



Family Handbook

08/2011





Welcome

We warmly welcome you to *The Children's Center* at Red Rocks Community College. We hope that your family will enjoy *The Children's Center* and the friends that you meet here. This handbook describes our purpose and philosophy as well as the policies and procedures that make each day as safe, healthy, happy, and enriching for your child(ren) as possible. Please feel free to stop by the Director's office at any time if you have any questions or thoughts to share. We look forward to getting to know you and thank you for choosing to be with us.

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Philosophy and Purpose

We want the best for our family-learning, safety, love and joy!

Mission

Our mission is to:

- Support children as they learn about and discover their own uniqueness in a rich, caring, loving, environment where relationships between children, families, and staff are nurtured.
- Provide a demonstration/lab site for RRCC students and the community of high-quality child care practice.

Philosophy

We believe:

- **Children learn through play and discovery**

We provide for learning by assuring the environment is rich in appropriate materials that nurture exploration and growth in creativity, imagination, physical skills, language, literacy, math, science, the arts, dramatic play, and social skills.

- **In empowering the growth of each child**

- by using careful observation of children as the basis for communication and interactions with children, for planning based on the interests and uniqueness of each child, and to foster communication and connections with families;
- by assigning children to primary caregivers and ensuring continuity of care;
- through warm, attuned interactions between adults and children;
- through well-planned and thought-out daily schedules, transitions, activities and environments.

- **In building community with our families**

Building relationships provides a strong foundation for community, learning and personal growth. We nurture relationships by connecting with children, families and each other on informal, personal levels, and taking time for reflective practice. We know that each child, family and staff member is unique. We respect that uniqueness by listening carefully, communicating clearly, encouraging growth, exploration and risk-taking, and by being patient.

Staff

We believe that, in order to provide high quality child care, our teachers must be well educated and trained in the field of early childhood. The Children's Center staff participates in ongoing training and education. Each of our classroom teachers is strongly encouraged to become director qualified, which requires several more early childhood classes than are required by the State of Colorado Department of Human Services, Childcare Division for Early Childhood Teacher certification.

Primary Caregiving and Continuity of Care

There is ample research supporting primary teaching (caregiving) and continuity of care as a strong foundation for optimal development and learning. Primary care giving assigns a child and family to one teacher who has time to get to know the child, the child's family, culture, temperament, cues, and personality so that the teacher can be responsive to the child's developmental needs. Primary care giving, combined with continuity of care (moving the primary group of children and their teacher to the next room together) create strong home-school partnerships, foster communication between teachers and families, help children create strong friendships, and pave the way for a responsive, child-centered curriculum. The National Research Council on Early Childhood states, "If there is a single critical component to quality, it rests on the relationship between the child and the teacher/caregiver, and in the ability of the adult to be responsive to the child." We support these relationships through assigning a primary teacher/caregiver to each child, and ensuring continuity of care for at least one year and longer whenever feasible.

College Training Site

A primary purpose of *The Children's Center* is to provide a place where college students can observe high-quality practice. Most of the students are here to observe the teachers, our teaching techniques, the environment, and the children in general. Students are always supervised. Occasionally, a student will work with one child over a period of time. In that case, we will request your written permission before the observation starts. Photographs and videos of children in the center are a strong component of our training program. We ask parents to sign a permission form for release of these images for educational purposes.

Background Checks

All Center staff, student employees and students from the ECE department completing observations receive complete CBI fingerprinting and Colorado Central Registry of Child Protection background checks.

General Information and Enrollment Procedures

The Children's Center provides care and education for children ages **18 months to kindergarten entry (6 years)**. Children, once placed in a primary care giving group, move with that group to the next room level. Thus, ages in each room vary, and yet comply with licensing regulations. Because we are part of Red Rocks Community College, students and faculty needing full time care receive priority status for care, as well as families who already have one child in care at the Center. We are also committed to providing care for children in families with low incomes, and we designate ten percent of our slots for families who receive federal child care assistance.

Days and hours of operation

We are open Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 6:00pm, year round. We are closed Labor Day, Thanksgiving weekend, the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, Memorial Day,

July 4th and the week before Red Rocks Community College and/or Jefferson County schools begin in August for staff training, cleaning, and repairs. The date will be announced in the spring to provide adequate time for families to make other arrangements for care. The Center staff is required to attend two college staff development days, one in the fall and one in the spring. We are closed for those two days. All closure days are fee days, with the exception of the 2 full weeks we are closed.

Drop Off/Pick Up

When children are dropped off, it is beneficial to both the family and child if a teacher is available to help the child settle in, chat with the family, and help the child say good-bye and for you to have ample time to ease your child through the separation process. Teachers plan early morning activities that do not require intense adult supervision, so they can spend time with individual families. After **8:45am**, however, teachers need to be completely engaged with children as this is a transition time for cleaning up, hand washing and serving breakfast. **Please arrive prior to 8:45 am to help reduce the challenges of this time of day.** If you arrive between 8:45 and 9:00, we ask that you remain in the main foyer, apply sunscreen, read to your child, and enter the classroom at 9:00. It is natural for adults to want to visit with each other at drop off time, however, we ask that you help your child transition into the classroom and then connect with other parents in the front hallway, rather than in the busy classroom.

