, and what to do if you suspect abuse. All childcare providers are required to report verbally and in writing, if they reasonable believe a child has suffered abuse of any kind. If necessary, the staff member or Director will report the suspected case to the Department of Human Services to investigate. Definition of child abuse: “the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child by a person who is responsible for the child’s welfare under circumstances which indicate that the child’s health or well-being have been threatened.”

All staff are to bring any suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect to the attention of the Director.

All staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect are immune from discharge, retaliation, or

other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless the report is proven to be malicious.

1. **Substance Abuse**

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on Community Early Childhood Center property. Staff will be unable to allow any child to be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If someone is suspected, they will be approached; asked to speak with a supervisor in the office and alternate transportation will be discussed for the child and decided upon.

1. **Smoking Policy**

As we promote the health and well-being of the families we care for and the staff we employ,

acknowledging the harmful effects on health caused through direct and passive smoking, we have

implemented a smoke free campus policy. Smoking and vaping will not be allowed anywhere on the

Community Early Childhood Center premises. This does include around the building and in

the parking lot area. We ask that in order to keep our center environment clean, that you

extinguish your cigarette before emerging onto the property.

1. **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**
2. **Home - Center Communication**

Parents are the most significant adults in a child’s life. We strive to create mutual respect between parents and the center staff; a partnership for the benefit of the child. CECC has an open-door policy for parents.

Parent Pockets are located in the first main hallway to the right after you enter the security door. Every enrolled family has a parent pocket, labeled with their last name. Parents should check their pocket every day as they leave, so they are certain to get all the information needed to be prepared for all that is going on at the center, each child’s classroom, and/or necessary forms that may need to be updated for the children. Other items that you can find in the parent pockets are billing statements, activity calendars, parent letters, book orders, picture orders, etc*. If the family needs two parent pockets, because of parents or guardian living separately, please just let someone in the office know.*

During the year, CECC sponsors events that all parents are encouraged to participate in, such as the holiday program, parent/grandparent snacks or luncheons, special field trips, Halloween Fundraising Carnival, Week of the Young Child Activities, and more. It is so important that parents have the opportunity to show their children that they have an interest in their life and share special time together. Suggestions and volunteers are always appreciated.

1. **Parent - Teacher Communication**

Communication between the parent, child, and teacher is important to ensure a good working relationship. We encourage daily communication between parents and teachers. Parents of Infants and Toddlers will receive a sheet that will be completed daily. In the morning when the parent brings in the child, the staff will ask a few simple questions (such as last bottle, how much, last slept, last diaper/potty, their demeanor for the day, medication, etc.). They will put the necessary information on the daily sheet and continue to record the child’s information for the rest of the day (including eating and/or drinking schedule, diapering or toilet training, naps, at least one of the activities the child did that day, and other comments from the staff. The parents can pick these up every day as they pick up their child.

Weekly Lesson Plans, Calendars, schedules, pictures/names of the teachers in the room and menus are posted outside of every classroom for your convenience. We want the parent to be aware of all that is going on in the child’s classroom, what they are learning, who’s is caring for the child, etc. The parent should also find (inside or outside of the room) a sign posted daily of a specific activity that the children in the class did that day.

1. **Conferences**

All care providers are true teachers in a sense of helping to nurture and provide both academic readiness and a positive social environment. This parent-teacher communication is important at all ages. Parents typically want to know how their child is doing and what he/she is learning. We offer conferences so teachers can share stories, class projects, day to day interactions, assessments, and answer parent questions and concerns. Any problems can be addressed together and develop an action plan if necessary. This is a prime opportunity for the parent to gain input and learn more about their child and how she/he interacts with others. Caregivers know things about their son or daughter that most others don’t. The focus of the parent-teacher conference should always be to work in partnership with the caregiver to help a child develop, learn and grow into a positive little person.

Parents are encouraged to schedule a conference with their child’s teacher any time they feel it is necessary during the year. The center will offer a conference schedule twice a year, in which a parent may sign-up for a specific time to meet with their child’s teacher. It is a time for the parent and the teacher to work together as a team to discuss ways that both can help the child.

1. **Assessments**

The classroom teacher will base the child’s assessments on The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos or The Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers Developmental Continuum Assessment System. At every age level, Infant through Preschool, children are developing their social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language skills. The assessments are created using these developmental areas and the objectives attained in each. We will be observing the children while collecting facts and evaluating each child’s progress. Examples of this would be everything from “Coos as you rock and talk with him” to “demonstrates throwing, kicking, and catching skills” to “Enjoys and values reading”. If at any time a parent has questions about their child’s development, they can set up a conference with their child’s teacher. Otherwise, we will offer the opportunity twice a year for the parent to schedule such an appointment to go over what we have observed. If a parent chooses not to meet with their child’s teacher, they are always welcome to ask for a copy of the assessment as it is prepared twice a year.

1. **Parent Visitation**

We welcome and encourage parents to visit at any time. Parents have unlimited access to the center during business hours for the purpose of contacting their child and assessing the care provided. They are more than welcome to join their child for lunch on any given day. Parents should let us know before 10 am if they plan to come for lunch.

