



PARENT-FAMILY HANDBOOK



Family Development Center

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
COLORADO SPRINGS

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WELCOME TO THE FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Our Early Childhood Philosophy

The Family Development Center provides a nurturing and warm environment in which children are free to be themselves and to explore the world around them. Above all, we want our children to feel a sense of security and belonging.

We are committed to the uniqueness of each child, recognizing that children experience varied areas of growth and develop at different paces. Learning activities are adjusted to each child's interests and needs. By celebrating the diversity within our classrooms, it is our hope that children will develop not only a strong sense of self, but respect for the feelings, abilities, and differences of others.

Our classrooms are non-competitive. Children are encouraged to use their unique talents to become imaginative and independent thinkers, problem solvers, and communicators. Children are motivated by their own inspirations and natural curiosities.



When planning activities and interacting with children, our teachers take the “whole child” into account. Beyond ensuring physical safety, we are committed to helping children cultivate their emotional, artistic, physical, intellectual, and social skills. Classroom activities are varied and designed to stimulate many facets of development.

We believe that children learn best through experience—in other words, they learn best by doing. We emphasize the process of learning (for example, manipulating clay, or stringing beads) rather than the products (the finished artwork, or the creation of a perfect bead pattern.) It is through exploration, learning from mistakes, and further experimentation that children achieve the deepest learning, and ultimately the greatest sense of pride in their accomplishments.

A language-rich environment fosters a strong foundation for language and literacy development. Our children are provided with many opportunities to practice communication skills of all kinds: informal discussions with teachers and peers; looking at books and “reading” pictures; retelling familiar stories aloud; writing letters and other symbols; listening to and participating in group stories, songs, and finger plays; depicting stories through drawing; using language to resolve conflicts with other children; role playing; expressing ideas through art and music, and more. Language development is integral to our program because we believe that strong communication skills empower children to be successful lifelong learners.

Self-esteem provides a foundation for successful learning and growth. Children need love, sensitivity, understanding, and encouragement. They also need reasonable limits and guidance, yet the freedom to explore without being stifled by excessive rules or demands. A balanced, consistent and positive environment cultivates the confidence a child needs to flourish.

Our Core Values

Inclusive Diversity: The Family Development Center provides a safe, warm and welcoming environment in which all members of our community are respected and valued. We seek to understand the cultural values and other factors that shape children's lives at home, so that we can tailor our program to be respectful and relevant for every child. Our open-ended, child-centered curriculum allows children to participate at their own developmental levels, and in ways they find meaningful and rewarding, maximizing opportunities for the success of all children.

Community and Collaboration: Our School Family atmosphere nurtures a sense of community belonging, while offering opportunities for children and parents to become engaged in program activities, and to collaborate with others in ways that benefit the program, the community and its members.

Interpersonal Relationships: Relationships among children, families and staff are at the heart of our school family. We know that caring relationships and quality interactions form a foundation for optimal early learning and development. Teachers build relationships with children that are responsive to children's needs. Our curriculum includes social-emotional development, including activities and strategies to promote emotional intelligence, effective communication, and prosocial behavior.

Innovation and Ongoing Development: Our staff collaborate and share decision making as members of a professional learning community, always striving to advance our knowledge and understanding of the field of early childhood education, to stay abreast of current research-based best practices, and to develop and implement innovative, effective methods for nurturing, teaching and supporting the individual children in our care.

Teacher Engagement: Teachers are professionals possessing the knowledge and experience to observe and assess children's development and to make decisions about appropriate curriculum, activities and teaching strategies to support each child's emergent learning. Interactions between teacher and child are responsive to the child and thoughtfully promote development and learning.

Support for College Students: The Family Development Center is a vital program within the larger campus community, offering an essential support service to college students who are parents of young children. Access to quality childcare is key for many students to persist in pursuing their educational aspirations. In addition, the Center employs and trains many college students and serves as a practicum site for students studying early childhood education. We value students and embrace the university's student focus.



Our Mission

The Family Development Center is committed to providing high quality, research based, early childhood programs that are responsive to the needs of children and their families. The Center's programs support parents who are university students by offering financial assistance and ensuring their children receive safe, nurturing care in a stimulating learning environment, enhancing the learning environment of the university by serving as a site for university observation, research, and training, and by providing on-campus student employment opportunities.

Our Vision

Shaping the future through child-centered, research-based, leading-edge early care and education.

Our Principles, Based on Quality Indicators for Effective Early Childhood Programs

The FDC offers a high-quality, research-based early childhood program of care and learning. The following characteristics have been identified through research as indicators of quality in early childhood programs.

- *A safe, warm, and welcoming environment in which children are respected and valued as individuals.*
- *Low Ratios:* Fewer children per teacher, increasing the level and quality of interaction between adults and children.
- *Quality Interactions:* Teachers build relationships with children that are responsive to children's needs. Teachers recognize that their interactions with children directly support children's comfort and acceptance within the program, as well as their developmental and learning needs.
- *A Balance of Educational Activities that Promote Development in All Areas:* Classroom activities are purposefully selected to promote and enhance children's development across all developmental domains: social, emotional, language, cognitive, and physical development.
- *Children Learn through Play and Direct Experience:* Hands-on classroom activities are fun and engaging for children, but also provide important learning opportunities.
- *Opportunities for Learning in Different Ways:* Children may choose from a wide range of learning activities that support a variety of learning styles. Activities throughout the day vary in format, offering small and large group interaction, as well as individual learning and play.
- *Support for Language and Literacy Acquisition:* The classroom environment provides rich opportunities for language development through interaction with others and with print in the environment. Children are read to often and are encouraged to read books on their own. Rhyming games, writing centers, book making projects, and many other activities support early literacy learning.
- *Activities Are Inclusive:* Classroom activities provide for the success of all children. Children are able to participate at their own developmental levels, and in ways they find meaningful and rewarding.



Early Childhood Programs

The primary function of the Family Development Center is to provide high quality early childhood programs for university families and the community at large. We offer full-time and part-time year-round toddler and preschool programs for children ranging in age from 1 year (and walking) to 5 years. A summer day camp program is offered for young elementary children, ages 5 (and completed kindergarten) to 10 years. (Please note we are unable to provide school age care at times other than the summer.)

The Family Development Center is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services. Enrollment is open to university students, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as to community members when possible. Enrollment priority is given to UCCS students.

The toddler and preschool years are the most crucial years of growth and development in a child's life. Caregivers and families can work together to create a positive environment that supports the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth of children. At the Center, we strive to help children build self-esteem and to feed each child's curiosity and enthusiasm. We form partnerships with parents, demonstrating respect for the culture and values of each child's family — creating continuity in the life of the developing child.



Family Development Center Website

For an overview of our program, visit the FDC website: fdc.uccs.edu

University Collaboration

The Family Development Center serves as an observation and practicum site for university students who are studying early childhood education and the growth and development of children. UCCS students and faculty periodically visit the Center to use our classrooms or observation rooms for on-site training. Visitors must always sign-in at the front desk. Their activities must be approved by the administration and supervised by Center staff.

Occasionally, UCCS students and faculty request to conduct research at the Center. All research involving parents, children, or staff must be approved by the UCCS Institutional Review Board (IRB). In addition to IRB approval, researchers need to obtain adult consent and child assent (if the research involves children) prior to conducting the research. Families are informed of upcoming research and given the option of participating. Participation is voluntary, and refusal to participate involves no penalty or loss of services.

POLICIES REGARDING CHILDCARE ENROLLMENT AND FEES

Admission

Enrollment is open to children of university students, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as to community members when possible. Enrollment priority is given to UCCS students. Enrollment is on a space-available basis, with each class group limited by licensing capacity and group size. The Center maintains a Wait List for class groups that are fully enrolled.

Prior to enrollment, a Center administrator meets with the family to discuss the family's needs and to determine whether the services offered by the Center will meet the needs of the child and family. This meeting also provides an opportunity for the family to tour the facility, and for the administrator to explain Center policies and answer any questions the family may have.

In the event of enrollment of a child with special health care needs, the parent/guardian must provide the Center with a copy of an individualized health care plan for the child, signed by a health care provider. The form for the health care plan is available in the Center's office. This form must be completed prior to the child's first day of attendance, and it must be updated annually, or more often as changes occur. The health care plan is shared with the Center's nurse consultant, who advises staff members on the implementation of the plan. Should there be other special requirements for the care of a child (other than health needs), the parent must provide information in writing detailing the special requirements. This information must be submitted prior to the child's first day of attendance.

The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs is committed to maintaining an environment that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, or political philosophy.



Enrolling Your Child

The best way to see what makes us unique is to come and visit. You'll enjoy touring our facility and seeing our program in action. We'd love to meet you and have the opportunity to answer your questions.

Feel free to call or visit to inquire about availability in the classroom for your child's age. The Center operates at or near capacity most weeks of the year. You may wish to be placed on our Wait List.

When enrollment space for your child has been confirmed by one of our administrators you are

ready to enroll, you can now complete and submit an enrollment contract. Your contract, along with payment of the nonrefundable registration fee, reserves a place for your child. (Refer to the current fee schedule for the registration fee and tuition rates.)

Completion of Enrollment Forms

In addition to the enrollment contract, there is a packet of enrollment forms. All enrollment forms must be completed and submitted by your child's first day at the Center.

Please complete the Enrollment Application in full. To provide proper care for your child, we require that the emergency information and authorization for treatment sections of the application be completed by the first day of attendance and updated annually. Childcare regulations require that at least one person other than the parent(s) be included in the list of emergency contacts. We also ask that you complete the parent authorization forms and the Important Information for Parents.

The Food Program Income Eligibility Form is also required. The Center participates in the federally funded Child and Adult Care Food program. We receive reimbursements for meals served to children. We must have parent Income Eligibility forms on file in order for the school to participate.