Out of respect for the learning environment in the morning and the rest time in the afternoon, the minimum hours of attendance are from 8:45 am to 3:00pm. Of course, they are welcomed to come prior to and leave later, however, these are our minimum hours. These hours enable teachers to be focused with children, without interruptions. To greet children continually throughout the morning, or engage in goodbyes during rest time would strongly impact the quality of the care and education each child receives. In addition, when children are picked up before or during rest time, other children may become concerned because they do not see their parent, rest time is interrupted, etc.

A minimum of two full days per week is required. Children may enroll for the following days:

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Tuesday and Thursday
Monday through Friday**

Other attendance days will be considered if space allows. Four days a week may be considered for RRCC students only. It may be possible to enroll a child with attendance patterns that differ from above. However, in the event that the atypical pattern prevents a child with a typical pattern from enrollment, you may be asked to change to a typical pattern, or find other care. Children with the above attendance patterns will be given priority for acceptance into the program. A two week written notice is required to change your attendance days so we can fill the vacated slots in a timely manner.

Initial tour, interview and visiting

A tour of the Center is required for all families who are interested in enrolling their child(ren) in *The Children's Center*. We believe the needs of children are best met when staff and families form a partnership. Once enrolled, the first step in creating that partnership is the initial interview. This interview is an opportunity for the teacher to become acquainted with the family before the child starts and to learn some strategies for assuring that the child's first few days are as pleasant as possible. It is also an opportunity for families to ask questions, get to know the teacher better, understand the Center policies, and meet the Director. Families are encouraged to arrange for short visits in the classroom with their child prior to actual enrollment to assure the smoothest transition for everyone.

Arrival, Departure, Security

Arrival Policies

You, or your designated representative who is at least 18 years old are required to **sign your child in each morning and sign each child out at departure, using a full signature**. In case of evacuation, the class sign-in/out sheets go with the teachers and you will be contacted from that list, so please leave a number where you can be reached **during that day**. Cell phone use is not permitted in the Center, so that you can give your full attention to your child.

Identifying where children are at all times

Your children should be supervised by you until you leave the classroom or assure that he/she is in the care of a teacher. Please walk into the classroom with your child and make sure your child is greeted before you leave. The staff is responsible for knowing where children are at all times. Another benefit of primary care giving is that teachers keep very close track of their group's whereabouts during the day. Counts of children are taken periodically throughout the day. Coded locks on classroom doors limit access to only those individuals who should be in the Center. Rooms are searched at the end of the day and sign-out rosters checked by classroom staff and the Director in charge before closing to assure that all children are accounted for.

Absences/Late Arrival

When your child is sick, not attending or will be late, please let us know. Since all children are expected to be here by 8:45am, teachers often take their children on trips around the college grounds after breakfast. If you arrive late and your child's group is not in the classroom or on the playground, we ask that you take your child to their group or remain with your child until the class returns. We are not staffed to provide care for individual children and another teacher may not be able to add another child to their group size. Children will not be accepted into the Center for any reason from lunch time forward.

Releasing children

Children are only released to adults who have been designated by the parent/guardian on the enrollment form. If someone other than an authorized individual will be picking up your child, we must have a written, signed note from the parent or guardian delivered to the front desk or the director in the morning. In emergencies, once we know you and recognize your voice, you may call the center and authorize someone not on the list to pick up your child. For your child's protection, persons not on the original list, or on the list and not known to the staff **will be asked to show identification before we release your child**. We must have documentation of any changes in custody. We cannot and will not keep a child from going with previously designated parent/guardians.

Children who remain after closing time

Our staff works long, hard days. Please be on time to pick up your child, and make sure your child's teacher knows that you are taking your child. If a child remains at the Center past 6:00pm, your child will be with the Director on duty. A late charge of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed to your account. Please be respectful of our staff by picking children up on time. If your child is at the Center more than 15 minutes after the Center closes, and we have not heard from you, your child will be taken to the RRCC Campus Police Department. The Police Department will determine further action.

Visitors

Visitors must sign in at the front desk and wear identification tags. Students often observe at the Center. Tours are frequently conducted for perspective families. These and all other visitors are always accompanied by a staff member.

Admission and Registration

Admission Procedures

- **\$50.00 non-refundable** deposit per child is required to reserve space for your child; and is due as a registration fee every August thereafter
- Family interview conducted
- Short visits to classroom prior to first day is recommended
- Records for child's file including:
 1. Current record of immunization
 2. Completed emergency contact card
 3. Enrollment application
 4. Signed Financial Agreement & Payment Policy Form
 5. Health Status Form
 6. Signed permission forms
 7. USDA enrollment form
 8. Allergies & specific food requests

Fees

Current fee information is posted at the front desk, included in each New Family Packet and distributed when changes in fees occur. All payments for child care must be paid in advance. Tuition is due at the beginning of each month of care, in full weeks, unless prior arrangements, with a signed contract, are made with the director. Child care may be denied for any child for whom tuition is not paid on time. Full tuition is required whether your child attends each day or not. We cannot offer make up days if your child is unable to attend on a scheduled day. You may add and pay for additional days, if we have openings. We accept checks and credit cards for tuition payments in the Center. Cash payments must be made at the college cashier's office.