1. **Parent Meeting**
2. **New Parent Orientation**

The center offers a Parent Orientation Meeting for all new families upon request. Some of the topics that will be discussed at the meeting are:

1. Expectations of the teachers, parents and children.
2. Communication (daily reports, accident reports, etc.)
3. Schedules / Agreement / tuition / vacation days
4. Forms (updating)
5. Illnesses / Medications
6. Conferences and Assessments
7. Also, some policies & important information that will help families get through the year.
8. **Board Meetings/Parent Board**

Community Early Childhood Center Board of Directors schedules meetings at least on a quarterly basis throughout the year on the third Tuesday of the month. We encourage parents and other members of the community to fill out a board membership application. We are always looking for new Board Members, including those that are parents. It is a great opportunity to help the center and be a part of the decision-making process, that will affect every family.

1. **Fundraising**

Community Early Childhood Center is a nonprofit childcare center. The tuition rates that we charge to our families on a weekly basis cover the day to day expenses of the center. We try to keep tuition rates as low as possible in order for families to afford quality childcare while they are working or going to school. For this reason, it is that much more important that the families we enroll, ALL help out with the fundraising projects that we do throughout the year. Some families would rather just give a cash donation, instead of soliciting others, and that is great. We have to do continuous fundraising projects to be able to afford curriculum supplies and toys, equipment, maintenance and repairs, vehicles, training, experienced or educated teachers, etc. It is important to CECC to offer high-quality care and in order to do this it does cost more money. We want you to know that we appreciate all the fundraising you do and hope to encourage you to ask others to help too. These children are the future and we want to offer them all we can!

1. **Volunteers**

Whenever possible, parents are invited to share their time and talents with the children. Parents should check with their child’s teacher, as they will know the best time to set up a visit, activity, or field trip opportunity. If a parent is interested in spending time in a classroom or wants to assist with a classroom or center event, they should contact someone in the office.

At times throughout the year, volunteers from the community may be brought in to work with the children. We work with a variety of different training and volunteer programs. These programs include; Foster Grandparents, VESS Program (ICCC), World or Work (High School), etc. All volunteers, even parents, are required to fill out a volunteer form including a signed statement saying that they are free of communicable disease and a Criminal Record Check. These forms are available in the office. The Department of Human Services requires CECC to send in a Criminal and Child Abuse Record Check on any of our volunteers.

1. **Parent Conduct**

Parents are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner. The relationship between parents and teachers impacts the wellbeing of all our children and should serve as a role model for healthy, adult interactions. While issues with teachers should not be discussed in front of children, parents should feel that they can communicate their concerns and complaints directly to the caregiver of their child, provided it is done in a civilized and considerate manner. Parents may also talk directly to the Director. Displays of anger or hostility are not appropriate. Any comments or opinions about center policies should be brought to the attention of the Director, but it is the decision of the Board of Directors, the Department of Human Services, or the Department of Public Health that would have the final say.

1. **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

There are three basic responses to an emergency situation at the center, based on an assessment made by the Director or identified staff in charge. In an emergency, the Director has the authority to make the determination to 1) Shelter on-site 2) Evacuate or 3) Relocate the children and staff.

Staff will be instructed by the Director to take children immediately to their designated safe area. Staff will account for all children in the room before leaving the classroom and as they reach their destination. Staff will also bring First Aid Hip Pack, class list with parent emergency numbers and items to entertain the children. Staff will also locate flashlights and blankets if necessary. This may be temporary until the center can get the all clear and resume normal operation or until all children are picked up by parents. The Director will assess any injuries and notify parents, the authorities or 911 of the situation, if needed.