Please have your child's doctor complete the medical form included in your enrollment packet (General Health Appraisal Form) and provide a current immunization record. State regulations require that these records are on file by your child's first day of attendance. The General Health Appraisal must be dated within the last 6 months for children less than 2½ years, and within the last 12 months for older children. The statement must include when the next visit is required by the health care provider. The General Health Appraisal must be updated annually (expires 1 year from date signed by doctor), and immunizations must be received, and records updated according to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Immunization Schedule. For any child with special health care needs, an individualized health care plan must also be on file by the child's first day of care (forms available in the office). The plan must be signed by a health care provider and updated annually, or sooner if your child's medical condition changes. We are required by State regulation to maintain complete and up-to-date enrollment and health records for all children. The Center has the right to refuse to enroll a child or continue to provide services should the required health statements or records not be provided.

Please note: Our center may have children enrolled who are not fully immunized. In these cases, parents of children who are not fully immunized must provide documentation of exemption, which must be submitted by the first day of attendance; this documentation is required to be kept on file at the Center. As per the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, all non-medical vaccine exemptions expire each year on June 30 and must be updated.



Confidentiality of Records

The contents of children's files are considered confidential and are made available only to those staff who have a need to know in order to fulfill job responsibilities. Disclosure of children's records beyond the parent or guardian and program personnel requires written parental consent, except when disclosure is required by law.

Enrollment is on a Year-Round Basis

Since the Center is open every week of the year and childcare is provided on a continuing basis, parents are billed for childcare every month, including university interim, summer, and holiday weeks. Upon disenrollment, a child's place will be given to another child on the waiting list. The Center cannot hold spaces for children who do not attend during interim weeks or other vacation weeks, unless the parent is paying to reserve the space.

Enrollment Checklist

- If you have not yet visited the Family Development Center, please schedule a visit so you can meet our staff and see our program and facility firsthand. We welcome the opportunity to get to know you and to answer any questions you may have.
- Inquire at the Center about availability in the classroom for your child's age group. If the classroom is already at capacity, you may add your name to our Wait List. Wait-listed families are contacted when space becomes available. It is helpful if you call the Center every few months while on the Wait List to update us on your situation.
- Once space is available, submit an enrollment contract and the registration fee. You will be contacted to confirm we are able to accommodate your enrollment request and start date.
- Once your enrollment request is accepted, complete the enrollment packet in full. Make arrangements with your child's doctor to complete the General Health Appraisal and immunization record. Submit the completed enrollment packet prior to the first day of attendance at the Center.
- If you have any questions, please call (719)255-3483. We will be happy to help you.



Your Childcare Contract, or Agreement

A regular schedule for childcare is arranged on a contract basis. Contract arrangements provide parents with reasonable rates for guaranteed hours of childcare. In order to reserve contracted space, the payment for contracted hours is due monthly, regardless of attendance.

Arrangements that vary every week or that are short-term will be considered drop-in, and will be scheduled on a space-available basis, 24 to 48 hours prior to the date of care. (See Drop-In Care, page 10)

Scheduling Options

Extended-Day Programs, Open 7:30am - 5:30pm, Year-Round		
Toddlers (1-3yrs.)	Full-time	5 days per week
	Part-time	2-3 days per week (M/W/F or T/Th)
Transitioners (2½-3½ yrs.)	Full-time	5 days per week
	Part-time	2-3 days per week (M/W/F or T/Th)
Preschoolers (3-5* yrs. and successful in toilet-learning)	Full-time	5 days per week
	Part-time	2-3 days per week (M/W/F or T/Th)
Summer Camp for Elementary Children, Open 7:30am - 5:30pm, Summer Only		
School Agers (5**-10*** yrs.)	Full-time	5 days per week
	Part-time	2-3 days per week (M/W/F or T/Th)

Parents may reserve childcare services in the following age groups:

* Any child who is 5 years of age by October 1 may not enroll in a preschool program.

** 5-yr-old campers must have finished kindergarten.

*** Children who turn 11 years of age during the camp season (May through August) are considered “aged out” of the program and may not attend.

Group Placement

A child’s placement in a particular classroom is based primarily on age, with consideration of developmental needs. Information you provide helps us to make the best decision regarding initial group placement. Later, as your child approaches the next age or group level, the teacher will speak to you about beginning to make the transition to the next group.

Orientation of New Families/Supporting the Child’s Transition

New families tour the Center as part of the enrollment process. Families are encouraged to bring their child on the tour if at all possible. The tour includes a meeting with a staff member or administrator, during which the Center’s services and policies are explained, and parents have the opportunity to ask questions and clarify their understanding.

Families receive a folder containing enrollment information, a contract and application packet; a current tuition chart; the Parent-Family Handbook detailing policies; an overview of the program’s philosophy and curriculum; a sample menu; and contact information, should the parent have further questions. Families are encouraged to return for a longer visit to the child’s new classroom in advance of starting in the program, to allow the child an opportunity to meet the teachers and become familiar with the environment.

On the first day of enrollment, families are welcomed to the Center, and teachers make every effort to ensure that children are welcomed and oriented to the classroom. Teachers are responsive to the child’s needs and feelings, helping the child to feel comfortable and included in the program and the group. Family members may use the adjacent observation room to observe their child’s interaction and engagement in the program. Teachers and administrators are available to answer families’ questions and provide information as needed. An administrator will follow-up with a courtesy call to the parent within the first few weeks of enrollment.

Changing Your Contracted Schedule

You may change your childcare contract (make a schedule adjustment by adding/dropping days, or by moving from an extended-day preschool classroom to the Full-Day Preschool classroom) when there is space in the program to accommodate your request. Changes must be requested in advance, at minimum during the week prior to the Monday when the new schedule takes effect. A contract change will be accompanied by an administrative charge of \$12.

We are not always able to accommodate contract changes that move from full-time to part-time schedules. To fully meet our financial obligations, a certain number of spaces in every classroom are reserved for full-time children. If there are no spaces remaining that are designated for part-time children, the Center will not accommodate a full-time to part-time change.

Parents/guardians who are university students and who have enrolled their children part-time may need to make contract changes at the beginning of each new semester. To receive priority consideration for a semester contract change, submit your contract change form as early as possible. Changes are granted on a first come, first served basis. If we have not received notice, we will assume your child's schedule will be continuing unchanged. Although we do our best to accommodate contract changes, we are unable to guarantee we can honor all requests. You will be notified whether we can accommodate your new schedule.

Requesting Drop-In Care

Children currently attending part-time may also use the Center on a drop-in basis for non-contracted days. Drop-in services are provided if space is available, and reservations are made 24 hours in advance. To request drop-in care, submit a drop-in request form, or call the Center. Our staff will check whether space is available to accommodate your request. Payment is due the day services are provided.

Tuition

The Family Development Center offers competitive childcare rates, with discounted rates for children of UCCS affiliates (students, staff, faculty and alumni). Tuition rates accommodate a variety of parent scheduling needs, ranging from part-time (2-3 days per week) to full-time childcare. Please refer to the current rate schedule for details. For information on university student financial assistance, refer to Financial Assistance on page 12.



Payment of Fees

Childcare tuition is due monthly, on the 1st day of every month, for that month's care. If needed, to accommodate bi-weekly pay periods, families can choose to pay one-half of their childcare tuition on the 1st of the month and pay the second half on the 15th of the month. Please contact the Facility Director to set up this payment plan. A late fee of \$15 will be assessed if payment has not been received, in full, by the close of business on the 20th of the month. In addition, any balance on an

account will be assessed a late fee of \$15 every month until the account is paid in full.

Accounts that are one month in arrears will result in immediate disenrollment. Upon payment, enrollment may be reinstated at the discretion of the director, and if the enrollment slot is still available. A \$30 returned check charge will be assessed for any checks returned for non-sufficient funds. Delinquent accounts will be forwarded to the State Collection Agency, at which time a 20% collection fee will be added to the account balance.



UCCS students should be aware that an encumbrance will be placed on student accounts that remain delinquent. This encumbrance affects a student's ability to register for classes and receive transcripts and diplomas. The encumbrance remains in effect until the account is paid for in full.

Billing and Childcare Account



All families are required to register for Smartcare for signing your child in and out of the Center and for billing purposes.

Smartcare Parent App & Web Portal Instructions

1. You will receive an email from Smartcare Services to set up your account. Please look for this email and follow the link to verify your account.
2. After verifying your account, you can download the Smartcare app on your mobile device from the App Store or Google Play. You can also use any computer to access your billing account at www.smartcare.com.

Once your account is verified you can:

1. Use the sign in/out kiosks at the Center to scan your QR code from your phone to sign your child in and out of the center for every pickup and drop off for your child.
2. View and pay your bill via the Parent App or Web Portal at my.smartcare.com. Parents can pay via ACH transfer/Checking Account Routing at no cost to you, or you can pay with a credit/debit card with a transaction fee of 2.58% per transaction.

Annual Registration/Enrollment Fee

A nonrefundable registration/enrollment fee is due at the time of enrollment and every year thereafter on the anniversary of enrollment. Please refer to the current rate schedule for the fee amount.

Refund Policy

Should an overpayment be made, the account shows a credit balance, and the overpayment can be used to reduce the payment made the following month. Should a credit balance remain on the account at the time of disenrollment from the program, a refund will be issued to the parent. Refund requests are

submitted to the university system accounting office (in Denver), and refund checks are typically issued 1-3 weeks following submission of the request.

Financial Assistance

UCCS students may be eligible for financial assistance through the university financial aid office (719-255-3460). Childcare subsidies through a CCAMPIS grant to the FDC are available to low-income, Pell-eligible university students through application. ~~Students should be sure to include their needs for childcare in their discussions with financial aid counselors.~~

Equal Access/Non-Discrimination

The Family Development Center has been equipped to provide equal access to persons with physical disabilities. The Center does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, or political philosophy.

Hours of Operation/Holidays

The Family Development Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. The Center will remain open when there are no college classes in session, such as during spring break, except on days when the UCCS campus is officially closed.