All checks and credit card payments should be dropped in the locked box outside the Director's office. Receipts will be placed in your parent slot. There is a \$20.00 returned check/declined credit card fee. It is your responsibility to notify the director if your card information changes due to loss, theft or expiration.

Two-week trial period

All children will be enrolled on a trial basis for the first two weeks. At the end of this period, or anytime thereafter, if there are any concerns about having a child in our program, his or her family will be asked to meet with the primary teacher/caregiver and the director. We will make every effort to assure continued enrollment for a child who is having difficulties. Ultimately, however, we have to take into consideration the best interests of the child, our current staffing patterns, and all children currently enrolled. If we are not able to meet the needs of a particular child, we will give the family two weeks to find other care. If a family decides, for whatever reason, to discontinue enrollment in the first two weeks, two weeks advance notice is not required. Registration deposits will not be refunded.

Vacations and withdrawal

One of the benefits to children and families enrolled in *The Children's Center* is that we are a small center. We hold to a very narrow financial margin in order to operate. If every family took one week of vacation every year and did not pay tuition for that week, we could not operate. Some families arrange vacations to coincide with the two weeks we are closed, in Dec. & Aug. when tuition is not charged. If you do vacation at other times, tuition is due for the time you are gone. If your family will take longer than two consecutive weeks for vacation, the third and following consecutive weeks will be charged at 50%. If you are planning to withdraw your child, we require a two week notice before the last day of care. If a two week notice is not given, you will be charged for two weeks from the time notice is given, even if your child is no longer here.

The Children's Center is a year round child care center, and maintains sometimes lengthy wait lists. If you choose to withdraw your child from care for the summer, we cannot hold the slot. You may put your child's name on the wait list for fall, but there are no guarantees care will be available at the end of the summer.

Discharge Policy

The Children's Center reserves the right to cancel enrollment of a child for any of the following reasons:

- ✓ Non-payment of tuition.
- ✓ Not observing the policies and procedures described in this handbook, or the Financial Agreement and Payment Policies.
- ✓ We cannot meet the needs of a child with our current staff and staffing patterns.
- ✓ If a parent/guardian has a complaint with *The Children's Center* staff or administration, it is expected that all parties conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner. *The Children's Center* will not tolerate any physical or verbal abuse directed at its employees. *The Children's Center* will also not tolerate any behavior by a parent/guardian that is disruptive in the classroom. Individuals behaving in this manner will be asked to find other care immediately.

Admission of Children With Special Needs

The Children's Center complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA mandates that equal access be given to all children with disabilities in childcare programs and that children with disabilities be fully integrated into regular activities. Childcare programs are required to make an individual assessment about whether it can meet the particular needs of the child without fundamentally changing the program. *The Children's Center* incorporates this mandate within its purpose, philosophy, and daily practice. *The Children's Center* staff works with families to include their child in our programs and activities. We agree to make reasonable accommodations for all children with documented disabilities. "Reasonable accommodations" is defined as the ability to provide services for a child without fundamentally changing the nature of our program. Enrollment is based on individual assessment of each child and the ability of the Center to meet the child's specific needs.

Health Care Plans

At the time of enrollment or any other time a health concern is identified, staff should notify the RN consultant of the health concern. If the health concern is life threatening in nature, (e.g., severe allergy, severe asthma or diabetes) or requires a health treatment while in child care, the

RN consultant will be contacted immediately before the child can attend. To help the program staff better understand the child's needs, the staff will ask the parent or legal guardian or a child with special needs to complete a "Health Care Plan" (HCP) in conjunction with the child's health care provider(s). The program will attempt to accommodate children with special needs consistent with the requirements of the ADA. If the program is unable to accommodate the child's needs as defined by the child's health care provider or Individual Family Service Plan/Individual Education Plan without posing an undue burden as defined by federal law, will work with the parent or legal guardian to find a suitable environment for the child. The RN is responsible for the development and implementation of a health care plan based on written medical orders received from the health care provider. The health care plan is written in collaboration with the family, child, child care personnel and health care providers, as appropriate. Based on nursing assessment, the RN determines the appropriateness and considers safety factors of delegating the performance of the individual health procedures(s) to select child care personnel.

PLEASE NOTE: Children with severe allergies requiring treatment with injectable epinephrine are requested to obtain the Epi-Pen™ auto injector for use at school. Licensed child care facilities are regulated by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The Epi-Pen™ auto injector is currently the only auto injector device available that meets OSHA standards for employee safety.