1. **Evacuation and Relocation**
2. In the event that Community Early Childhood Center must be evacuated because of a confined emergency in our facility, the staff and children will leave the building and gather in our designated areas on the far South and North sides of the property.
3. If we cannot continue to use the facility or the immediate area becomes unsafe, we will relocate to our“Neighborhood Relocation Site” at Community Christian Schoollocated 4 blocks north of our building at 2406 9 ½ Ave. S.
4. In the event that Community Early Childhood Center must be evacuated because of an emergency in the immediate area, the children and staff will be transported in the CECC vans and staff vehicles to our “Across Town Relocation Site” at Childhood Discovery Center at 2329 1st Ave South in Fort Dodge.
5. In the event that CECC must be evacuated because of a widespread emergency, the children and staff will be transported in our CECC vans and staff vehicles to our “Out-of-Town” relocation site at Webster City Daycare at 1317 Beach Street in Webster City, IA 50595.
6. If necessary, ill or injured children will be transported to Unity Point Medical Center at 802 Kenyon Road.
7. **Sheltering-In-Place**
   1. If we need to stay in the safest place inside our facility when there is a weather-related event such as a severe storm/tornado or if we are notified by emergency officials of a chemical spill/hazardous gases, etc., we will proceed to our designated safe areas for each classroom.
      1. Barnyard Infants to the north hallway
      2. Aquarium Infants to Sheri’s office
      3. Ocean, Jungle and Arctic Toddlers and 2’s to Kitchen area
      4. Safari three-year olds to the boy’s bathroom
      5. Outer Space 4-year olds to the girl’s bathroom
      6. Dugout and Stadium school-agers to the kitchen area in front of stoves.
   2. This Sheltering-In-Place drill is practiced every month and recorded with dates, numbers and times as a “tornado drill”.
8. **Lockdown**
   1. If Community Early Childhood Center is forced into a “Lockdown” situation as to the fact that the safest place for the children and staff is inside our facility, children and staff will be directed to either stay in their classrooms or proceed to their designated Shelter-In-Place areas.
   2. A ”Lockdown” situation in our center would be put into place when there is a security issue, such as, a disgruntled person, active shooter, community violence, unstable custody dispute, hostage situation, other physical or verbal threats, etc.
   3. Lockdown Protocol
      1. Director will secure the center and lock doors
      2. The Director will alert everyone in the building that we are in a “Lockdown” situation through our ALL-CALL intercom system.
      3. Classroom teachers’ close curtains and lock doors as they get instructions from ALL-CALL to stay in their rooms or proceed to the Shelter-In-Place designated areas.
      4. If instructed to stay in classrooms the staff with will lock classroom doors/exits (if possible), engage children into one area of the classroom out of sight from windows and doors, and move furniture in front any doors.
      5. Staff will keep children in the instructed area until the ALL-CLEAR has been verbally given by the Director or Emergency Authorities.
      6. These drills will be practiced periodically through the year.
   4. Parents need to be aware that once the center has had to go into a “Lockdown” situation, they will not have access to their children until the emergency situation has been taken care of, subsided and the ALL-CLEAR has been given for the safety of the children by the Director or the authorities.
9. **Addressing the individual needs of the children**
   1. Our Kitchen Manager, who is in charge of medicine administration, will be responsible for making sure any necessary medications, diabetic food needs, and any other medical needs of the children that she takes care of on a daily basis are on her person and transported to the relocation shelters as per the individual situation. If our Kitchen Manager is not at the center, our Administrative Assistant will oversee these responsibilities.
   2. The Infant classrooms will be responsible for any of their own medications as they are on a daily basis.
   3. Each individual classroom is responsible for bringing their own classroom first aid bag which would include any EpiPen’s and first aid supplies needed in an emergency.
10. **Communication and reunification with parents/families**
    1. All classroom teachers have class lists including sign-in sheets and emergency contact numbers for parents and other people allowed to pick/up the children in their classroom on a clipboard that they have with them at all times. Staff have been instructed to have the classroom clipboard with them in order to verify the children are all accounted for in an emergency situation and for the contact information when needed.
    2. All parent/guardian information including contact information, phone numbers, emails, etc. are transferred from paperwork in to our ProCare Childcare Software upon enrollment. If CECC if forced into a relocation situation, we will be able to use the computer system online at our relocation center to upload any and all information needed to contact parents/guardians of the children as necessary.
    3. All 5 daycare cell phones, both Directors’ phones, along with the Kitchen Manager and Administrative Assistant have programed all of their phone numbers into their phone. In addition, we have included the phone numbers for all relocation sights, the police department, Fire and Rescue, Department of Human Services, Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, the Fort Dodge Schools and our County Emergency Manager in our phones.
    4. Parents will be informed of any emergency situations that requires a lockdown or relocation as soon as possible by phone call, text or email. We will also provide the information on our Website, local media, and our Facebook Page as necessary.
    5. Upon Enrollment parents are given a card or sheet with the designated relocation sight’s phone numbers and addresses. They are also posted at the center year-round and if we do have to relocate for any reason, a sign will be posted on our door stating the name and location of our evacuation relocation shelter.
11. **Continuity of Operations**
    1. If the CECC building/property is no longer safe/able to accommodate the children for childcare purposes, the center would want to continue business at an alternate location as soon as possible in order for working families to have childcare and for our staff to continue employment.
    2. CECC has access to all business and family records online through our ProCare Childcare Software. We would be able to access all the necessary information including child and family information, billing, allergies, immunization records, payroll, etc. in order to run the center from another facility.
12. **Other Emergency Procedures**

***Intoxicated Driver or Parent*** *–* The Director or On-Site Supervisor will assess the driver or parent to determine the situation and address them with any concern. The Director will find and/or offer an alternate driver or way of transportation. If the driver or parent refuses to cooperate and insists on leaving with the child, the provider is to contact the police to report the driver of the car immediately.

***Missing or Lost Child*** *–* All staff are to keep an accurate count of the number of children in their care at all times. If at any time they realize that a child is lost or missing, the Director will be notified immediately. Staff will conduct a search of each room, playground and parking lot area. If the child is not found, the Director will notify the police and the parent. Staff will continue to search until the child is located.

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We at Community Early Childhood Center want to make sure that every family attending the center clearly understands the content of our Parents Handbook, including complete access to all the policies and procedures we adhere to. If you need further explanation, translation or assistance in reading any of the information provided, please do not hesitate to ask in the center office and we will provide the help you need.