UCCS Campus/FDC Center Closure Days:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Days after/before Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
Weekdays between Christmas and New Year's Eve
New Year's Eve
New Year's Day
2 Parent-Teacher Conference days (November and April)
2 Cleaning and Classroom Set-up Days(August and February)
1 Professional Development Day in August
2 Early Release days, FDC closes at 12pm for PLC (October/March)

Veteran's Day, President's Day, and Frances Cabrini Day are also holiday closure days that are typically moved and scheduled between the Christmas and New Year's holidays and the day after Thanksgiving, rather than on their designated calendar days, to provide an extended Thanksgiving and Winter Holiday Closure for Staff and Faculty. As a state entity, UCCS reserves the right to include additional closure days to the calendar when granted by either the State of Colorado Governor, or the UCCS Chancellor, at which time the Family Development Center will also close on these days.

Families are billed for full childcare tuition fees during weeks when there are UCCS Campus and/or FDC center closure days.

Weather Closures

Occasionally, the Center closes due to extreme weather conditions. If the University is closed, has a delayed opening, or closes early due to inclement weather, the Center will also be closed or delayed. FDC families will receive text and email alerts announcing any changes in operating hours. Families are expected to retrieve their children from care within 30 minutes of an immediate closure announcement. A recorded message on the campus weather hotline states the weather closure status for the day (255-3346). Closures are also announced on local radio and television stations. The best way to ensure you receive timely notice of weather closures/delays is to sign up for UCCSAlerts, the campus emergency notification system that sends text alerts of weather closures and other emergency information (to sign up, complete the UCCSAlerts form in your FDC enrollment packet, or request one at the FDC reception desk). When the FDC is closed for snow/weather conditions there is no adjustment in the childcare tuition fees. Families are billed for full childcare tuition fees during that time.



Temporary Closures of the FDC Due to Illness/Emergency/Safety Precaution

The FDC may need to temporarily close individual classrooms, or the entire Center, due to illnesses, emergencies, and safety precautions. The FDC will work in partnership with UCCS Administration and Public Safety, City of Colorado Springs, and the El Paso County Health Department, to determine when closures may be necessary. FDC families will receive text and email alerts announcing any changes in operating hours. Families are expected to retrieve their children from care within 30 minutes of an immediate closure announcement. All parents/guardians/account owners responsible for their child(ren)'s childcare tuition must pay the full monthly charge when the FDC closes either a single classroom, or the full facility, for Temporary Closures.

Late Arrival

We ask that parents consider the classroom routine when arranging their daily schedules to drop off their children at the Center. We suggest that children arrive at the Center by 9:00 or 9:30 am each day, to receive the greatest benefit from the classroom program. However, if you are going to be late in dropping off your child, be sure to have your child at the Center by 10:00 am. Our toddler and preschool classrooms have a rest period following lunch each day. Arriving just prior to or during the rest period is generally not a successful or inviting experience for your child and can cause disruptions for the other children who may need to rest.

In the event your child's class is scheduled for a field trip, please be certain to have your child to the Center by the scheduled time of departure. Should your child arrive after their group has departed, the

Center will not accept the child for the day. There is no alternative activity available at the Center. (See Field Trips, page 20)

Late Child Pickup

Parents of children who remain at the Center after closing (5:30 PM) will be assessed a late pickup charge of \$2 per minute. Parents who repeatedly arrive after closing will be asked to disenroll.

In the event you will be arriving late to pick up, please phone the Center immediately to inform staff of the situation. Should we receive no communication, during the hour following closing, our staff will try to locate you or your emergency contacts. If we are unsuccessful, at 60 minutes past closing Center staff may contact child protective services and/or law enforcement.

Conflict Resolution

Should a conflict arise between a parent and a staff member, there is a conflict resolution process to be followed. Issues regarding classroom activities, procedures and incidents may be addressed directly to the teacher. Should this fail to resolve the conflict, the parent is welcome to bring the matter to the attention of one of the Center administrators or the Director. Policy disputes may be brought directly to the attention of the Director.

Disenrollment



Please let us know as soon as you have made the decision to disenroll your child. A minimum of two weeks' notice is required. If two weeks' notice is not given, you will be charged for the full two weeks.

Occasionally, our program is not a good fit for a child or family. The Family Development Center may disenroll a child for one of the following reasons: the account is one month in arrears; parent's failure to provide required medical or administrative forms; refusal to follow Center policies; lack of parental cooperation with the Center's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff

meetings or conferences; threatening or abusive behavior (verbal or physical) exhibited by the parent or child, or behavior that does not support a safe and healthy environment at the childcare center; or, the Center is unable to meet the needs of the child or family.

Our staff are well trained and work hard to identify the social, emotional and developmental needs of each child. However, there are times when children may need additional care that our staff are not able to provide. If we feel that a child's behavior endangers their own safety or the safety of others at the Center or requires an amount of one-on-one supervision that is not sustainable, we will document incidents and notify the parent. We typically schedule a parent-teacher-administrator conference to work with the family to develop a plan of action to better support the child, and request that a

professional developmental screening is provided by an early childhood mental health consultant. If the child continues to be a danger to themselves or to other children, requiring one-on-one supervision that is not sustainable by the classroom staff, we may choose to suspend the child for a specific period. If we feel we are unable to adequately and safely meet the needs of the child, the Director may make the decision to disenroll the child. It is only as a last resort, and in the best interests of both the child and the center, that we ask a family to remove a child from our care.

Typically, two weeks' notice of disenrollment is provided to the family; however, in rare circumstances where significant safety concerns are present, the FDC Director reserves the right to disenroll a child without notice to ensure the safety of the child and/or others at the Center. FDC staff are happy to assist the family by providing referrals to alternate childcare providers, with consideration of the factors that are likely to support the child and family in a successful placement.

Parking

Please drive slowly and carefully in our parking lot, as other parents may be dropping off or picking up their children. There are seventeen parking spaces in the Family Development Center lot that are reserved for parents dropping off and picking up children. These are the spaces labeled “30-minute parking only,” directly in front of the entrance to the Center. Please use these spaces—they are the closest to the front door and are directly adjacent to the sidewalk for safe, easy access. The fenced lot (Lot 226) is a UCCS “Yellow Circle” lot and requires a permit, though parents can use this lot during drop-off and pick-up hours of 7:30-9:30 am and 3:30-5:30 pm without being ticketed. Please do not park in the fire lane, service lane, or any other area marked as a “no parking” zone. Campus police routinely ticket cars parked illegally.

Cars May Not Be Left Idling in Parking Lot

Please do not leave your car idling in the parking lot while dropping off your child. This is illegal, and you may be ticketed. This practice also exposes children who may be playing in nearby playgrounds to dangerous emissions.

Unattended Children in Vehicles

Please do not leave unattended children in your vehicle while in our parking lot.



Door Code Access

The front door of the Family Development Center remains locked during hours of operation. A unique passcode is issued to each family so they may enter the building.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures and Authorization for Pick-Up

A parent/ guardian/authorized person must sign their child in and out every time they drop off or pick up the child at the Center. This is a State of Colorado regulation.

Your child’s safety is our paramount concern. There are several reasons the sign-in/out system is important. In the event of emergency, it provides a quick list of all the children who are present in the building. In addition, the sign-in/sign-out system provides a record of attendance, required by the State of Colorado, Division of Early Childhood Education.

At the time of enrollment, parents are asked to provide a list of persons authorized to pick up their children from the Center. Authorized persons must be at least 18 years of age. If anyone other than

those on the list is to pick up your child, you must provide written authorization. In the event of an emergency, you may notify the office by phone that someone who is not on the authorized list will be picking up your child for that day. Please give the Center the name and a description of the individual and ask the adult to check in at the front desk before going to the classroom to pick up your child. We will ask any adult we do not recognize to show photo identification before releasing a child. Children will not be released to unauthorized persons.

If a parent/guardian is prohibited from picking up a child, a court order must be on file at the Center.

In the event an unauthorized person arrives at the Center to pick up a child and becomes insistent or uncooperative, or any person who arrives to pick up is intoxicated, impaired, or belligerent, Public Safety (campus police) will be called immediately for assistance (see p. 18).



Visitors

All parents are welcome to visit their children at the Family Development Center—we have an open-door policy. We also encourage families to make use of our observation rooms, so they may observe their children’s natural interactions with their teachers and peers.

Occasionally, the Center is visited by workmen, inspectors, university students and staff, and adults interested in enrolling their children at the Center. All visitors must ring the bell at the front door to gain access and are then required to sign the visitor’s log. Visitors must have an appropriate

reason for the visit. At no time are visitors allowed unsupervised access to the children.

Employee Background Checks

All employees at the Family Development Center are carefully screened and assessed as part of the hiring process. All employees must pass thorough background checks. Only the very best are hired.

Active Supervision

Teachers actively supervise children at all times. They take attendance frequently throughout the day, at regular intervals, to ensure they know the whereabouts of all children. Teachers circulate and interact with children, guiding them into appropriate activities and heading off potential problems before they occur. They also strive to maintain a safe environment, and to establish clear guidelines for appropriate behavior, which are explained and taught to children. Active supervision minimizes the possibility of accidents or injuries. Occasionally, teachers fulfill professional responsibilities outside of the classroom, including attending meetings and trainings, planning for classroom activities, and holding conferences with parents. Qualified caregivers are scheduled to provide care and supervision during the absence of regular teaching staff. At all times, requirements for qualified teachers and child to staff ratios are met. Continuous supervision is ensured.

Regular Safety Inspections

Classrooms and playgrounds are inspected regularly for safety hazards. The facilities and equipment are maintained regularly to ensure a high level of safety.

First Aid and CPR Training for Staff Members

Our staff members are routinely trained in pediatric first aid and CPR procedures. First aid kits are located throughout the building, in all classrooms and the office. During field trips, a kit is always carried along.