Factors determining safety of delegation of specific treatments(s):

- Health status of child
- Basis CPR/First Aid training of unlicensed staff
- Capacity of child care personnel to perform specific treatment(s) with training
- Capacity of professional nurse consultant to supervise specific treatment(s).
- Adequate environmental resources to provide specific treatment(s)
- Documentation of delegation, staff competency and ongoing supervision by the RN

The enrollment date of a child with a HCP will be determined by the Center director in collaboration with the RN consultant.

The RN provides the necessary training and child care personnel demonstrate competency in their abilities to perform the specific task(s). Periodic evaluation and supervision of child care personnel are established by the RN, in order to assure the safety and appropriate care for the child.

Parents need to authorize, in writing, the implementation of the health care plan in child care and review the plan annually. Until the health plan is authorized in writing by the parent/guardian, child care personnel are instructed by the RN to follow the "Colorado Emergency Care Guidelines" distributed by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. These Guidelines follow basic first aid and care procedures for the school and child care environment.

Copies of the health care plans will be kept in the child's file and in a confidential location in the classroom. All staff and substitutes involved in the care of the child need to be made aware of the health care plan and actions needed. Review of the health care plan by the RN consultant will be completed annually or when a significant change in the health condition occurs.

Children with Changing/Different Needs

Occasionally, emergent circumstances occur that require certain accommodations in the classroom to meet the needs of children. For example, if a child has surgery, an injury that temporarily limits mobility, encounters a seizure, or any number of medical issues, often the needs of the child changes. Families requesting such accommodations will need to present their

request to the Director. Because the Director must consult with the RN consultant prior to providing care that require accommodations, our Center may not be able to manage your child's different needs for a specific period of time. The Director will consult with the RN consultant as soon as possible. Recommendations made by the RN will be reviewed with staff and a plan will be created. If we are unable to provide care for your child new/temporary needs, you will be notified in a timely fashion to support your efforts to secure alternate care for that specified period of time. Otherwise, you will be contacted and must agree to the plan for accommodations. The introduction of such accommodations will occur within 24 hours.

Family Partnerships

Young children benefit immensely when their parents have carefully selected a center for their child's early care and education. Showing an interest in your center, what your child does here, and the people who care for and educate your child provides a solid foundation for your child's educational experience. The stronger the connection between the home and center, the more secure your child will feel.

Gatherings

There are a variety of ways for families to participate more fully in *The Children's Center* and become more acquainted with other families and staff. We usually have at least four gatherings throughout the year, including a Welcome New Families barbeque in the fall, Family Field Day in the summer, Winter Get Together and The Children's Center Art Show in the spring to celebrate national "Week of the Young Child". Individual classrooms also plan activities during the year so children can share their classrooms and favorite activities with their families.

The Parent Advisory Board meets at least twice a year with the director and staff members to dialogue about policies, procedures, classroom curriculum, etc. From this group committees are formed to help raise funds for many things that tuition does not cover, plan community-wide celebrations, staff appreciation, etc. Notices are posted in advance of all meetings, and all families are invited to attend and participate.

Evaluations of the Center

Families have the opportunity to provide formal feedback regarding our program and staff through a survey/evaluation twice each year. Informal comments and questions are always welcomed by the director.

Family Resources

Occasionally family forums are planned to explore a variety of issues relevant to families raising young children. Notices of forums are posted throughout the center. We have a family resource center in the foyer with materials that are available for check out.

Teacher-Family Communication

Each day, teachers take time to talk to families at drop-off and pick up. Families or toddlers receive written communication about their child's day every day; Families of older children will receive written communication about the child weekly. Families are encouraged to drop by the center at any time – to read stories, observe, share a specific activity with a small group of children, etc. Bi-yearly conferences are conducted between teachers and families. In addition, children enjoy a visit from their families occasionally for lunch. If you would like to come for lunch:

- Three days notice is recommended;
- Please limit your lunch visits to not more than once a month;
- If the demand exceeds supplies, you may be asked to choose another day.

Curriculum

Play is the best way for young children to learn. Children who are prematurely pushed into academic instruction display less creativity and enthusiasm for learning in later years. Children who memorize isolated facts early in life show no better long-term retention than their peers. However, **children who learn through play also develop social, emotional skills, and cognitive skills which are critical for long-term success.** Simply stated, our curriculum is the children's play. Our schedule, environment, activities, and materials foster child-directed, child-led play. Our teachers actively participate in the children's play, value children's play and extend children's ideas and play themes through close observation, conversations and documentation. We support purposeful and meaningful play by encouraging respect for the classroom environment and the materials, providing an organized environment, allowing time for play, and fostering focused exploration and learning.

Young children need to play; it is how they learn. Play provides the ideal medium for optimal development. Play is the process children use to learn.

- In play, children voluntarily elaborate and complicate the activity.
- In play, children learn that they can cause things to happen or change. Children begin to see that what they do has cause and effect, and they begin to assume responsibility for their behavior.
- Play stimulates cognitive development, language development, perceptual development, social and emotional development and helps to prepare children for kindergarten.
- Play follows a developmental progression.

Guidance Policy

As a college training site, we demonstrate the most appropriate guidance policies for students to observe and model. Our environments meet the developmental and ever-changing interests and needs of children so that they are fully engaged and active. Our schedules eliminate unnecessary transitions that stress children and cause disruptive behavior. We provide cozy, alone spaces in each room for children who need to get away from the group, and plenty of outdoor time for young children who want and need to use their large muscles and enjoy fresh air and sunshine.

We do not place expectations on children that they are not developmentally ready to meet. We do not require children to sit still for long periods of time and listen to an adult; we do not tell children that they "have to share"; nor do we expect them to stand in line. We do expect that they are **learning** to be respectful of each other, and the environment, that they are **learning** to take another's perspective, and that they are **learning** to engage for increasing amounts of time on tasks and activities, and that they are **learning** to assume responsibility for their own actions.

Recognizing that young children are in the process of learning to be social creatures, we know that adults must first of all, and most importantly, model what we want to see in our children at all times. Children truly do learn to love and respect if they are loved and respected. We encourage relationships between adults and children, knowing that these are the models on which children develop relationships with other children. A hallmark of the care children receive here is the respectful attention our teachers give children throughout the day.

Violence/Disruptive Behavior

A goal of *The Children's Center* is to create an environment free from violence for children. We are careful to model peaceful conflict resolution with each other and to teach children negotiating skills when appropriate. Our role is to help children modulate their extreme emotions and learn alternative ways of expressing emotion without harming others. This process takes place over time, and looks slightly different with different ages.

It is not unusual for a child who is having difficulty controlling his/her emotions to also be highly disruptive. When this occurs, teachers often end up spending considerable time with individual children while others receive only minimal attention. Chronic violence against other children will not be tolerated. If a child is chronically aggressive a family conference will be set up to discuss what might be triggering the aggression and apply techniques to eliminate it. If that doesn't help, we will request that parents obtain outside intervention.

Routines

Meals and snacks

We provide breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. All meals are served family style, and children eat in their primary groups with their teacher. Children serve themselves, pour their beverage, and clean their plates and the table when the meal is over. Teachers always sit at the table and converse with children during meals, encouraging conversation, getting to know children better, and creating a calm, relaxed atmosphere.

Diapering and toileting

Personal care routines, like toileting and diapering, are usually handled by your child's primary caregiver. Decisions about potty training are made by families in collaboration with the primary caregiver. **While in the Center, if you change your child or assist in his/her toileting, please keep their Center routines consistent and be sure both your child and you wash hands.** Families must provide diapers, wipes and any ointment required, as well as a complete change of clothing in case of accidents or messy play activities.

Field trips

Because we are part of the community college, we have a tremendous amount of resources at our fingertips. We bring enrichment programs to the children, rather than transporting young children away from this site. The summer prior to a child's enrollment in kindergarten, they may walk to the neighborhood Sixth Avenue West pool. Always with two adults. If so, parents will sign a permission form for the children to leave the college campus.

Media Use

Music from many cultures, children's music, music for relaxation, classical music and some types of popular music are available to children. Relaxing music is played at nap time, including lullabies from many lands. Videos are rarely shown. If so, they are short and relate directly to a theme the children have initiated. On occasion, we have a G-rated "movie day" in the River Rock Room. No television or commercial radio is allowed in the Center at any time.

Birthdays and other celebrations

It is our intention to ensure that birthdays and other celebrations are meaningful and appropriate for children. Each classroom teaching team will develop a plan to help every child feel special on his/her birthday. All food used at the Center is provided by the kitchen to ensure safety for children with allergies. Please place all private party invitations in the parent slots in the hallway out of respect for all children.

Holidays and other celebrations are important times for many families. Some families celebrate different holidays, some do not. At *The Children's Center* you may see an environment with

décor made by children who have created an atmosphere of their choice during the holidays. You may see card making materials in the writing center for children to create any time of the year. You may see children making masks or painting faces during fall. You will not see group or individual holiday projects designed and fostered by the teachers. As mentioned in our curriculum section, our activities develop from the children's interests. Most celebrations such as children's holiday parties meet the needs of adults, however may not be appropriate for young children, and in fact, may exclude children who cannot, for whatever reason, participate. Celebrations at the Center are a culmination of a project or interest, and are always fully integrated within the curriculum.

Children's personal belongings and toys

Limited cubby space is provided for children to store coats, gloves, a change of clothing and other personal belongings. This space is limited and cannot be used for more than one personal comfort object from home. **PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS, INCLUDING SHOES AND OUTDOOR CLOTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.** Children's soiled clothing is bagged and placed in a special area in each classroom. Please check daily to see if your child has any items that need to be taken home. If your child has soiled the roly poly/sheet, we ask that you launder and return it the next day. The health department does not allow staff to rinse fecal matter.

The Center provides a roly poly, fleece sleeping bag or cot sheets for rest time. Many children like to rest with their own stuffed animal. Please leave other toys at home. We have many toys and materials for the children to use during the day. If your child has something special she/he would like to share with teachers or friends, feel free to bring it to share, and be sure your child understands you will take it with you for safe keeping as you leave.