Minor Bumps and Bruises

If your child has a minor accident while attending the Center, our staff will administer the proper first aid treatment. An injury report will be completed. You will be asked to sign the report when you pick up your child.

Injuries and Medical/Dental Emergencies

In the event of a serious injury or medical/dental emergency, we will make every effort to immediately reach you, or one of your emergency contacts if you are unavailable. Childcare regulations require that at least one person other than the parent(s) be included in the list of emergency contacts. Please be sure the person(s) you list as emergency contacts understand their responsibility. If we are unable to locate you or one of your emergency contacts, we will seek emergency medical treatment, while continuing to attempt to contact you. A teacher or administrator will accompany your child to an emergency care facility. Please be sure to keep your child's enrollment file up to date, with current phone numbers and emergency authorizations, and ensure important medical information is updated annually, as required by the State. A detailed injury report is completed in the event of an injury requiring medical attention.



Role of the UCCS Office of Public Safety

Any emergency on campus is overseen by campus Public Safety personnel, which includes State police officers and safety specialists. The office of Public Safety is notified immediately in the event of any emergency. Personnel arrive on the scene within minutes.

Fire and Tornado Drills

All staff members are trained in emergency procedures. Fire drills are practiced year-round, and tornado drills occur during tornado season. During fire drills, children are evacuated to the fenced parking lot,

where they remain calmly seated in groups, under the careful supervision of teachers. (In the event of an actual fire, children may be evacuated from the parking lot to another location if determined to be safer, under the direction of fire and police officers. For example, the UCCS University Center may be identified as a location that is safer under certain circumstances; arrangements would then be made to transport children there, where children would remain under the care and supervision of their teachers, and parents would be notified through UCCS Alerts.) During tornado drills, all staff and children move to a large classroom that has been equipped with storm shutters for increased safety, where everyone can shelter-in-place until any danger has passed.



Lockout/Lockdown Plan

The Center has an emergency response plan in the event of a safety threat in the nearby area. The Center would be locked out or locked down until advised by Public Safety that the threat has passed. Communication with Public Safety would clarify the nature and extent of the threat and provide direction for appropriate response. During a lockout, all Center doors and windows would be locked, blinds would be closed, and children would not be permitted on the playgrounds. In the event of a more serious threat, individual classrooms would also be secured. Any additional precautions would be taken at the direction of Public Safety. Parents would be notified via UCCS Alerts.

UCCS Alerts (Campus Emergency Notification System)

In order to receive prompt notification in the event of a campus or Center emergency, parents are urged to enroll in the campus emergency notification system, UCCS Alerts. To sign up, complete the UCCS Alerts form in your FDC enrollment packet, or request one at the FDC reception desk. This system can provide emergency information to parents much more quickly than FDC email.

Parents can also download the UCCS Safe app, or sign up for temporary notifications from UCCS. The UCCS Safe app allows users to communicate directly with the UCCS Police Department and sends instant notifications and instructions when on-campus emergencies occur. Visitors to campus can also text the keyword UCCSAlert to 67283 to receive alerts for 90 days.

Other Emergencies

The University has a campus-wide emergency plan to respond to large-scale emergencies and evacuations. The campus plan can be viewed online at the Public Safety website: <https://dess.uccs.edu/em>. All emergency response on campus is overseen and directed by Emergency Management and Public Safety personnel, which include state-commissioned police officers.

In the event of severe emergency (i.e., facilities failure, natural disaster), children and staff may be

evacuated to another building. Children will be transported (by university bus or vehicle, police vehicle, or by foot) to a safe location during an emergency, where they will remain under the care and supervision of their teachers. Two alternate campus locations have been identified for the FDC: the University Center and the Recreation Center. Parents are urged to enroll in UCCSAlerts (see above), to receive prompt notification in the event of a campus emergency or Center evacuation. This is the quickest and most reliable way to receive up-to-date information regarding an emergency. In addition, when possible, the Center will notify parents through email. In the event of an emergency, our priority will remain the care and safety of the children.

Prohibited Substances and Firearms

All staff, students, parents and visitors are prohibited from the unlawful possession, distribution and use of illicit drugs or alcohol on the premises. Possession of illegal firearms, explosives, and other dangerous weapons is also strictly prohibited on campus, as per university policy. Any violation of these policies will be immediately reported to campus police and may result in criminal charges or other disciplinary action.

Smoking and Tobacco Use on Campus

The Family Development Center is a smoke-free and tobacco-free environment, as are all buildings campus-wide. Smoking on campus may only take place in an outdoor designated smoking area (a campus-wide policy). The only designated smoking area near the Family Development Center is the fenced parking lot (Lot 226). We request that, out of courtesy to our young children, smoking takes place out of view of children and at a distance of at least 25 feet from our playgrounds, so children are not exposed to smoke as they play outdoors. Please help us to protect the health of all our children.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

By law, childcare workers are required to report all suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Colorado Department of Early Childhood Education.

Reporting Suspected Abuse of an Adult

Should there ever be any suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse of a staff member, volunteer, or parent/guardian that occurs on the premises, all UCCS policies will be followed in reporting the suspicion of abuse to campus authorities.



Field Trips

Summer Campers take daily field trips to visit local natural, historical, cultural and recreational sites. Preschoolers who are three and older may occasionally take a field trip by walking to an adjacent nature area or to a nearby neighborhood park. Families are always notified of trips, and written parent permission is required for participation. Children are closely supervised on field trips. In the event of an emergency,

the lead teacher carries a cell phone and copies of the emergency contact information and medical treatment forms for every child, as well as a first aid kit. Children must arrive at the program prior to field trip departure to be accepted into the program for the day. See [page 39](#) for more info on Field Trips.

Inclement and Excessively Hot Weather

Children play out of doors nearly every day. However, if precipitation is occurring or you observe lightning, children may not be on the playgrounds. If you are already outside, bring in the children immediately. Children are also restricted from outdoor play on days that are excessively cold (below 20 degrees) or excessively hot (95+ degrees). However, to ensure safety on extreme temperature days, consult the Weather Watch chart posted at the reception desk, which takes Heat Index and Wind Chill into account to determine safety. On hot days, be sure children are well-hydrated. On days when children may not play outside, indoor gross motor activities must be offered. Licensing requires 60 minutes of daily physical gross motor activities be offered (outdoors or indoors, with or without equipment or materials); gross motor activities do not have to occur all at one time.

Transportation Safety

Field trips for Summer Campers (ages 5-10) include transportation by university bus, a commercial vehicle that is driven by a professional driver. Seating capacity is never exceeded, and children wear seat belts at all times and are supervised carefully by staff to ensure safety. On a rare occasion, preschoolers who are at least four years of age may take a field trip including transportation by university bus. As for all field trips, written parent permission is required. Children under four will not be transported by bus for any reason other than extreme emergencies (i.e., emergency evacuation). Qualified staff members provide supervision on the bus and throughout the trip, maintaining proper staff to child ratios at all times. Emergency contact information and medical treatment forms are always carried in the vehicle, as well as a first aid kit.

Presence and Safe Care of Classroom Pets

On occasion, our teachers choose to provide fish tanks or other small pets to extend science learning as children observe and help to care for classroom pets. Currently, a couple of our classrooms have fish

aquaria. Any pets acquired by the Center must be safe for observation by children and must meet all licensing and health department guidelines for safety in early childhood classrooms. Pets must be cared for appropriately, and must be free from disease, immunized when applicable, and maintained in a sanitary manner.



Required Information for Parents

The Colorado Department of Human Services requires all childcare centers to provide information on the following policies to parents.

Procedure for identifying where children are at all times: Teachers are responsible for knowing where all children are at all times. They take “face-to-name” attendance at specific times of the day (upon arrival, when going outside and coming back in, when the group leaves the room and returns, during and after emergency evacuations, and when boarding and getting off the bus on field trips), as well as frequently throughout the day, at regular intervals. “Face-to-name” counts require verifying that every child who is in attendance is present in the room. This information is recorded and tracked on an attendance sheet.



Lost child procedure: Should a child be discovered missing, the director or administrator in charge would be immediately notified. A thorough search of the building and playground areas would be conducted. If the child were not located within minutes, campus Public Safety and the parents of the child would be called.

Health Procedures Overseen by Our Nurse Consultant

The Family Development Center contracts with a nurse who acts as a consultant regarding health issues. The nurse visits monthly, stopping by each classroom and providing guidance to teachers and administrators regarding health concerns and regulations. She also provides educational articles for staff and parents, informs us of health-related changes in regulations, and reviews and recommends health procedures. Our nurse provides medication training for our staff and oversees the process of medication administration at the Center. She is also available to our staff for phone consultation when needed.

Regular Health Care

All children in licensed childcare in Colorado are required to receive regular health care, and specific health records (see below) are required to be kept on file in the childcare center. Should you need referral information regarding local health care providers, medical insurance, and/or low-cost health care options, please speak to an administrator. We maintain a resource file in the office regarding health services and other family support services. There are also some brochures for community health resources that are made available in our lobby.



Health Records

Please have your child's doctor complete the General Health Appraisal form included in your enrollment packet and provide a current immunization record. State regulations require that this information is on file for every child enrolled at the Center, provided by the first day of attendance. The General Health Appraisal must include when the next visit is required by the health care provider, and be updated annually, upon expiration, and immunizations must be received and records updated according to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment schedule. For any child with special health care needs, an individualized health care plan must also be on file by the child's first day of care. The plan must be signed by a health care provider and updated annually, or sooner if your child's medical condition changes. The Center has the right to refuse to enroll a child or refuse to continue to provide services should the required health statements/records not be provided.

Exempt Immunizations

Our center may have children enrolled who are not fully immunized. In these cases, parents of children who are not fully immunized must provide documentation of exemption, which must be submitted by

the first day of attendance; this documentation is required to be kept on file at the Center. As per the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, all non-medical vaccine exemptions expire each year on June 30 and must be updated. Children who have been exempt from immunizations are not allowed to attend the Center when communicable diseases are present in the Center, and full tuition must be paid during these absences.

The parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible if a child is ill or exhibiting any of the above symptoms. In the event of illness, you must retrieve your child within 30 minutes of notification of suspected illness. If the Center is unable to reach you in the first 15 minutes, we will call your emergency contacts to come pick up your child. Depending on the illness and symptoms, or if your child is too ill to receive care in the regular group, your child will be isolated from the other children and cared for by an individual staff member until you arrive, to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Should Center administrators have reason to suspect a child participating in the program may have a condition potentially communicable to others or find a child's general condition indicates the need for examination, an administrator may require the child be seen by a health care provider and that a statement from the provider be obtained.

Illness

Please do not bring your child to the Center if they have, or have had, any of the following conditions within the last 24-48 hours:

- Fever 100.4 degrees or higher, without the use of fever-reducing medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.)
- Nasal discharge is profuse or discolored
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Severe, persistent or productive cough, or one that interferes with their ability to participate/sleep
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pink eye/ Conjunctivitis
- Unusual spots or rash
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Lice or scabies, until treatment has been completed
- Unusual sleepiness, crankiness, extended crying, or inability to be calmed or comforted
- Symptoms that are unable to be managed in a group care setting
- Any communicable disease



Children who have been sick may return to the Center when they are symptom-free for at least 24-48 hours, or according to the following guidelines:

- Fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen
- Nasal discharge is clear and not frequent
- Diarrhea or vomiting has ceased for at least 24 hours
- No lice or nits present on child and treatment has been completed

- Treatment has been completed for scabies
- Chicken pox are scabbed over
- An antibiotic regimen has been taken for 24 hours (or as prescribed by physician)
- Rashes or spots have been diagnosed by a physician, treated, or deemed no longer contagious
- Child is no longer contagious with a communicable illness as per Doctor's statement

Please notify us immediately if your child contracts a contagious disease, for example: COVID-19; hand, foot and mouth; chicken pox; strep throat; RSV (respiratory syncytial virus); or the flu, etc. The FDC is required by State law to notify other parents that their children may have been exposed to the disease. Parents will be informed by a notice posted at the Center, or by email. In cases of more serious communicable diseases, the Center is required to report known cases to the Health Department. In the case of an active pandemic, such as COVID-19, if there is a positive case in a child, staff member, or immediate exposure to a child or staff member, the Center will work with the El Paso County Department of Health to determine the next steps, which may include classroom closures. All health department guidelines and directives will be followed to ensure the greatest level of safety for everyone.

The Family Development Center is dedicated to keeping every child, family, and staff member safe, happy and healthy. Thank you for doing your part in keeping our School Family healthy and safe. It is greatly appreciated!



Long-Term Illness or Serious Medical Condition

The Center provides care for some children with special, non-communicable health care needs, when the Center is able to fully provide a safe and healthy environment for the child. There may be some circumstances, however, in which the Center is unable to provide the level of care needed by an enrolled child. In the event a child contracts a long-term contagious illness or develops a medical condition requiring specialized care that is beyond the scope of that provided at the Center, the Center reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of the child, in respect for and

consideration of the needs of the child, as well as those of other enrolled children.

Medications

The Center can only administer medications that have written orders from a physician or health care provider with prescriptive authority. This includes prescriptions and over-the-counter medications. Your child's doctor must complete the "Order for Medication" form, which can be faxed to our office to speed delivery. By licensing regulation, home remedies, including homeopathic medications, may never be given to a child while in care at the Center.

The parent/guardian must also provide written authorization for the Center to administer medication, by completing the form called "Parent Permission for Medication Administration." These forms are located in the office. Please ask an administrator for a form and be sure to discuss any special medication

instructions with the teacher. A separate authorization form must be completed for each medicine. All forms must be on file in the office prior to medication administration.

All medications must be brought to the Center in their original containers, with your child's name and dosage printed on the label. Please provide a calibrated medicine spoon, dropper, or cup if required. Medications that are out-of-date may not be administered. Parents are notified when out-of-date or leftover medications are at the Center, requesting they pick up these items. If parents do not respond within a reasonable timeframe, the center is responsible for disposing of medications according to regulation.

Please give all medicines to a teacher or center administrator. Medications are stored in areas that are inaccessible to children (in the locked medicine cabinet adjacent to the director's office, or in a medication container in the kitchen refrigerator.) Medications may not be stored in the classrooms or in children's backpacks or diaper bags. The only exception is in the case of emergency medications, such as an inhaler or EpiPen, which may be stored in the classroom in a place accessible to staff, but out of reach of children, in accordance with our nurse consultant's recommendation. When away from the classroom, staff must carry emergency medications in a bag on their person. This policy is followed for all enrolled children, including those of elementary school age. As with all medications, when an inhaler or EpiPen is brought to the Center, the parent must hand off the medication to a teacher or administrator for proper storage. When in childcare, the child may not carry the inhaler or EpiPen on his/her person or in a backpack.



The teacher will record the date and time any medication is administered on the "medication log" area of the Parent Permission for Medication Administration form. These records are retained in the Center office.

Diapering

Families are responsible for providing disposable diapers and wipes for their children who wear diapers, or pull-ups/disposable training pants and wipes for those who are in the process of toilet learning. In the event of an emergency and you did not provide diapers/wipes, you can purchase them from the front desk at the Family Development Center. Due to sanitation and storage concerns, cloth diapers are not permitted at the Center.

Please check your child's diaper bag each day to ensure there are no hazards in the bag. Diaper creams, medications, choke hazards, and other unsafe items may not be brought to school in the diaper bag. Diaper bags are stored in cubbies where children may be able to reach them.

Teachers change diapers every hour and a half to two hours, and as needed throughout the day. They record diaper changes on each child's Daily Care Sheet. Staff follow all licensing and health department

guidelines for safe and sanitary diapering. Teachers wear gloves while diapering, and then wash their hands and those of the child, and thoroughly disinfect the diapering table after every child's use. Diapering procedures are posted by each diapering table.

Toilet Learning

Based on observation of the child's signs of readiness for toilet learning, along with discussion and input from the family, Center staff will determine when to begin providing support for toilet learning at school. Readiness signs include interest in learning to toilet, ability to dress and undress self, awareness of bodily functions, and ability to verbalize toileting needs. As toddlers show signs of readiness, our teachers will support the toilet learning process in a positive and low-stress manner. Children are asked if they would like to toilet; they are never coerced or forced.

The individual child's developmental abilities and needs are considered and supported. Teachers and families work together to create a consistent and encouraging environment at home and school for toilet learning. Please be aware that childcare licensing prohibits any "attempt to toilet train children until they are able to verbalize or otherwise indicate need, help manage their own clothing, and be able to access toileting facilities." Toilet learning support typically begins in our Toddler 2 class, based on each child's readiness.



Once a child has entered the toilet learning phase (child is showing signs of readiness, and teacher and parent have discussed that toilet learning support will begin at school), parents must then provide disposable pull-ups/training pants and wipes for their child. We ask that parents refrain from bringing their child to school in pull-ups/training pants until the child is ready for toileting, to minimize unnecessary sanitation risks in the classroom. Cloth training pants are not permitted at the Center in this stage of the learning process. Accidents are treated as a normal part of the learning process; children are never reprimanded or punished for toileting accidents.

Once a child has been accident-free in disposable pull-ups/training pants for four weeks, together the teacher and parent may determine it is time for the child to transition into cloth training pants at school—thick 5-ply pants. The absorbent thickness helps to ensure a sanitary classroom environment for all children. Children are assisted with changing their training pants, and clothing, if necessary, as soon as they become soiled.

We encourage parents to provide extra change of clothing for children who are in the process of toilet learning. There are many days that more than one change of clothing (and even socks and shoes) may be needed. Soiled clothing will be bagged, labeled, and sent home for laundering. We encourage the family to be patient as children progress through the toilet learning process. For most children, toilet learning involves steps forward as well as back; this is normal. Children acquire toilet learning skills in their own time and pace, best supported through consistent, patient and encouraging interactions with parents and teachers.

Once a child has been accident-free for at least two weeks in thick training pants, the child may begin

wearing regular cloth underwear at school. When a child is fully toilet trained and is 3 years old, they can move up to the preschool classrooms, if space is available. Please consult with your teacher to ensure toilet training and their preschool move-up date are aligned.

Personal Hygiene/Handwashing

Our staff receive training in proper techniques for hand washing, diapering, and preventing transmission of disease. Children are taught the recommended procedure for washing their hands. Children and staff wash their hands upon arrival and many other times throughout the day, according to licensing, health and NECPA guidelines. Handwashing procedures are posted by every sink.

Classroom Sanitation

We strive to maintain high standards of cleanliness at all times. The Center is professionally cleaned every night. Classroom staff ensure sanitation routines are carried out throughout the day. Diaper changing areas and disinfected after every use, and classroom tables are sanitized before and after meals. Other classroom surfaces, toys and equipment are also regularly cleaned and sanitized.



Food, Nutrition and Food Service

Nutritious meals are a part of the learning experience. Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are served daily at no additional charge to families. Mealtimes are as follows: breakfast between 8:30 and 9:00; lunch between 11:30 and 12:00; snack about 3:00 (refer to the schedule posted in your child's classroom for specific times for that group). To be included in the food service, your child must be present when meals are being served. All meals are prepared on campus by catering staff.

Menus are posted weekly and are also available to pick up from the office. Our menus are designed to present a well-balanced variety of nutritious and pleasing foods. There is an 8-week menu cycle. We believe that children benefit from being exposed to a wide range of foods, to acquire familiarity with flavors and textures and to learn to eat a nutritionally balanced diet. In general, since your child's nutritional needs will be met with foods provided by the Center, we ask that you do not send food with your child except under special circumstances when you have made arrangements with a Center administrator. If your child has a dietary restriction, please refer to the section below on Food Allergies/Dietary Restrictions.