Health and Safety

The Children's Center operates in compliance with the Nurse Practice Act. Monthly nurse visits include training for staff on medications administration, universal precautions, general hygiene and safety, etc.

Hand washing

The best way to prevent the spread of disease is through hand washing.

Children must wash their hands:

- Upon entering and leaving the classroom
- After using the toilet or diapering
- After blowing their nose or contact with any bodily fluids
- Before and after meals and snacks
- After playground or outside time
- After handling pets
- When hands are noticeably soiled

Adults must wash their hands:

- Upon entering and leaving the classroom
- After helping a child toilet or changing a diaper
- After blowing their nose or helping a child blow a nose
- Before preparing food, serving food or eating
- After handling pets

Illness

It is your responsibility to notify the center if your child has a communicable disease such as: measles, mumps, meningitis, T.B., hepatitis, lice, ring worm, chicken pox, salmonella, hand, foot and mouth disease, etc. A child may be readmitted without a statement from a health practitioner only if the child has been absent for a period of time equal to the longest incubation period of the disease as specified by The Children's Hospital School Health Program guidelines. Children may attend the Center without immunizations.

Deciding whether to keep your child at home or whether Center staff should send a child home from child care can be difficult. It is important for parents and caregivers to discuss what symptoms they have observed and agree on a plan of action based on consensus about what symptoms require that children stay home.

There are three reasons to exclude children from our child care:

- 1) The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in usual activities.
- 2) The child requires more care than the program staff is able to provide without affecting the health and safety of the other children.
- 3) The illness is on the following list of symptoms or illness for which exclusion is recommended.

Children with the following symptoms or illnesses should be kept (excluded) home from care:

Symptom	Child Must Be At Home?
Diarrhea – frequent, loose or watery stools compared to child’s normal pattern; not caused by diet or medication.	YES – if child looks or acts ill; if child has diarrhea with fever and behavior change; if child has diarrhea with vomiting; if child has diarrhea that is not contained in the diaper or toilet
Fever with behavior changes or illness Note: An unexplained temperature of 100 degrees or above is significant in infants 4 months of age or younger and requires immediate medical attention	YES – when fever is accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms of illness such as rash, sore throat, vomiting, etc.
Flu Symptoms – Fever over 100 degrees with a cough or sore throat. Other flu symptoms can include fatigue, body aches, vomiting and diarrhea.	YES – for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicine
Coughing – severe, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, rapid or difficulty breathing Note: Children with asthma may be cared for in school with a written health care plan and authorization for medication/treatment	YES – medical treatment is necessary
Mild respiratory or cold symptoms stuffy nose, clear drainage, sneezing, mild cough	NO - may attend if able to participate in activities.
Rash with fever Note: Body rash <i>without</i> fever or behavior changes usually does not require exclusion from school; seek medical advice	YES – seek medical advice. Any rash that spreads quickly, has open weeping, and is not healing should be evaluated.
Fever with behavior changes or illness	YES – when fever is accompanied by behavior changes or other symptoms of illness such as rash, sore throat, vomiting, listlessness, diarrhea, etc.
Vomiting (2 or more episodes in past 24 hours)	YES – until vomiting resolves or a health care practitioner decides it is not contagious. Observe for other signs of illness and for dehydration.
ILLNESS	Child Must Be At Home?
Chicken Pox	YES – until blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days). If blister occurs after vaccination, refer to Health Dept. Guidelines.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) pink color of eye and thick yellow/green discharge	YES until 24 hours after treatment If your health provider decides not to treat your child, a note is required to return to care
Croup (See Coughing) Note: May not need to be excluded unless child is not well enough to participate in usual activities	Seek medical advice
Fifth’s Disease	NO – child is no longer contagious once rash appears
Hand Foot & Mouth Disease (Coxsackie virus)	NO – may attend if able to participate in usual activities, unless child has mouth sores and is drooling
Head lice or Scabies	YES – may return after treatment starts

Hepatitis A	YES –until 2 week after onset of illness or jaundice and when able to participate in usual activities
Herpes	YES – if area is oozing and cannot be covered, such as mouth sores
Impetigo	YES- for 24 hours after treatment
Ringworm	May return after treatment starts Keep area covered for the first 48 hours of treatment.
Roseola Note: A child with rash and no fever may return to school	YES- seek medical advice
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) Note: A child does not always need to be excluded unless he/she is not well enough to participate in usual activities	YES – seek medical advice. Once a child in the group has been infected, spread of illness is rapid.
Strep Throat	YES – for 24 hours after treatment and the child is able to participate in usual activities
Vaccine Preventable Diseases Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	YES – until determined not infectious by the health care provider.
Yeast Infections Including thrush or candida diaper rash	NO - may attend if able to participate in activities. Follow good hand washing and hygiene practices.

Hepatitis A	YES –until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice and when able to participate in activities.
Herpes	YES – if area is oozing and cannot be covered (mouth sores).

This information is based upon the guidelines from American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Childcare, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Communicable Disease Epidemiology Program, and Center For Disease Control.

Medication policies

Prescription and non-prescription (over the counter) medication

- Can be administered only on written order or a prescription from a health-care practitioner **and** written parent/guardian permission.
- Written authorization and consent forms must be reauthorized annually.
- All medications of any kind (this includes diaper ointment, cough syrup, prescriptions, cold remedies) must be checked in at the front desk upon arrival at the Center. Children must never have any type of medication on their person or in their cubby.
- All medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child’s first and last name.
- Prescription medication must bear the original pharmacy label.

Topical Preparations (diaper rash ointments)

- May be applied to children with written parental permission.
- We cannot apply anything to broken skin or open wounds, such as severe diaper rash, without a written order from a health-care practitioner.

Sunscreen

- A written authorization or denial to apply sunscreen from you is required upon enrollment.
- We will provide Rocky Mountain Sunscreen; if you wish to provide your own, it must be labeled with your child's first and last name. Please give it to the classroom teacher; it must not be left in your child's cubby or with your child.
- Please apply sunscreen during sunscreen season on your child upon arrival at the Center. We will apply it again before afternoon outdoor time.
- Only children over four years of age may apply sunscreen to themselves and only under adult supervision.
- **Sunscreen must be kept out of reach of children at all times.**

Accidents, Emergencies and Injuries

If your child has an accident that results in an injury, is injured seriously or becomes ill, you will be notified immediately. If we believe the injury requires immediate medical attention we will immediately notify campus police who will determine whether the child needs to be transported to a hospital or whether to stand by while we contact you. If we cannot contact you or your emergency contacts, we will assure that your child is taken to the hospital by emergency medical personnel following your instructions on the emergency form completed at enrollment. All minor injuries will be cleaned and treated, and written notification will be provided to you that day. Should we ever have a lost child, staff will notify the proper authorities by phone immediately, followed by family members, and the appropriate written forms will be completed.

The Children's Center and Red Rocks Community College have detailed plans for emergencies and critical incidents. These plans are posted on the bulletin board by the front desk. Should an emergency require evacuation, we will move to our emergency site, the Environmental Training Center, north of the east entrance. At this point, information about picking up your child would appear on the television. The staff and children practice fire drills monthly and tornado drills several times a year.

Weather Conditions

Children need and want to be outdoors in all kinds of weather; however, when the weather is colder than 20 degrees or warmer than 92 degrees, the children stay inside. It is important that all children are dressed appropriately for the weather predicted each day.

Filing complaints

If you have concerns or complaints about anything at anytime please contact the Director. You may also file serious complaints at:

Division of Child Care
The Colorado Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203
303-866-5958

Child Abuse Reporting

We are required by state law to report any suspected abuse or neglect, or any observations of children being subjected to circumstances or conditions that reasonably result in abuse or neglect immediately to social services or a law enforcement agency.

If you suspect any child abuse has occurred at this facility, you must report it to Jefferson County Social Services at 303-271-1388 or the Lakewood Police Department at 303-987-7111.



General Information

Rates effective as of 1/05/09

Hours of operation: 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Because we believe primary care giving and continuity of care are best for young children, we match each family with a caregiver who will stay with your family for at least two years. The children & caregivers move together to the next room each summer. To support the work, meal and rest times of the children, we ask that families arrive by 8:45 am and leave after 3pm.

The Center is closed on Labor Day, Memorial Day, July 4th and two days during the year for College wide professional development. These are all fee days. In addition, the Center is closed between Christmas and New Year's Day and for one week each August for staff training, cleaning, maintenance, etc. No fees are charged for these two weeks.

A yearly \$50.00 registration fee is due at the time of enrollment and each August thereafter, pro-rated for those who enroll in the summer. Tuition is due at the beginning of each month of care.

A schedule of closures is provided each August for the next year. We are a full day child care only. We care for children from 18 months to kindergarten entry.

RATES

Number of days	\$50.00 Garden Room 18 mos.-2½ years	\$46.00 Sunlight Room 2 ½ -3 ½ yrs.	\$43.00 River Rock Room 3 ½ - 5 yrs.
5 days a week	\$250.00	\$230.00	\$215.00
3 days a week	\$150.00	\$138.00	\$129.00
2 days a week	\$ 100.00	\$ 92.00	\$ 86.00

Center Tours are conducted Thursday mornings at 9:45. Please call to schedule a tour. If you have further questions please call the number below.

Phone: 303.914.6328

Email: sue.barnett@rrcc.edu



IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING HANDBOOK

Please bring this form to your family interview to be reviewed with the Director.

College Training Site, pg. 3: Children are **never** left alone with practicum students at any time. Background checks are completed on all work study students and staff. ECE students complete a background check before doing observations here.

Drop off/pick up, pg. 4: We adhere to a policy of not entering the classroom between 8:45-9:00am. Please remain in hallway with your child until 9am if you arrive during that 15 minute window. We ask that all children be here from 8:45-3so breakfast and rest time are not interrupted. Chronic late arrival (after 9:30) will be discussed with family.

Cell Phone: Cell phone use is not permitted in our Center so you can give your children the attention they deserve when you drop off and pick up.