The Family Development Center participates in the federally funded Child and Adult Care Food Program*. The CACFP provides guidelines for nutritional variety and quantities of food to serve children of different ages. CACFP also periodically audits the Center's compliance with food program requirements and standards. For many years, the Center has been noted for its outstanding food program.

As a participating CACFP program, the Center receives reimbursements for meals served to

children. The reimbursements help us to keep our fees as low as possible. All families are required to complete an Income Eligibility Form (IEF) annually, every July/August. This form is confidential, and the information supplied is not used for any other purpose than to allow the Center to qualify for the maximum amount of reimbursement for which we are eligible. We appreciate your cooperation in completing this form along with your enrollment packet.

Family-Style Dining*

Mealtime, like all classroom activities, is a time for learning. Meals are served *family-style* in the classroom. Teachers join the children at the table, modeling appropriate mealtime behavior. A relaxed and pleasant atmosphere is established. Children are encouraged to try new foods. They learn to serve themselves, pour their own milk, pass dishes to others, and clean up after the meal. (Note: During an active pandemic, meal service is modified according to health guidelines, which may include meals being plated by a staff member and served individually to each child.)

*Our center participates in a USDA Program. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Food Allergies/Dietary Restrictions

If your child has a food allergy or other dietary restriction, please speak to an administrator at the time of enrollment, or as soon as the allergy is diagnosed. In the event of a dietary restriction, the parent must ask the child's doctor to complete the Special Diet Statement, a form that is required for the child to eat an alternative diet at school.

A food program resource book (containing our menus and ingredient lists) is available in the office for parents to review, in order to locate regular menu items that contain allergens their child must avoid. Families review each week's menu and mark the items that may not be served to their

child, providing the notated menu to the child's teacher. Families then provide substitute meals, or meal components, for every FDC meal component the child cannot have. Alternatemeal components should be similar to the component that is being replaced (i.e., a protein for a protein, or a fruit for a fruit). Certain food items that are not considered "creditable" by the CACFP program may not be used as food replacements (i.e., chips, pretzels, popcorn, sugar-sweetened beverages; for a more complete list of non-creditable foods, inquire in the Center's office). No food containing any type of nuts are allowed. All foods brought from home must be stored in an appropriate container and clearly marked with the child's name. Unfortunately, the Center is unable to prepare special meals for individual children.



child prior to outdoor play. Elementary school children may apply sunscreen to themselves under staff supervision. At the time of enrollment, parents provide written permission for sunscreen application; permission must be updated annually.

Application of Other Topical Preparations: Should you desire other topical, non-medicated preparations to be applied to your child (hand lotion, lip balm, diaper cream), you must provide written permission, in addition to supplying the product to be applied. Stop at the front desk for the permission form. Please make sure that products are clearly labeled with your child's name. A permission slip for a specific topical preparation must be renewed annually if it is still to be applied to your child. Topical preparations may not be applied to open wounds or broken skin unless there is a written order by a doctor or health care provider.

Medicated topical preparations require full medication paperwork from your child's pediatrician.



CLASSROOM POLICIES AND THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

Qualified Teachers

The Family Development Center is committed to maintaining a staff of highly qualified and caring teachers. The activities in each classroom are planned and supervised by professional lead teachers who are trained in early childhood education and are responsible for coordinating the program. Lead teachers are supported by assistant teachers and aides. All teaching staff possess the qualifications for their position required by state childcare regulations and by standards set by the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA). All staff also participate in regular professional development and training.



We know that our teachers are the heart of our program. Our teachers are college-educated and experienced professionals, dedicated to the early childhood profession and to the children they serve. They understand the importance of developing caring relationships with children and providing supportive and enriching interactions throughout the day.

Staff/Child Ratios

The Family Development Center strives to meet the high standards for staff/child ratios that have been adopted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA). At all times our classrooms are staffed with the proper number of teachers and assistant teachers required to meet state mandated staff/child ratios. The ratio guidelines are as follows:

	State	NAEYC	NECPA
Toddler 1	1:5	1:6	1:3/4
Toddler 2	1:7	1:6	1:4/6
Transition	1:8	1:10	1:6
Younger Preschool	1:10	1:10	1:7/10
Older Preschool	1:12	1:10	1:10
Part-Day Preschool	1:10	1:10	1:7/10
Summer Camp (5-10 yrs)	1:15	1:15	1:12

Occasionally, teachers fulfill professional responsibilities outside of the classroom, including attending meetings and trainings, planning for classroom activities, and holding conferences with parents. Qualified caregivers are scheduled to provide care and supervision during the absence of teaching staff. At all times, requirements for qualified caregivers and staff/child ratios are met.

Practicum Students

UCCS students studying early childhood education occasionally visit the FDC to fulfill certain class assignments. They may observe classroom environments and interactions, and complete field work and course assignments on site. Each practicum student works under the guidance of a college instructor/ professor, and under the direct supervision of an FDC lead teacher. Practicum students are not left alone with children or counted in the ratio of staff to children, except in the event the student is an FDC employee completing their practicum on site.



confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

Support for English Language Learners

The Center values each child's home language and culture, and home language development is encouraged and supported in the classroom and through conversations with parents regarding home-school connections. Strategies include using familiar home language books or recordings, songs, and labeled picture cards to support the child at school, as well as providing opportunities for the family and child to teach peers and staff new words in the child's home language. Whenever possible, a staff member or volunteer who is bilingual is scheduled in the classroom to have weekly time with a child who is an English Language Learner.

Curriculum Framework and Learning Objectives*

The Family Development Center provides a well-rounded, research-based, developmentally appropriate program for young children. We strive to develop a wide range of skills and interests in each child.

The Center utilizes the Creative Curriculum as its curriculum framework, and Teaching Strategies GOLD as its assessment system; both are

The Classroom Environment

The Center provides a well-rounded, research-based, developmentally appropriate program for young children. Our balanced curriculum encourages freedom and direct experience within well-defined limits. We strive to develop a wide range of skills and interests in each child. Learning activities are based on developmental principles and are adjusted to each child's interests and needs. Teachers are responsive to the child's intellectual, social, emotional and physical needs, emphasizing learning in many areas. We offer diverse experiences that are stimulating and challenging, and that will help to develop

*Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers. (2010). Dombro, A.L.; Colker, L.J.; &Dodge, D.T. Washington, D.C.: Teaching Strategies.

Creative Curriculum for Preschool.(2016). Dodge, D.T.; Colker, L.J.; &Heroman, C. Washington, D.C.: Teaching Strategies.

Teaching Strategies GOLD: Objectives for Development and Learning: Birth through Third Grade. (2010). <https://teachingstrategies.com/our-approach/our-38-objectives/>

published by Teaching Strategies. Our program supports learning in all domains of development: social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The learning objectives (from TS GOLD) are detailed on the following page. These objectives provide direction to teachers when lesson planning, and they are used as the basis of the ongoing developmental assessments teachers complete for every child. The objectives are also linked to State early learning standards, and they are considered the most predictive of future school success.

The Classroom Schedule and Lesson Plan

The daily schedule and weekly lesson plan for each classroom are designed to offer a balance of activities and choices for children. Schedules and lesson plans are posted in each classroom. Visit the parent bulletin board to keep apprised of classroom activities. In addition, weekly lesson plans and monthly newsletters are emailed to families.

Learning Centers



Each classroom provides a wide array of learning materials for children to explore. Toddlers, transitioners and preschoolers choose from activities such as large motor play with block building, a variety of art forms such as painting, coloring, drawing, and fingerpainting, fine motor activities such as sorting buttons and beads, learning the sciences by experimenting with magnets, playing with sand and water, gross motor play through climbing and sliding, dough modeling, literacy centers for looking at/reading books or writing letters, plus music center fun with playing rhythm instruments, or role playing in the house center and dressing up, manipulative play with puzzles, matching color patterns, and

so much more. Summer campers create arts and crafts, play board games, construct projects, explore science and nature, solve puzzles, and develop other activities based on individual interests. Feel free to speak to your child's teacher for further information on the variety of learning activities offered in our classrooms.

Circle Time

During Circle Time, children gather together to build a sense of community, listen to stories, sing songs, chant rhymes and fingerplays, and participate in creative movement activities. Many of these activities support language and literacy development, as well as social-emotional skills.

Small Group Activities

Children are invited to participate in special small group activities. These activities may include art projects, sensory experiences, cooking, science experiments, book making, and other activities where children benefit from the support of a teacher within a small group setting.

GOLD Objectives for Development &

Note: The Teaching Strategies GOLD ® objectives represent a p

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
 - a. Manages feelings
 - b. Follows limits and expectations
 - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
 - a. Forms relationships with adults
 - b. Responds to emotional cues
 - c. Interacts with peers
 - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
 - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
 - b. Solves social problems

PHYSICAL

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
 - a. Uses fingers and hands
 - b. Uses writing and drawing tools

LANGUAGE

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
 - a. Comprehends language
 - b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
 - a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
 - b. Speaks clearly
 - c. Uses conventional grammar
 - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communications skills
 - a. Engages in conversations
 - b. Uses social rules of language

COGNITIVE

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
 - a. Attends and engages
 - b. Persists
 - c. Solves problems
 - d. Shows curiosity and motivations

- e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
 - a. Recognizes and recalls
 - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols & images to represent something not present
 - a. Thinks symbolically
 - b. Engages in sociodramatic play

LITERACY

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness, phonics skills, and word recognition
 - a. Notices and discriminates rhyme
 - b. Notices and discriminates alliteration
 - c. Notices and discriminates discrete units of sound
 - d. Applies phonics concepts and knowledge of word structure to decode text
16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
 - a. Identifies and names letters
 - b. Identifies letter sound correspondences
17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
 - a. Uses and appreciates books or other texts
 - b. Uses print concepts
18. Comprehends & responds to books & other texts
 - a. Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections
 - b. Uses emergent reading skills
 - c. Reads stories and recounts details from informational texts
 - d. Uses context clues to read and comprehend texts
 - e. Reads fluently
19. Demonstrates writing skills
 - a. Writes name
 - b. Writes to convey ideas and information
 - c. Writes using conventions

MATHEMATICS

20. Uses number concepts and operations
 - a. Counts
 - b. Quantifies
 - c. Connects numerals with their quantities

Learning: Birth through Third Grade

Progression of development that spans birth through third grade.

- d. Understands and uses place value and base ten
 - e. Applies properties of mathematical operations and relationships
 - f. Applies number combinations and mental number strategies in mathematical operations
21. Explores and describes spatial relationships & shapes
- a. Understands spatial relationships
 - b. Understands shapes
22. Compares and measures
- a. Measures objects
 - b. Measures time and money
 - c. Represents and analyzes data
23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

24. Uses scientific inquiry skills
25. Demonstrates knowledge of characteristics of living things
26. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
27. Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment
28. Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

SOCIAL STUDIES

29. Demonstrates knowledge about self
30. Shows basic understanding of people & how they live
31. Explores change related to familiar people or places
32. Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

THE ARTS

33. Explores the visual arts
34. Explores musical concepts and expression
35. Explores dance and movement concepts
36. Explores drama through actions and language

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English

ADDITIONAL NECPA REQUIRED GOALS AND/OR DAP ACTIVITIES

105. Learns about nutrition, health, and safety
- 106-E Integrates math terms & concepts, including time, into everyday use
- 107-A Explores & discusses scientific concepts & principles
- 107-B Uses senses & simple tools to observe scientific features
- 107-C Collects & documents scientific materials
- 107-D Integrates scientific terms & concepts into every day use
108. Explores cause & effect & how things work
109. Builds understanding of technology (listening center, tablet, computer, gears/wheels, age-appropriate simple tools)
110. Uses computers/tablets interactively with teacher guidance, conversation, & open-ended questions
- 111-B. Expands artistic skills by manipulating age-appropriate materials & child-sized tools
- 111-C. Reviews personal art and others' art
- 111-D. Integrates artistic terms into everyday use
- 112-B. Explores diversity in non-stereotypical cultures, family structures, abilities, languages, ages, and genders
- 112-C. Discusses fairness, friendship, responsibility, authority, and differences
- 112-D. Reviews local geography & the varying communities at large
- 112-E. Explores positive & negative environmental effects
- 112-F. Contributes to the well-being of classroom & community
- 112-G. Engages in economic concepts (ages 3 & up). Ex: value, cost, want vs need, resources, scarcity
- 112-H. Connects personal experiences to broader world concepts

Outdoor Play

Children play outdoors nearly every day. Outdoor play schedules are posted in every classroom. Please be sure your child is dressed for the day's weather. It is wise to send hats, coats, and mittens during colder seasons. During the summer, we recommend that you provide a baseball cap or brimmed hat for your child, in addition to sunscreen. Children remain indoors during inclement and excessively hot or cold weather (typically when below 20 or over 95 degrees; however, to ensure safety, wind chill and heat index are also taken into consideration when temperatures are approaching these limits). On days when children do not play outdoors, indoor gross motor activities are provided.

Clothing for Play

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is suitable for active play and weather appropriate for the time of year. Children engage in a wide range of activities while at the Center and will play outside in all types of weather. From finger painting and sand and water play, to playing in the snow and rain, children will likely soil their clothing at times. Please send a change of weather-appropriate clothing with your child every day. If your child is a toddler, please provide more than one clothing change, just in case it is needed. Winter boots, hats, mittens/gloves, jackets and snowpants are needed every day for winter play November through March, and occasionally at other times of the year.



Personal Belongings

We request that your child leave at home personal belongings, such as toys, technology or money. This will help prevent the disappointment of these items being lost or damaged. These items also distract children from the variety of learning opportunities available in the classroom. The Center cannot assume responsibility for personal belongings.

Lost and Found

Please label items you bring to the Center with your child's name (coats, diaper bags, rest-time blankets or stuffed animals, etc.). Unlabeled and unclaimed items will be brought to the Center's Lost and Found. Please be sure to check the Lost and Found area periodically. Every so often, unclaimed lost and found items are donated to charity.

Positive Guidance and Discipline

Positive guidance grows from a foundation of caring and respectful child, staff and family relationships. Our goal is to nurture children in their development of self-esteem, emotional competence, social skills, and ultimately self-discipline. This begins by establishing a caring relationship between teacher and child, and ensuring a safe, welcoming and supportive classroom community. This also extends to parents and families, with whom we strive to build and maintain positive, mutually respectful

interactions and good communications. We desire to work together with families to create an encouraging environment in which children can develop and learn.

Our teachers create and maintain a socially and emotionally respectful early learning and care environment. They encourage positive interactions with each child and among children by modeling respectful communications and behaviors. When children struggle socially or emotionally, teachers understand that children lack the skills needed to behave differently; so skills are patiently taught to help the child be more successful in managing emotions and behaviors. Teachers support children's comfort and sense of safety and belonging within the group, as well as their development of increasing social-emotional competence.

Our teachers implement teaching strategies designed to support positive behavior, pro-social peer interaction, and overall social and emotional competence in young children. They set clear and consistent, age-appropriate limits and guidelines for classroom behavior. They help children learn the expectations for behavior through modeling, reviewing picture sequences, and practicing routines and interactions with peers. The focus is on helping children to develop skills for self-management and social interaction and acknowledging individual successes along the way. There is an emphasis on everyone's important role as a helpful member of the classroom community. Each child's positive contributions are encouraged and acknowledged.



The Conscious Discipline Program: The Family Development Center utilizes the Conscious Discipline program (Bailey, 2015) for teaching children the strategies for self-regulation—the lifelong journey toward learning to manage one's own thoughts, feelings and actions. Self-regulation forms the basis for emotional well-being and healthy relationships (Bailey, 2011). All teaching staff participate in Conscious Discipline training.

When a child's behavior is inappropriate, the teacher addresses the situation using a positive approach such as one or more of the following: listening to and acknowledging the child's

feelings and frustrations, and helping the child to articulate what happened; supporting the child in self-regulation and composure by teaching self-calming strategies, such as deep breathing; expressing confidence in a child's inner strength by reminding the child that "you can handle this"; offering the child two acceptable choices of activity; helping the child to figure out a "better way" to respond to the situation; redirecting the child into a constructive activity; modeling appropriate handling of feelings and resolution of interpersonal conflict; applying logical, non-punitive consequences. *Conscious Discipline* offers a comprehensive array of strategies for helping children to develop self-regulation skills while nurturing their self-esteem.

Bailey, B. (2015). *Conscious Discipline*. Oviedo, FL: Loving Guidance, Inc.

Bailey, B. (2011). *Managing Emotional Mayhem: Five Steps to Self-Regulation*. Oviedo, FL: Loving Guidance, Inc.

Our staff provide individual social and emotional intervention supports for children who need them, seeking understanding of child behavior and developing and implementing a team-based positive

behavior plan with the intent to reduce challenging behavior and to support growth in the child's ability to successfully manage emotions, behaviors and interactions. The Family Development Center believes in working as a team with parents, as well as specialists when needed, to identify the specific social and emotional needs of each child. Our staff are trained in methods that enable them to understand children's behavior and develop positive behavior support plans for each child. This typically reduces challenging behaviors and may help to prevent suspensions and expulsions.

The Family Development Center helps to connect families with specialized support services when needed, including making referrals to developmental specialists and mental health consultants. We continuously strive to strengthen our relationships with children and families. Through ongoing training, our teachers can identify the individual needs of children. While working with our families, we can provide many specialized interventions to support each child's development and success within the program. When a situation arises that makes a child's needs difficult for staff and parents to adequately address, the family will be given information on how to access outside specialists to support their child in their development. The Center has connections with many agencies in the community that provide a variety of support services for children.

Media Use: Restrictions on Tablets and Video Viewing in the Classroom



The Family Development Center respects the media use guidelines recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Due to the proliferation of tablets, computers, video games and television in the lives of young children, and the need to monitor and limit the amount of exposure for each child, the Center has adopted a policy minimizing children's media use while they are in our program. Children 3 and older may have occasional access to a tablet or media device when looking up photos and information on topics of study. This occurs only under direct supervision and with the support of a teacher. Toddlers do not have access to tablets or media devices while at the Center.

As a general rule, videos are not utilized within the Family Development Center program. On a rare occasion, a preschool or school-age teacher may request to show a short video (under 5 minutes) to the class. The video may be shown if it relates to a unit of study and if there are developmentally appropriate learning goals. Toddlers are never shown videos.

On a rare and special occasion, older children may be shown a longer video around a holiday or special study or event. Families are informed in advance of longer videos. An alternate activity is always offered to children, so those who are not interested in viewing the video may engage in another activity. Children are always supervised during video viewing by qualified teaching staff at proper staff to child ratios. Television viewing is never available to children.



Field Trips

Field trips provide opportunities for children to have fun and educational experiences beyond the scope of the classroom. Summer Campers take daily field trips to visit local natural, historical, cultural and recreational sites. Preschoolers who are three and older may occasionally take a field trip by walking to an adjacent nature area or to a nearby neighborhood park. Families are always notified of trips, and written parent permission is required for participation. Children are closely supervised on field trips. In the event of an emergency, the lead teacher carries a cell phone and copies of the emergency contact information

and medical treatment forms for every child, as well as a first aid kit.

Late Arrival for Field Trips: Families are always informed in advance of classroom field trips. Should a child arrive at the Center after their group has departed for a field trip, the Center will not accept the child for the day. There is no alternative activity available at the Center for the child. In the event of an emergency, the family may have the option of driving the child to the field trip location and finding the group so the child can join them. Please contact the front office to arrange this.