Attendance Days: Preference is given to typical attendance patterns: Full time, MWF, TTH. We cannot offer substitute days if your child is not able to attend on their enrolled day. If we have room, you may **add** a day. Your account will be charged for that day.

Admission, Registration, Tuition: Registration fee is due when you accept a space for your child. Record of immunization and health status form must be completed and delivered at drop off on the first day of attendance, along with tuition for the month of care, through the last full week of the month. All subsequent tuition payments are due at the beginning of the month for the entire month of care. There is a \$20.00 returned check/declined credit card charge. Extended absences are billed as follows: 2 consecutive weeks at full tuition, additional consecutive days at 50%. Slots are not held through summer for families who wish to return in the fall.

Parent/Guardian agrees to notify director if child has special needs, ILP, IEP or other support at time of enrollment or at an time the child's needs change.

Curriculum:

We integrate High Scope and Reggio Emilia philosophies with our child-directed learning curriculum.

Celebrations: Because we respect all cultures and all family practices & beliefs and because we do not believe some celebrations are developmentally appropriate for young children, our celebrations always emerge from our curriculum. Please read handbook carefully.

I have discussed the above information with Center staff and understand and agree to it.

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)

Date



HELPFUL INFORMATION TO REMEMBER

All Classrooms:

- Bring all completed forms, cannot attend without medical forms signed by physician
- Registration Fee and First Week Payment
- 1 or 2 photos of your child and family
- Toothbrush, labeled (toothpaste provided)
- Center provides rest time fleece blanket for each child, however, if your child requires a special **SMALL** blanket or stuffed animal, feel free to bring along-remember space for each child is very limited!
- Diapers, wipes, diaper rash ointment if needed.
- If your child's skin requires a specific over counter lotion or sunscreen, please label and give to teacher for storage (Medicines, lotions, etc. cannot be stored in child's cubbie.)
- Extra labeled clothes, season appropriate.
- Sun hat to keep in the classroom (available for purchase from Center)
- College class schedule each semester, if you are a student

Garden Room:

- An extra pair of shoes for indoors only
- a small water bottle/sippy cup for water

Sunlight Room:

- A water bottle to keep in the classroom

River Rock Room:

- Water bottle is provided.
- Each child in RRR fills up his/her water bottle upon arrival.

General Information:

Each child must be signed in and out of care each day. Full first/last names are required by USDA Food Program. In the event of an emergency, these sign in sheets will be the only information that will be taken and used to contact families. Therefore, a phone number must be **LEGIBLY** written. Most communication is done by email; however, some important information is put in mail slots located above the sign in sheets. Children's work will be placed in their classroom folders. Please check both your mail slot and your child's folder each day.

There will be no entry into any classroom between 8:45-9:00. If you arrive during that time:

- There will be sunscreen in the foyer for all families to take care of that step before entering the classrooms
- River Rock families can help children put their things in the cubbies and apply sunscreen, as all RRR cubbies are in the main foyer.
- All families are welcomed to sit in the foyer and read with your child between 8:45- 9am.

At 9:00, feel free to enter your child's classroom, and help them wash their hands, fill their water bottles and join breakfast, remembering the teacher is engaged with the breakfast conversation.

Please label all your child belongings. We will have sharpie markers available in the classroom if you need them (black ones for white tags, and silver ones for dark tags).

Please be aware that many children at the Center have severe food allergies that can be life threatening. For that reason, we ask that no child in any room comes to the classroom with food of any kind including milk, peanut butter, fruit, cereal, candies, cereal bars, etc. If your child is eating something on the way to the school, please make sure he/she finishes it prior entering the Center. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep all the children at the Center safe. We are so glad that your family is part of our Center!

Just Playing

When I'm building in the block room,
Please don't say I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play;
About balance and shapes.
Who knows, I may an architect some day.

When I'm getting all dressed up,
Setting the table, caring for the babies,
Don't get the idea I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play;
I may be a mother or a father someday.

When you see me up to my elbows in paint,
Or standing at an easel, or molding and shaping clay,
Please don't let me hear you say, "He is Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm expressing myself and being creative.
I may be an artist or an inventor someday.

When you see me sitting in a chair
"Reading" to an imaginary audience,
Please don't laugh and think I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a teacher someday.

When you see me combing the bushes for bugs,
Or packing my pockets with choice things I find,
Don't pass it off as "Just Play."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a scientist someday.

When you see me engrossed in a puzzle,
Or some 'plaything' at my school,
Please don't feel the time is wasted in "Play."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate.
I may be in business someday.

When you see me cooking or tasting foods,
Please don't think that because I enjoy it, it is "Just Play."
I'm learning to follow directions and see differences.
I may be a chef someday.

When you see me learning to skip, hop, run, and move my body,
Please don't say I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning how my body works.
I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday.

When you ask me what I've done at school today,
And I say, "I Just Played."
Please don't misunderstand me.
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work.
I'm preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I'm a child and my work is play.

by Anita Wadley
Gateways to Learning
Edmond, Oklahoma