Transportation Safety

Field trips for Summer Campers (ages 5-10) include transportation by university bus, a commercial vehicle that is driven by a professional driver. Seating capacity is never exceeded, and children always wear seat belts and are supervised carefully to ensure safety. On a rare occasion, preschoolers who are at least four years of age may take a field trip including transportation by university bus. As for all field trips, written parent permission is required. Children under four will not be transported by bus for any reason other than extreme emergencies (i.e., emergency evacuation). Qualified staff members provide supervision on the bus and throughout the trip, maintaining proper staff to child ratios at all times. Emergency contact information and medical treatment forms are always carried in the vehicle, as well as a first aid kit.

Developmental Assessments

Twice a year, teachers assess the growth and development of each child using the Teaching Strategies Gold developmental assessment tool. This process helps to assess a child's progress within the program, as well as the child's physical, social-emotional and cognitive development. Written assessments are shared with parents during parent-teacher conferences.

Community Resources and Developmental Screenings/Evaluations

Parents are strongly urged to arrange for their children to be screened annually for hearing and vision loss or impairment. Dental screenings are also urged as an important part of regular health care. In addition to seeking screening advice from a pediatrician, the Center has a resource file with contacts for these types of screenings, and for full developmental evaluation, as well. The Center also offers

free, onsite hearing screenings annually for children ages 3 and up, with written parent permission for participation. The Center is required to maintain in each child's file the documentation of screenings received. There is a place on the form General Health Appraisal for your health care provider to note during regular checkups that screenings have been given.

At least once a year, teachers complete individual developmental screenings for each child. A developmental screening is an assessment that is used to identify children who should receive more intensive evaluation for developmental concerns or delays. Should a teacher have a concern regarding a child's development, a conference is scheduled with the parent to discuss the concern and to consider alternatives for further assessment or support. Referrals are often made to outside services. We are committed to working with families to ensure that every child has the chance to develop optimally and to achieve the greatest success possible.

Should you ever have a concern about your child's development, feel free to discuss it with the teacher or an administrator. We are happy to provide referrals for more thorough developmental evaluations. There are government-sponsored systems for providing free developmental evaluations for all children, and free intervention services for children who are found to have developmental delays or disabilities. Private services are also available in the community and are often covered through family health insurance. Information on these services is available in our office.

Transition to a New Classroom

A child's placement in a particular group or classroom is based primarily on age, with consideration of developmental needs. The information you provide helps us to make the best decision regarding initial group placement upon enrollment. Later, as your child approaches the next age or group level, the teacher will speak to you about beginning to make the transition to the next group. Generally, we help children get to know their new surroundings by arranging a visit to the new classroom every day for a week, for an increasing period. Our teachers will make every effort to be aware of your child's feelings and to help him or her to make a smooth and confident transition.



Parents of transitioning children are also offered the opportunity to meet individually with our Associate Director regarding the transition process and what to expect as a child acclimates to a new classroom. For children who are new to the Family Development Center, this meeting includes information on how to help the child transition successfully into the program from home, as well as time to answer any questions the parent may have.

In addition to individual conversations with Center staff, at the beginning of each school year, parents are invited to the Curriculum Night to learn about the program in their child's new classroom. Teachers provide information on what to expect as the children transition from one classroom to another, or from home to school. Curriculum Night also offers an opportunity for families to get to know teachers and one another better, and to ask questions about the daily happenings and procedures in their child's classroom.



Parent-Teacher Communication

Parents are always welcome to visit their children at the Family Development Center—we have an open-door policy. We encourage you to take time to get to know your child’s teacher and the classroom environment. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to speak to your child’s teacher or to the Center director. We believe that we can best meet the needs of our children by forming partnerships with our families.

Feel free to speak briefly with your child’s teacher every day. We want to share your child’s daily experiences with you, and work together to help your child make the most of their school experience. Please understand that the teacher’s time with families is limited during periods of supervision and interaction with the children. Should you desire a lengthy conversation with the teacher, please feel free to arrange an appointment with the teacher. We will be happy to make staffing arrangements so the teacher can meet with you outside of the classroom for a more extended conversation.



Every classroom also has a parent communication bulletin board where notices, menus, lesson plans and schedules are posted. In addition, families of toddlers and transition children receive a daily report in the form of a “Daily Care Sheet”. Finally, each classroom has an informal mail system (often distributing items through a mail folder or your child’s cubby) for sending home teacher notes, artwork or other items. Please be sure to check for notes and artwork regularly.

Classroom Email Communication

Families receive regular emails regarding the program in their child’s classroom. Teachers prepare weekly lesson plans and monthly newsletters highlighting upcoming learning activities, which are provided to parents via email. In addition, the weekly menus, as well as other special announcements and schoolwide communications, are distributed by email.

Injury and Incident Reports

In the event your child has a minor accident while at school, such as tripping or skinning the knee, our staff will administer the proper first aid and complete an injury report to inform you about the incident. You will be asked to sign the report when you pick up your child that day. Incident reports are used to inform parents about significant behavioral incidents. Families should feel welcome to speak directly to the teacher or an administrator regarding incidents if there are any questions or concerns to be addressed.

Curriculum Night

Within the first few weeks of the school year, parents are invited to an evening Curriculum Night. The purpose of the event is for families to learn about the program in their child's new classroom, and what to expect as their child transitions from one class to another, or from home to school. It also provides an opportunity for families to get to know teachers and one another better, and to ask questions about the daily happenings and procedures in their child's classroom.

Family Events in the Classroom

Families are invited into the classroom at least three times a year for special events with the children. Family events provide opportunities to learn more about the classroom while engaging parents and children in collaborative family activities.

Parent-Teacher Conferences



Conferences are conducted twice a year, in the fall and in the spring. Conferences offer a more in-depth discussion of a child's development, and an opportunity for families to share their at-home observations of their child's development, as well as to ask questions, discuss concerns, or make suggestions about the program. At the time of the conference, families are given a written assessment of their child's learning and development. Informal conferences may be scheduled at any time when requested by a parent or teacher. Feel free to arrange a meeting with your child's teacher whenever you have concerns or questions.

Use of Interpreters

As a department of UCCS, we are fortunate that there are people of many languages affiliated with the university at large. Through our university contacts, we are typically able to locate individuals who can interpret or translate for parents whose home language is not English. Please let us know if this service would be helpful to you during upcoming conferences or other meetings.

Involvement in Classroom Projects and Schoolwide Activities

There are many ways families can volunteer at the Center if they are interested in becoming more involved. Feel free to speak to your child's teacher about visiting the classroom to read a book or share a talent or cultural or family tradition. Families are encouraged to take part in our Week of the Young Child festivities. You are also welcome to assist with or participate in special projects as they occur throughout the year. Some volunteer projects may be able to be completed at home (i.e., sewing, carpentry, making classroom materials, recording books read aloud, etc.). Volunteers are always needed for special all-school activities, such as the Fall Carnival, Family Night, and the Family Picnic. Events such as these offer opportunities for parents to get to know one another and to work together for the benefit of all of the children in the program.

Confidentiality Regarding Other Children and Families

We ask that families refrain from taking photographs within the program, as we have a responsibility to protect the confidentiality of all children and families enrolled. For the same reason, please understand that it is not permissible to post photos or comments on social media regarding other children or families. Thank you for respecting our families and helping to protect all of our children.



Family Education

The Center offers family workshops every year. Workshops are on parenting topics of interest, such as child development and learning, Conscious Discipline, nutrition, and more. These are usually offered at the end of the workday or in the early evening, with childcare provided.

Family Library

The Center has a small library of family support books available for checkout by family members. The family library is housed on a shelf in the Center library.

Information for Family Members About Community Resources

The Center keeps on hand an assortment of brochures and pamphlets for local community services, which are offered to families in the lobby on a self-serve basis. Resources include information on child development, developmental evaluations and special needs support services, low-cost medical and dental care, mental health referral contacts, and childcare tuition payment alternatives. In addition, the Center maintains more extensive files with a greater range of community resources in the areas above, as well as parenting classes, child abuse intervention services, play therapists, and emergency services (i.e., food banks) for families. These files are found in resource binders in the office and are available for use by staff members and family members.

Family Input and Feedback

Every year, the Family Development Center surveys its families concerning their level of satisfaction with the programs and services offered, to invite parent input and to evaluate the Center's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and families. The results of the family survey are incorporated in the Center's annual curriculum and program evaluation (see below) and contribute to the establishment of goals for continuous improvement and innovation. If parents have feedback, concerns or suggestions at any time throughout the year, they are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher or to an administrator. Our door is always open.

Participation in Center-wide Program Evaluation and Planning

Once a year, the Center completes a program evaluation to identify strengths and weaknesses of

the program and to set program goals for the upcoming year. Families are surveyed regarding their satisfaction with the curriculum and the overall program, and the degree to which the program is meeting the needs of children and families. Following input from families, staff members, the Advisory Board and administrators, the data is reviewed and used to evaluate the effectiveness of the entire program. Goals for continuous improvement and innovation are developed based on the program evaluation results.

Advisory Board

There is an Advisory Board at the Family Development Center. The Board is comprised of FDC parents, UCCS students, an FDC teacher representative, and an FDC administrator liaison. The Board helps to promote and facilitate family involvement, provide program feedback, oversee family events and/or fund raisers, and sponsor a special teacher appreciation event in the Spring. Board membership is open to all interested family members on a voluntary basis. Members are asked to make a commitment to serve for one year. The Board elects its own chairperson and sets its own meeting schedule.

Connections with the Community at Large

The Family Development Center receives donations of goods and services from members of our UCCS campus community and from the community at large. In addition, the FDC invites financial donations to support our program and to provide additional childcare scholarships for low-income student families. The FDC is a department of UCCS, a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. To make a financial donation to the Family Development Center, visit: <https://fdc.uccs.edu/family-development-center-gift-fund>



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Family Development Center
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Colorado Springs, CO 80918

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